

Game Closure Procedures



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It is the Louisiana Lottery's policy to immediately begin closing a scratch-off game when all of the top prizes have been claimed to ensure that players have a chance to win the top prize that is advertised on that scratch-off. By working together with retailers, this practice maintains the integrity of Lottery games and the public's trust. Here is the Lottery's process for closing a game when all top prizes have been claimed:

1. Last Top Prize is Claimed

The Lottery does not track where winning tickets are located within a game. The first time it becomes aware of the depletion of top-prize winning tickets is when the last ticket is claimed at a regional office, headquarters or at a retailer (if the top prize is under \$600). When the ticket is scanned for validation, the Lottery's computer system checks the ticket against the number of total prizes and claimed prizes.

2. Lottery Notification

If the top prize being claimed is the last top prize for that scratch-off game, the Lottery is notified that this has occurred through an automated report that details all prizes remaining for every active scratch-off. The Lottery then begins communicating game closure details to retailers and players.

3. Retailers Notified to Stop Sales

Retailers play the most important role in executing the Lottery's game closure policy, since they have the most immediate access to games on sale to the public. For this reason, the Lottery uses a multifaceted communication strategy for notifying retailers to stop sales once all the top prizes in a game have been claimed.

When the Lottery receives information that all top prizes in a game have been claimed, the Lottery initiates a "mandatory message" to retailers on their Lottery terminals within 24 hours. The message notifies retailers of the game's closure and informs them to immediately pull the game from sale. The message also provides important dates for cashing winning tickets in the game. State law sets the last date of redemption at 90 days after the game's official closing.

Retailers must acknowledge this terminal message before being allowed to conduct any subsequent terminal transactions. If the last top prize is claimed at the end of business on Friday, then retailer notification may not be made until the next business day, which is no more than three days after the top prize is claimed.

In addition to terminal "mandatory messages," the Lottery also notifies retailers in writing and by phone. When retailers do not comply with removing a closed game from sale, a Lottery sales representative will remove the game from sale during his or her next regularly scheduled visit.

4. Player Notification of Game Closure

While most player communication takes place at the retailer level, the Lottery also provides this information on its website, www.louisianalottery.com. The Lottery's website contains a listing of all the remaining prizes in each prize tier of a scratch-off game. This information is updated periodically throughout the day.

Although the Lottery closes a game when all of its top prizes have been claimed, games may also be closed when ticket inventory reaches near sell-out or at the discretion of the Lottery's president.

