

Official

Lottery Frauds

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FRAUD ALERT

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Analysis of reports to Action Fraud by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) has identified a dramatic increase in Advance Fee Lottery Frauds over the last six months. **Over £925,000 was lost by victims during that period. Victims reported losing an average loss of just over £1,500. 70% of victims reported to be aged 50 or over.**

Lottery fraud occurs when criminals use fake messages and calls to convince a person that they have won a lottery or a prize draw. The victim is then informed that they will need to pay an advance “fee” in order to receive the winnings.

Victims are commonly asked to pay these advance fees by purchasing gift cards and relaying codes to the fraudster.

In some instances, victims have reported being asked for personal and financial information in order to obtain their “winnings”. Some victims reported providing their bank details thinking they would be sent a small payment to verify the account. In reality, criminals use these details to steal the victims money.

What you need to do

- **STOP:** Unsolicited offers of large sums of money in return for a small upfront payment should always raise a red flag. Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.
- **CHALLENGE:** Could it be fake? After all, you can't win a prize in a competition you didn't enter. Remember, it's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.
- Be wary of unsolicited callers instructing you to pay fees or fines using a gift card or voucher. Legitimate organisations would never do this.
- **PROTECT:** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud.
- Further consumer protection advice around lotteries and competitions is offered by the Gambling Commission - <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/>

For more information about how to protect yourself online, visit
www.cyberaware.gov.uk and takefive-stopfraud.org.uk

Every Report Matters

If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, report it to us at Actionfraud.police.uk, or by calling 0300 123 2040.