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Fraudsters Exploit Consumers with Lottery Scam

Fijians are being alerted about a scam that is currently circulating on popular messaging platforms, Viber and WhatsApp. Scammers are targeting individuals by calling or sending messages, congratulating them on winning a lottery and enticing them to claim a substantial prize amount. The scammers then request personal information such as banking details from their victims, or ask for a small payment to clear the taxes associated with the lottery win.

Over the past few days, the Consumer Council of Fiji has received numerous reports from concerned individuals who have received calls under this scam. The Council is deeply concerned about the increasing traction of this fraudulent activity and urges consumers to exercise the utmost caution.

“People have come forward with reports about receiving calls from overseas numbers, either on Viber or WhatsApp, and they are informed that they have won a lottery which they never participated in. If the consumers start asking questions, or try and call out the scam, they are subjected to verbal abuse,” says Consumer Council CEO Seema Shandil.

The Council advises all Fijian consumers to be vigilant and to take necessary precautions to protect themselves from falling victim. “These scams typically originate overseas, making it challenging for the Council to take direct action against the perpetrators. However, we strongly recommend that consumers refrain from engaging with these scammers and never share their personal information, especially sensitive details like banking information,” says Shandil.

The Council emphasizes the importance of safeguarding personal information and exercising caution when interacting with unknown individuals or organizations, particularly when it involves financial matters. Consumers who are unsure about the legitimacy of any communication or suspect fraudulent activity are encouraged to reach out to the Consumer Council of Fiji for assistance and guidance on the national toll-free number 155, or through the Consumer Council of Fiji App.



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