



Texas Lottery
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NEWS

from the Texas Lottery Commission

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**LATIN LOTTO SCAM STARTS UP AGAIN IN DALLAS
AREA; TWO CASES REPORTED THIS WEEK, CITIZENS
WARNED NOT TO FALL FOR PHONY PITCH**

(AUSTIN) – Hispanic citizens in the Dallas metroplex are being warned not to believe anyone who approaches them in the parking lot of a mall or big-box store trying to sell them a winning lottery ticket and telling them they'll keep a huge prize.

“If you are approached by someone who promises you a part of a big lottery prize in exchange for money, please get away from them immediately and call the police as soon as possible,” said Texas Lottery Deputy Executive Director Gary Grief. “This scam has been around since the late ‘90s in Texas, with the cons looking for other Hispanics who may be sympathetic to the sob story they’re telling. We’ve had two reports this week that the con artists are back in the Dallas area. Two Hispanic women were the near-victims. I congratulate both of them for thinking through what was being said to them and not falling for the scam.”

One case was reported at a Goodwill store in Carrollton. The second occurred outside a clothing store located at MacArthur Boulevard and 635 in Irving. In both cases, con artists tried to sell an alleged *Cash Five*® ticket they purported to be worth \$325 million.

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(Texas Lottery Commission news release, continued)

“*Cash Five* top prizes are in the five-figure range, so for anyone to claim they have a \$325 million jackpot for this game is outrageous,” Grief said. “A jackpot that high is major news, and so it should be a clue that someone trying to sell a ticket alleged to be worth that much is telling a story that’s just too good to be true.”

Grief said the procedure for claiming a winning ticket is simple, without the “requirements” alleged by the thieves.

“The Texas Lottery never requires any money in order to claim a ticket,” he said. “And a claim is not denied because a claimant is from another country and may be in the U. S. without proper documentation.”

The perpetrators also ask for money from victims to defray alleged Lottery taxes. They also claim they have insufficient identification to claim the prize.

The thieves also call someone who alleges to be an employee of the Texas Lottery® who then confirms that the ticket is a winner. Not only is the person on the phone part of the scam, the Lottery never confirms by phone that a ticket is a winner.

In other cases, the thieves may stop at a Lottery retail outlet to obtain winning ticket results, which seem to validate their fraudulent claim. Victims fail to notice that the printout they’re being shown is not really a ticket or that the winning number combinations were for a drawing held on a different date.

Grief said the con artists never let their victims out of their sight while the scam is happening and will often go with them to an ATM or a bank. Once the money is exchanged, the perpetrators make up some excuse to get away from the victim. Sometimes, they’ve pretended to be sick, and ask the victim to go into a pharmacy or store to buy them medicine, and then they disappear with the victim’s money.

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“We’re always grateful to law enforcement officials for the work they do to capture these unscrupulous characters and to get the word out in the Hispanic community and to all of our players not to fall for these scams,” Grief said.

For more information about the Texas Lottery, please visit the official Web site at <http://www.txlottery.org>.

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