



## Sweepstakes

**"Congratulations, You have won \$100,000!  
You are hereby notified that you are a winner..."**

We all dream about winning big and how we would spend the winnings. Sweepstakes scams thrive because they make you believe your dreams might have come true.

### Remember these tips:

- **Don't be fooled by official-looking mail.** It's not legitimate just because the envelope is marked "urgent" and the contents look impressive.
- **Don't give out personal information.** No legitimate company will ever need your Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers to declare you a winner.
- **Don't pay to win.** Buying goods or services won't increase your chances of winning, and you cannot be required to buy something before you collect a prize.
- **Don't send money for taxes.** If you win a prize, you will never pay taxes directly to the sweepstakes company. Only the government collects taxes.

**Remember, prizes are always free.**



## Foreign Lotteries

These are always scams. Scam operators use the telephone, mail and e-mail to entice U.S. consumers to buy chances at high-stakes foreign lotteries in countries around the world.

### Remember:

- You cannot win a lottery when you have not bought a ticket.
- It is illegal to play a lottery in another country from the United States.
- Legitimate lotteries only sell their lottery products within their own areas—Montana businesses can only sell Montana lottery tickets.

## Legitimate Lotteries

### A legitimate lottery will:

- never send money orders or cashiers' checks and ask the winner to wire some of the money back
- never require:
  - shipping and handling fees
  - up-front, cash payment of taxes
  - a "good faith" showing—they won't ask you to send money up front to confirm your identity

To find out if you have won a lottery in Montana, check at no cost at any business that sells lottery tickets. If you are a victim of a sweepstakes or lottery scam, contact:

**Office of Consumer Protection** (contact below)

### Montana Lottery

(406) 444-5825 | [www.montanalottery.com](http://www.montanalottery.com)

Your rights.  
Your privacy.  
Your peace of mind.

**Montana Office of  
Consumer Protection**

[www.dojmt.gov/consumer](http://www.dojmt.gov/consumer)  
(406) 444-4500 • (800) 481-6896

