



Office of Consumer Affairs
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CONSUMER FACTSHEET

FOREIGN LOTTERY SCAMS

Consumers need to be on the alert if you or someone you know receives unwanted solicitations in the mail, by telephone, or e-mail regarding foreign lotteries. These are **FRAUDULENT** solicitations that claim you have WON a prize in a lottery or contest in Canada, Australia, Spain, and other countries. **It is a scam out to take your money.**



Along with the promotional literature you receive in the mail, many times you will find an actual check. But do not be fooled by the check, it too is a scam. When presented to local banks, consumers may deposit the check but are told approximately 10 to 15 days later that there are insufficient funds. It is a **FAKE** or **COUNTERFEIT** check.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF and YOUR MONEY **DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN FOREIGN LOTTERIES**

- Beware of solicitations asking you to send a check, wire transfer, or other payment to another country. Just say "No Thank You" and hang up on the caller. If you receive by mail an unwanted foreign lottery solicitation, send it to our office at the address listed above.
- Do not disclose your credit card number, check routing information, or other banking information to unknown telemarketers or those claiming to represent foreign lottery officials. Fraudulent operators can use this information to commit identity theft and access your accounts to withdraw funds.
- Do not believe claims that you need to pay to "collect your winnings." Although US lottery winnings may be subject to taxes, legitimate lottery operations will deduct a portion of the winnings in lieu of the tax payment.
- Consumers should not enter any foreign lottery or sweepstakes asking for money in return for winnings or chances. US Federal law prohibits the use of mail to sell or buy lottery materials, including tickets, letters or circulars concerning a lottery, chances or shares in a lottery, or payments to purchase such tickets, chances, or shares.