

# Player Protection



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[louisianalottery.com](http://louisianalottery.com)  
[facebook.com/louisianalottery](https://facebook.com/louisianalottery)  
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The Louisiana Lottery encourages players to put these protection tips into practice to ensure the best possible playing experience:

**1. Signing the Back of Lottery Tickets Immediately After Purchasing.** Lottery tickets are bearer instruments, which means the Lottery must pay the holder of a winning ticket presented for payment. Signing the back of their tickets is the single most important thing players can do to help protect themselves from theft and demonstrate ownership of their tickets. Any alteration to a winning ticket worth more than \$600 is cause for an immediate security investigation. Keep in mind, once a winning ticket has been paid, it is much more difficult to determine whether another individual was the rightful owner. By law, the Lottery can pay a winning ticket only once.

**2. Learning How to Play & Checking Tickets After the Drawing.** The Lottery strongly encourages players to take the time to learn how a game is played before cashing a winning ticket. Players should learn the rules and winning combinations for the games they play in order to have an idea of how much they've won before presenting tickets for cashing. This information can be found on the Lottery's website, in the *All Games Guide* located in retailer play centers and on scratch-off game tickets. Winning numbers can be found on the Lottery's website and on the Lottery's toll-free winning numbers hotline (800-735-5825). Winning numbers are also broadcast nightly on official Lottery television stations and can be printed from retailer ticket terminals.

**3. Watching the Customer Display Unit to Verify Any Winnings.** Players should pay attention to the discreet Customer Display Unit when having their tickets cashed at Lottery retailers. The small screen will tell whether or not the scanned ticket is a winner, and if so, how much is won. If the winnings are more than \$600, the display will direct the player to a Lottery office to claim the prize.

**4. Asking for a Validation Receipt.** Winning tickets worth \$600 or less can be paid by Lottery retailers. Players are encouraged to ask for a receipt confirming whether the ticket was a winner or the amount won if ever they are in doubt. If a player is told his ticket is not a winner, he may request its return. There is no reason for a retailer to keep a nonwinning ticket.

**5. Reporting Any Concern Right Away.** To report a problem or concern with cashing a winning ticket, players should contact the Lottery immediately at [signitnow@louisianalottery.com](mailto:signitnow@louisianalottery.com) with detailed information regarding their complaint or the incident.

## Avoid Illegal Lottery Scams

Using e-mail, telephone and postal mail, schemers promise lottery prizes to lure individuals into sharing personal information or sending them large amounts money in advance. Here are red flags that a prize notification may be a scam:

**1. The notification requests the "winnings" be kept a secret.** This ploy is to keep individuals from sharing the information with family members who may help them realize that it's a scam.

**2. A ticket was not purchased for the particular game or the player did not enter the drawing in which the prize was won.** Every legitimate lottery business model requires the payment of prizes from funds collected through the sale of tickets. Even the IRS only issues refunds based on taxes already paid! Players should ask themselves where the funds came from to pay the prize and whether they recall physically entering the drawing or purchasing a ticket. Remember, there is no such thing as free money.

**3. Players are asked to make up-front payments of processing fees, taxes or insurance in order to collect the winnings.** This is the foundation upon which all scams are based. No legitimate lottery will ever require up-front payment of any kind from winners in order to claim a prize. Any withholdings, such as taxes owed by the winner, are deducted from the prize funds.

**4. Players are guaranteed that they will win a prize if they pay to join a pool.** Legitimate lotteries do not require players to join a pool in order to play. Also, legitimate lotteries cannot guarantee a ticket will win a prize. Even if there was a way to "fix the system" in order to win, participation would constitute a serious crime.

Remember, gambling across state lines through the Internet, phone or mail is illegal. Also, scam artists that set up shop overseas are more difficult to prosecute.

