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Purpose: This FAQ provides answers to questions about games of chance in the 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H YDP) and assists in policy implementation and interpretation.

1. What is a lottery?

A lottery involves the distribution of property by chance among persons who have paid or promised to pay any value for the chance of obtaining the property, with the understanding that it will be distributed by chance. According to CA law, in order to be considered a game of chance there must be three elements present: (1) a prize, (2) consideration is needed to be eligible to win (e.g., payment, any exchange of value, or requirement of purchase) and (3) distribution of the prize by chance.

2. What is a raffle?

A raffle is a lottery that requires no skill in order to win a prize. Prizes are awarded through the purchase of chances. The elements of a raffle are: (1) a prize, (2) distributed by chance, (3) to a person who has paid money for a paper ticket, which provides an opportunity to win, and which has a detachable coupon or stub, both of which have a unique identification, and (4) winner is determined by a draw from among the detached coupons or stubs.

3. Can 4-H members, adult volunteers, units and VMOs conduct raffles?

No, 4-H participants cannot conduct raffles. However, if everyone is provided a paper ticket and purchase is not required you may have a drawing for a prize as everyone would be eligible for the prize. It would also be okay to accept and encourage donations but donations cannot be required to receive a paper ticket and enter the drawing.

4. Can 4-H members sell raffle tickets as a fundraiser for their 4-H unit or VMO or for other organizations?

No, 4-H members cannot sell raffle tickets to fundraise for their 4-H unit or VMO or for other organizations. Additionally, all fundraising activities are to be reviewed and approved by the county director or designee. These activities should further the educational goals of the 4-H YDP.

5. If another organization runs a raffle and donates the money to a 4-H unit or VMO can the 4-H unit or VMO accept these funds?





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Yes, a 4-H YDP unit or VMO can accept funds raised by another organization through a raffle if they are to be used to further the educational mission of the 4-H YDP. However, the use of the 4-H name and emblem are protected under the law and cannot be used to promote raffles or other games of chance (i.e., lotteries) (see Chapter 9, VII, H2).

6. Can raffles occur at 4-H sponsored events?

No, raffles cannot take place during 4-H sponsored events; it implies an endorsement of activities that are against our policies.

7. What is the difference between a raffle and a drawing?

In a drawing everyone has an equal chance to win a prize and there is usually no money involved to be included in the drawing. A raffle is a lottery where an individual's chances of winning are increased by the number of chances that they purchase.

8. Can a 4-H event offer door prizes?

Yes, as long as no purchase (or donation) is required to participate in the door prize. This is permissible because consideration is not present (see #1 above).

9. If individuals pay to come to an event (e.g., spaghetti dinner) and are also given a ticket to win a prize via a drawing is this permissible?

This would be acceptable as long as people attending the event are paying to participate in the event (e.g., for the spaghetti dinner) and not the ticket. In this scenario consideration is not present (see #1 above).

10. If the event is free but individuals are given a ticket for donating goods (e.g., blanket or can food) and are then eligible to receive a prize is this acceptable?

No, this is not allowed. A donation of goods when required for a ticket is consideration (see #1 above). Any time an exchange of money, goods or services is required in order to be eligible to receive a ticket and win a prize this is consideration. However, you can encourage or otherwise let participants know that donations are accepted and appreciated but not required for participation. In order to win the prize, each individual must be eligible and have an equal opportunity to win.

11. Can cakewalks occur at 4-H events?





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If the three elements of a game of chance are present then cakewalks may not occur at 4-H sponsored events (see #1 above). If a person is eligible to win a prize without purchase or donation then the cakewalk is an acceptable activity. However, you can encourage or otherwise let participants know that cake or other donations are accepted and appreciated but not required for participation.

12. Can bingo occur at 4-H events?

If the three elements of a game of chance are present then bingo may not occur at 4-H sponsored events (see #1 above). If a person is eligible to win a prize without purchase or donation or if there is no prize for getting "BINGO" then the game of bingo is acceptable.

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