

Article 4.

Operation of Lottery.

§ 18C-130. Types of lottery games; lottery games and lottery advertising; certain disclosures and information to be provided.

(a) The Commission shall determine the types of lottery games that may be used in the Lottery, which may include instant lottery games, online lottery games, lottery games played on computer terminals or other devices, and other lottery games traditional to a lottery or that have been conducted by any other state government-operated lottery.

(b) In lottery games using tickets, each ticket in a particular game shall have printed on it a unique number distinguishing it from every other ticket in that lottery game and an abbreviated form of the game-play rules, including resources for responsible gaming information. In lottery games using tickets, each ticket may have printed on it a depiction of one or more cartoon characters, whose primary appeal is not to minors. In lottery games using tickets with preprinted winners, the overall estimated odds of winning prizes shall be printed on each ticket. No name or photograph of a current or former elected official shall appear on the tickets of any lottery game.

(c) In lottery games using electronic computer terminals or other devices to play the lottery games, no coins, currency, or redemption ticket shall be dispensed to players from those electronic computer terminals or devices.

(d) No lottery games shall be based on the outcome of a particular sporting event or on the results of a series of sporting events. Sports wagers shall be governed by Article 9 of this Chapter.

(e) Lottery advertising shall be tastefully designed and presented in a manner to minimize the appeal of lottery games to minors. The use of cartoon characters or of false, misleading, or deceptive information in lottery advertising is prohibited. All advertising promoting the sale of lottery tickets or shares for a particular game shall include the actual or estimated overall odds of winning the game.

(f) The Commission shall make available a detailed tabulation of the estimated number of prizes of each particular prize denomination that are expected to be awarded in each lottery game or the estimated odds of winning these prizes at the time that lottery game is offered for sale to the public.

(g) The Commission shall, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, develop and provide information to the public about gambling addiction and treatment. (2005-344, s. 1; 2005-276, ss. 31.1(j), 31.1(j1); 2006-259, s. 8(a); 2023-134, s. 4.3A(b).)

§ 18C-131. Sales and sale price of tickets and shares; sales to minors prohibited.

(a) The Commission may sell tickets and shares directly to the public, contract with lottery game retailers to sell tickets and shares, or distribute tickets or shares through any other method authorized by the Commission.

(b) No ticket or share in a lottery game shall be sold or resold for more than the retail sales price established by the Commission.

(c) The minimum retail price of each ticket or share in any lottery game shall be fifty cents (50¢). The minimum retail price shall not apply to any discounts or promotions authorized by the Commission for a particular lottery game.

(d) It shall be unlawful for a person to sell a lottery ticket or share to a person under the age of 18 years. No person under the age of 18 years shall purchase a lottery ticket or share. A person who violates this subsection shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(e) It shall be a defense for the person who sold a ticket or share in violation of subsection (d) of this section if the person does either of the following:

- (1) Shows that the purchaser produced a valid drivers license, a special identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7, a military identification card, or a passport, showing the purchaser to be at least 18 years old and bearing a physical description of the person named on the card that reasonably describes the purchaser.
- (2) Produces evidence of other facts that reasonably indicated at the time of sale that the purchaser was at least 18 years old. (2005-344, s. 1; 2006-259, s. 8(b).)

§ 18C-132. Procedures for drawings and claiming prizes; payment of prizes; protection of information concerning certain prize winners.

(a) If a lottery game uses a daily or less frequent drawing of winning numbers, a drawing among entries including second chance drawings where the value of the prize is five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or more, or a drawing among finalists, all of the following conditions shall be met:

- (1) The drawings shall be open to the public.
- (2) The drawings shall be witnessed by an independent certified public accountant or by an auditor employed by a certified public accounting firm.
- (3) Any equipment used in the drawings shall be inspected by the independent certified public accountant or auditor employed by a certified public accounting firm and an employee of the Commission both before and after the drawings.
- (4) Audio and visual records of the drawings and inspections shall be made.

If a lottery game uses a drawing among entries for (i) a second chance drawing or (ii) any other promotion conducted by the lottery, where the value of the prize is less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in value, the requirements of subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection do not apply.

(b) Prizes that remain unclaimed after the period set by the Commission for claiming the prizes shall not be considered abandoned property. If a valid claim is not made for a prize within the applicable period, the unclaimed prize money shall be handled in accordance with this Chapter.

(c) After the expiration of the claim period for prizes for each lottery game, the Commission shall make available a detailed tabulation of the total number of prizes of each prize denomination that was actually claimed and paid directly by the Commission.

(d) No prize shall be paid for a lottery ticket or share that is stolen, counterfeit, altered, fraudulent, unissued, produced or issued in error, unreadable, not received or recorded by the Commission by the applicable deadlines, lacking in captions that conform and agree with the play symbols as appropriate to the lottery game involved, or not in compliance with any additional specific rules and public or confidential validation and security tests appropriate to the particular game involved.

(e) No valid claim for a prize in any lottery game shall be paid more than once. The Director, Commission, and the State shall be discharged of all liability upon payment of a prize.

(f) Winners of less than six hundred dollars (\$600.00) shall be permitted to claim prizes from any of the following:

- (1) The same lottery game retailer who sold the winning ticket or share.
- (2) Any other lottery retailer.
- (3) The Commission.

(g) Winners of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) or more shall claim prizes directly from the Commission.

(h) The right of any person to a prize shall not be assignable. Payment of any prize may be paid to a person designated pursuant to a court order. Any prize or portion of a prize remaining unpaid at the death of a prize winner shall be paid to the estate of the deceased prize winner or to the trustee of a trust established by the prize winner or as designated in the deceased prize winner's will, living trust, or other prepared legal instrument if a copy of the trust document or instrument has been filed with the Director, and no written notice of revocation has been received by the Director prior to the prize winner's death.

(i) No ticket or share in a lottery game shall be purchased by, and no prize shall be paid to, a member of the Commission, the Director, or employee of the Commission, or to any spouse, parent, or child living in the same household as a person disqualified by this subsection.

(j) No prize shall be paid to a person under the age of 18.

(j1) If requested by the prize winner, the identity of a prize winner of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) or more shall be treated as confidential information under G.S. 132-1.2(8) until 90 days after the winner has claimed the prize.

(k) If a prize winner submits to the Commission a copy of a protective order without attachments, if any, issued to that person under G.S. 50B-3 or a lawful order of any court of competent jurisdiction restricting the access or contact of one or more persons with that prize winner or a current and valid Address Confidentiality Program authorization card issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 15C of the General Statutes, that prize winner's identifying information shall be treated as confidential information under G.S. 132-1.2 as long as the protective order remains in effect or the prize winner remains a certified program participant in the Address Confidentiality Program. That prize winner's identifying information shall be available for inspection by a law enforcement agency or by a person identified in a court order if inspection of the address by that person is directed by that court order.

(l) All prizes are subject to the State income tax.

(m) An eligible person serving on active military duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces during a war or national emergency declared in accordance with federal law may submit a delayed claim for a lottery prize. The claim shall be submitted to the Commission in writing no later than 540 days after the date the online game prize was announced or the instant game has closed. For the purposes of this subsection, the term "eligible person" means a person who has a valid claim for a prize in a lottery game and meets either of the following criteria:

(1) While on active military duty in this State, is transferred out of this State as the result of a war or national emergency declared in accordance with federal law before the applicable time period for claiming a lottery prize has elapsed. For the purposes of this subdivision, the term "active military duty" means a person who is covered by the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. App. § 501, et seq., as amended, or the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, 38 U.S.C. § 4301, et seq., as amended.

(2) While serving in the Armed Forces Reserves in this State, is transferred out of this State as the result of a war or national emergency declared in accordance with federal law before the applicable time period for claiming a lottery prize has elapsed. (2005-344, s. 1; 2005-276, s. 31.1(k); 2006-225, s. 4; 2009-357, ss. 8, 14; 2018-5, s. 5.3(c); 2019-142, s. 5.)

§ 18C-133. Lottery game-play rules and winner validation procedures.

(a) By purchasing a ticket or share in a lottery game, a player agrees to abide by, and be bound by, the game-play rules adopted by the Commission that apply to any particular lottery game involved.

(b) All players acknowledge that the determination of whether the player is a winner is subject to the game-play rules and the winner validation procedures and confidential validation tests established by the Commission for the particular lottery game involved. (2005-344, s. 1.)

§ 18C-134. Setoff for debt collection against lottery prizes.

(a) Purpose. – The Commission must establish a debt set-off program by which lottery prize payments may be used to satisfy a debt owed or collected by a claimant agency that is at least fifty dollars (\$50.00). The collection remedy under this section is in addition to and not in substitution for any other remedy available by law.

(b) Notification. – A claimant agency is automatically enrolled in the Commission's debt set-off program if it is enrolled in the Department of Revenue debt set-off program. To provide for more efficient operations, the Department of Revenue shall provide to the Commission on a periodic basis all updates to its debt set-off program as soon as practicable.

(c) Setoff. – The Commission must match the information submitted by the claimant agency with persons who are entitled to a State lottery prize payment in an amount of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) or more. If there is a match, the Commission must set off the debt against the lottery winnings to which the debtor would otherwise be entitled. When there are multiple claims to be set off, the priority in claims to set off is the same as provided in G.S. 105A-12. The winnings that exceed the amount of the debt, if any, must be paid to that person. The Commission must mail the debtor written notice that the setoff has occurred and must transfer the net proceeds collected to the claimant agency. If the claimant agency is a State agency, that agency must credit the amount received to a nonreverting trust account and must follow the procedure set in G.S. 105A-8.

(d) Collection Assistance Fee. – To recover the costs incurred by the Commission in collecting debts under this section, a collection assistance fee of five dollars (\$5.00) may be imposed on each debt collected through setoff. The Commission must collect this fee as part of the debt and retain it. To recover the costs incurred by local agencies in submitting debts for collection under this section, a collection assistance fee of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) may be imposed on each local agency debt collected through setoff. The Commission must collect this fee as part of the debt and remit it to the clearinghouse that submitted the debt. The collection assistance fees do not apply to child support debts. If the Commission is able to collect only part of a debt through setoff, the Commission's collection assistance fee has priority over the local collection assistance fee and over the remainder of the debt. The local collection assistance fee has priority over the remainder of the debt.

(e) Confidentiality. – Notwithstanding any confidentiality statute of a claimant agency, the exchange of information among the Commission, the Department of Revenue, the claimant agency, the organization submitting debts on behalf of a local agency, and the debtor necessary to implement this section is lawful. The information an agency or organization obtains from the Commission in accordance with the exemption in this subsection may be used by the agency or organization only in the pursuit of its debt collection duties and practices.

(f) Definitions. – The definitions in G.S. 105A-2 apply in this section. (2005-344, s. 1; 2005-276, s. 31.1(k1); 2009-357, ss. 9, 10.)

§§ 18C-135 through 18C-139: Reserved for future codification purposes.