

Guidance on how to run a raffle or sweepstake

Raffles and sweepstakes are a great way to boost your fundraising and can generate funds with minimal costs.

Raffles and sweepstakes can be some of the most regulated forms of fundraising, so we've created this handy guide to help you make sure that your fundraising is safe and legal.

Both raffles and sweepstakes come under the umbrella of lotteries from a Gambling Commission perspective. The Gambling Commission is the regulatory body who govern gambling in England, Scotland and Wales and describe these three essential ingredients which make a lottery:

- You have to pay to enter the game
- There is always at least one prize
- Prizes are awarded purely on chance.

Raffle

The simplest way to organise a raffle is to have one as part of an existing event. This is known as an incidental, non-commercial lottery and does not require a license or registration with your council to run. For this type of raffle, you can use "cloakroom" style tickets. There are however some restrictions which you must adhere to:

- These raffles can only be held as part of an event. If the event is being held for more than one day you can sell tickets on all the days of the event.
- The prize draw can be held either during your event or after, but you must let participants know when the draw will take place.
- We recommend, where possible, asking for prizes to be donated, to help you raise as much money as possible. If you do find that you need to purchase prizes, the total prize costs claimed against the draw proceeds must not be more than £500.
- The maximum permitted to be taken from proceeds for expenses is £100.
- Tickets should be sold at a consistent price.
- No rollovers permitted.
- Gift Aid cannot be applied to the money raised from raffles as legally buying a ticket does not count as a donation.

Sweepstakes

Sweepstakes are also incidental, non-commercial lotteries. They can be a fun way to help raise money for Diabetes UK or boost your fundraising. There are some basic rules that you will need to follow if you are planning on running your own sweepstake:

- All the rules shown in the raffle section apply as well as the following.
- You need to decide before hosting your competition if the entry money will be split between the winner and the Charity, or if you are going to have a separate prize with all entry fees going to the Charity. Whichever approach you take, participants must be informed before they enter, and the host cannot make a profit (i.e. funds will need to be donated).
- Office sweepstakes can only take place in one office with people in the same premises.
- You must not sell entry on the street or house to house.
- If you are running a competition where people need to guess the square of a picture that an object is hidden on you will need to decide ahead of time which the winning square is, and make sure that it is saved somewhere securely (for example in a sealed envelope). If no one guesses that square, then the nearest guess is the winner.

Tombolas

A tombola is a form of raffle in which prizes are pre-assigned to winning tickets. Typically, numbered raffle tickets are used, with prizes allocated to all those ending in a particular digit (traditionally a five or a zero). Players pay for a ticket, which they then draw at random from a hat or tombola drum and can instantly see whether or not they have won a prize.

You do not require a license to run a tombola however the tombola must take place during the course of an event. All tickets need to be sold and drawn during the event.

Small Society Lotteries

A small society lottery has a top limit of £20,000 in ticket sales. This type of raffle allows you to sell tickets in advance and the draw can be advertised to the general public. You must register your raffle with your local authority licensing department, and this will involve a small annual fee.

- Although you do not require a license from the Gambling Commission to hold this type of lottery you must still make sure your tickets adhere to the rules set by the Gambling Commission:
- You will need a person registered as the promoter and they are responsible for the lottery and what must be printed on all tickets. You cannot register under Diabetes UK.
- Tickets must show the name of the charity, the ticket price, the name and address of the organiser/promoter and the date of the draw.
- A small society lottery can raise up to £20,000 in a single draw and up to £250,000 over a year.
- You must be 16 years or above to purchase or sell tickets.

- At least 20% of the proceeds raised must go to Diabetes UK.
- Up to 80% of the sales may be used for prizes and expenses.

For more information and guidance please visit the Gambling Commission website.

Free prize draws

Free prize draws are similar to raffles, where people can enter to win a prize, but entries must be free. You can limit how many entries people can have and ask for a donation at the time of entry. However, it must be clear that there is no charge for entering and that donating will not affect the chance to win. Free prize draws are a good choice if you are in a situation where you cannot follow the regulations for incidental or private lottery draws. You might choose to run this type of draw to help raise awareness by asking people to share/like something on social media to have a chance of winning. Free prize draws are not regulated by the Gambling Commission. However, it's common for people to unwittingly create an illegal lottery, by not offering a truly free route of entry.

Collecting personal information

If you collect any personal details from those taking part in your raffle or sweepstake, such as a contact no. or email, you will need to handle this information in line with data protection legislation. In the UK this is the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This means you need to tell people:

- Why you're collecting their information (so that you can contact them if they've won something),
- What you're going to do with it (only use for purpose of the lottery/sweepstake administration)
- How long you'll keep it for (you will delete within a set time after the draw/result as no longer needed)
- That you will keep it secure, and not share with anyone. If it is a paper copy, keep it safe and destroy (shred) after event. If saving electronically, password protect if using a shared device and delete when no longer needed.

Questions?

We've tried to cover most of the ways that our supporters use gaming to raise money for us. If you've got further questions, or you need help with another type of game, please contact our fundraising team: fundraising@diabetes.org.uk or call 0345 123 2399 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) who will be happy to help.

Our logo

If you would like to use our logo to do this type of fundraising, you can request our in aid of logo by contacting our supporter relations team fundraising@diabetes.org.uk or call 0345 123 2399 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm).

Lotteries are regulated under the Gambling Act 2005, except in Northern Ireland where they are regulated by the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements Order 1985 and Lotteries Regulations. Lotteries need to comply with the terms of Diabetes UK's gambling license, issued by the Gambling Commission. Some lotteries, such as large society lotteries, require a license.

A license is generally required where tickets are sold throughout a geographical region, in advance of the draw and where proceeds from ticket sales exceed a prescribed amount.