



## Broadcast Contests, Lotteries and Solicitation of Funds

Broadcast television and radio stations must abide by FCC rules when conducting contests. Stations must fully and accurately disclose the rules of the contest, and must generally conduct the contest as advertised. Contest descriptions may not be false, misleading or deceptive.

### Lotteries

Federal law generally prohibits broadcast advertisements about lotteries, except for:

- Lotteries conducted by a state where the ad is broadcast by a station licensed to a location in that state.
- Gaming legally conducted by an Indian tribe.
- Both in-state and out-of-state broadcast advertisements for lawful casino gambling.
- Lotteries authorized or not otherwise prohibited by a state in which they are advertised so long as they are conducted by a not-for-profit or governmental organization or as a promotional activity by a commercial organization when it is not the primary business of that organization.
- Certain fishing contests.

### Solicitations of Funds

Generally, broadcasts of requests for funds intended for lawful purposes – including requests for contributions to meet station operating expenses – are permitted by federal law.

### Penalties

If you believe that a station has violated FCC rules regarding contests, lotteries or solicitations of funds, you can file a complaint with the FCC. Violations may lead to sanctions against holders of broadcast licenses.

### Filing a complaint

You have multiple options for filing a complaint:

- File a complaint online at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

### Alternate formats

To request this article in an alternate format - braille, large print, Word or text document or audio - write or call us at the address or phone number at the bottom of the page, or send an email to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov).

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