

Lack of Illinois funding affects Powerball, Mega Millions, prize payments over \$25,000

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CHICAGO – The Illinois Lottery is announcing a temporary change in its winner payment policy effective July 1, 2017, should funding for Lottery prizes not be approved by the General Assembly.

Players with valid claims of more than \$25,000 will experience a delay in payments for all games because of the ongoing state budget impasse in Springfield.

“Players should be confident knowing the Illinois Lottery has the money to pay these winning claims,” Illinois Lottery Acting Director Greg Smith said. “That means the General Assembly needs to approve a truly balanced budget that includes Lottery funding in order to ensure all prize payments will occur.”

In 2015, the Lottery didn’t have Fiscal Year 2016 appropriation authority to pay winners until December, resulting in nearly 3,900 valid claims being delayed, totaling more than \$112 million. Within a month of receiving an appropriation, all valid claims were paid to winners.

In addition, a lack of Lottery funding for Fiscal Year 2018 will result in the unprecedented step of suspending Powerball and Mega Millions sales in Illinois.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR POWERBALL

- Powerball sales in Illinois will be suspended at 9:00 p.m. June 28, 2017.
- All Powerball tickets purchased before that cut-off time will be valid tickets.
- All active Powerball subscriptions will be cancelled after the last draw on June 28. The Lottery will issue refunds to players for the remaining length of their subscriptions.
- When a Fiscal Year 2018 appropriation for the Illinois Lottery is passed, the Lottery will work with the Multi-State Lottery Association to determine a path for the return of Powerball sales. The timing is unknown.
- No other Illinois Lottery games will be suspended.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR MEGA MILLIONS

- Mega Millions sales in Illinois will be suspended at 9:45 p.m. June 30, 2017.
- All Mega Millions tickets purchased before that cut-off time will be valid tickets.
- All active Mega Millions subscriptions will be cancelled after the last draw on June 30. The Lottery will issue refunds to players for the remaining length of their subscriptions.
- When a Fiscal Year 2018 appropriation for the Illinois Lottery is passed, sales for Mega Millions will resume.
- No other Illinois Lottery games will be suspended.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR PRIZE PAYMENTS

- Players should not delay claiming a winning ticket.

- Valid claims of more than \$25,000 will experience a delay in payments due to the Comptroller's inability to make payments on behalf of the Lottery without an appropriation.
- Players with valid claims of any amount who owe money to the state (via an "offset") will experience a delay in payments due to the Comptroller's inability to make payments on behalf of the Lottery without an appropriation.
- At this time, the Illinois Lottery will continue to pay valid claims of \$25,000 or less at any of the five Lottery Prize Centers located throughout Illinois – Chicago, Des Plaines, Fairview Heights, Rockford and Springfield.
- Prizes of \$600 or less will continue to be paid at the Lottery's nearly 8,000 retail partners.

Illinois Lottery by the Numbers

- 1974 - The Illinois Lottery was founded
- \$19 billion - Illinois Lottery contribution to the Common School Fund (since 1985) to assist K-12 public schools
- \$2.86 billion - Sales in FY16 (FY15 sales were \$2.85 billion)
- \$691.55 million - The Illinois Lottery contribution to the Common School Fund for FY16
- \$44 million - Illinois Lottery contribution to special causes, including veterans services, breast cancer research, Multiple Sclerosis research, Special Olympics training programs and assistance for Illinois residents living with HIV/AIDS

Budget Déjà vu: 2015 Player Payment Delay Information

- In FY16, the Illinois Lottery didn't have appropriation authority to pay winners until December 2015, resulting in nearly 3,900 valid claims being delayed, totaling more than \$112 million. Within a month of receiving an appropriation, all valid claims were paid to winners.
- During the time the Illinois Lottery was not able to pay players in 2015 (October 14-December 14), lost sales are estimated at \$66.5 million to \$71.5 million. The Lottery continues its work to regain the trust of its players.
- SB 1497 and HB 3448 were introduced in this spring's legislative session, which would have provided the Lottery with a continuing appropriation for the payment of prizes to avoid payment delays. The legislation remains in committee in each chamber.

Mega Millions

Powerball

- Illinois started selling Powerball in 2010.

- Powerball is a draw game owned and operated by the Multi-State Lottery Association.

- Powerball plays cost \$2.

- Drawings are held at 9:59 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays.

- Powerball sales in Illinois accounted for \$208 million in FY16.

- Illinois started selling Mega Millions in 2002.

- Mega Millions is a draw game owned and operated by the Mega Millions consortium.

- Mega Millions plays cost \$1.

- Drawings are held at 10:00 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays.

- Mega Millions sales in Illinois accounted for \$99 million in FY16.