

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CONSUMER AFFAIRS BULLETIN



Running a lottery on social media ... here are things you need to consider!

Most importantly – Is the lottery licensed? If the activity qualifies as a lottery, and it is unlicensed by a municipal or territorial lottery license, it could violate provisions against illegal gaming under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Three factors are used to determine if an activity is a lottery. They are:

- Prize: A prize is offered.
- Chance: There is a random chance to win something.
- Consideration: You pay for the opportunity to win.

If the answer to these three questions is Yes, this is a lottery and requires a license.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) is the authority responsible for lottery licensing pursuant to Section 207 of the Criminal Code of Canada and the Northwest Territories Lottery Act and Regulations. In 15 NWT communities, this authority is delegated to community governments to license and regulate these activities within their municipal boundaries.

All lottery and gaming activities in the NWT must have a charitable purpose. To be considered charitable under the NWT Lotteries Act and Regulations the lottery should be for the benefit of others, and not for self-help purposes or direct personal benefit to the member(s).

Any advertising of the Raffle shall include the raffle license number. As the GNWT can only license lottery schemes within the NWT tickets cannot be sold outside the NWT but may be sold to non-residents visiting the NWT. In the cases of municipal lottery licenses, those sales can only take place within the municipal boundaries of that community.

Government of
Northwest Territories

Contact Us

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If an event takes place without a lottery license, and complaints are raised, this activity will be referred to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as they are the responsible for considering possible Criminal Code violations.

If you are aware of events taking place that may not have a license, you should notify the appropriate licensing office for further investigation. In those cases, we will require:

1. The date of the event,
2. Its type and location, and
3. Which individual or organization ran the event.

If this activity is taking place on social media, such as Facebook, a screen shot of the activity would also be helpful.