

Sticking to the rules for raffles, lotteries, sweepstakes, competitions and tombolas

Things like raffles, sweepstakes and competitions can all be great ways to put a little fun in your fundraising. They're also some of the most regulated areas of fundraising. This guidance for NSPCC supporters will help you make sure your fundraising is legal. But if you have any questions, or need any help, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Why are the rules important?

Charity lotteries, raffles, and other forms of gambling are regulated by the Gambling Commission, under the Gambling Act (2005), in the public interest. The Gambling Commission's three main objectives are:

- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed by gambling.

The NSPCC holds a Large Society Lottery Licence. This means that supporters **must not register for their own licence**. The Gambling Act (2005) allows for non commercial gaming, some of which does not require the use of the NSPCC's licence.

Raffles and lotteries

As part of another fundraising event

The safest and easiest way to hold a fundraising raffle is to hold an incidental raffle. This means a raffle that is held at another fundraising event.

What you must do

- Tell your local fundraising team, so they can help you!
- Only sell tickets at the event – anyone at the event can purchase a ticket.
- Use cloakroom-style tickets.
- Only take £100 maximum out of the profits of the draw to cover costs and prizes.
- Hold the draw at the event itself.

What you must not do

- Sell tickets before the event, or to people not attending the event.
- Apply Gift Aid to the money – legally, buying a ticket does not count as a donation.

Outside of a fundraising event

Selling raffle tickets outside of a fundraising event or private NSPCC society will require the use of our Large Society Lottery Licence, and you'll need to keep the following in mind.

- Due to the costs involved, we ask that you expect your raffle to raise at least £5,000 to be able to make use of our licence. This is due to the high level of compliance we must maintain for the Gambling Commission.
- Please contact your regional fundraiser at least nine weeks before you plan to run your raffle. This is so we can set up an action plan and register your raffle with the Gambling Commission.
- Please wait for our confirmation from our legal and compliance teams before having any materials printed. This type of raffle will incur higher costs due to rules around ticket printing.
- Please note, we will become the promoter of all raffles run on our licence.
- Other restrictions apply – get in touch to find out more.

Free prize draws

Prize draws are a great fundraising alternative to raffles or lotteries as they aren't subject to the same tight regulations.

In order to qualify as not being a raffle, it must be possible to enter the prize draw for free, but you can suggest a donation for entry. The bonus? This means the money you raise is eligible for Gift Aid!

'Free' is defined by any method of communication charged at the normal rate, including first and second class post.

Competitions and other games of skill

Games of skill, where the outcome of the game is not reliant on chance in any way (such as pub quizzes etc) are not a form of lottery and are exempt from these guidelines. However, they are subject to regulations set by the Advertising Standards Authority.

Tombolas

Tombolas are a type of incidental lottery, so must follow this guidance.

Sweepstakes

Sweepstakes can be run against many major competitions such as horse races, TV talent shows, sporting events and so on, but you need to bear a few points in mind.

- Sweepstakes are a workplace/residents lottery which means they can only be run with employees/residents based in one particular residence or office.
- Entries must be drawn at random, guessing games such as Guess My Time are not supported by the NSPCC.
- Profits from the sweepstake should be split between the winner and the charity, with at least 50 per cent going to charity.

Questions? Need help?

We've tried to cover most of the ways that our supporters use gaming to raise money. If you've got further questions, or you need help with another type of game, please contact your local fundraising team who will be happy to help you.