

SeniorALERT



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
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VICTIMS CAN BE CHARGED WITH PASSING COUNTERFEIT CHECKS

HERE IS SOMETHING for seniors to think about when they are tempted to believe they have won a foreign lottery: some victims of lottery scams have been charged with criminal offenses.

We have issued warnings about lottery and sweepstakes scams involving counterfeit cashier's checks. By sending a phony check, the scammer leads the victim to believe that he or she really has won a prize. Often the phony checks are such good forgeries that bank tellers initially accept them.

When the victim of a scam deposits a phony "prize" in a bank account, the last thing he or she intends to do is pass a counterfeit check. But if the check is counterfeit and the victim presents it to the bank as real, that is exactly how it could appear. If the victim then proceeds to write checks drawing on the "money" in the account, this could be interpreted as issuing bad (or "hot") checks.

It has actually happened: some lottery scam victims have been very confused and frightened to find themselves charged with crimes. Even if the charges are eventually dropped, this is not an experience any Senior Texan could enjoy.

Sincerely,

Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas