

Are House Raffles Real Or Legal?

By Colleen Sonntag

That is a common question for anyone considering a house raffle. We want to know if it is legal, if you really can win the house, and if the organization or person holding the raffle is legitimate.

First we want to know if it is legal and above board. Every state has laws about raffles. You can look up the laws of your state and see if the raffle can be held in your state, or in the state the raffle you are interested in is being held. Most raffles provide you with you a purchase option on a web page, so you may be able to procure a ticket on a raffle being held in one state even if they are not allowed in your state. Explore lotteries. Many people procure tickets from another state since they have no lottery in their own, and often win. Anyone suggesting a raffle should be advertising a way for you to know it is legal, and that they are following the laws pertaining to it.

Second, can you really win a raffle? Of course you can. The possibility is not going to be 1 in 10 though, since you typically have a lot of people buying tickets. But, with a house raffle, the win, is quite exciting. Most raffles offer you a cash prize and/or the house. The problem with that is always the same, how do you pay the taxes on the value of the winnings? Most people who buy raffle tickets do so for the “chance” to get something they otherwise wouldn’t. These same people don’t have extra money lying around to pay the income taxes on the value of the winnings. For the raffles that offer a cash prize and the house, the cash prize most likely won’t pay both the income taxes on the market value of the house, and the value of the cash won. So, what do you do about that? You look for a raffle that provides you a cash prize, AND the right to purchase the house for a set amount. Now you only pay taxes on the cash prize, because you are buying the house. Your winning ticket number gave you a cash prize and the first option right to purchase a house. Of course the purchase price must be a really sensible price, or you would still need to have money lying around to pay for it. A really smart raffle like this can be found at Joyful Hearts, Inc.

Third, how do you know the business or person holding the raffle is legitimate? For one thing, most states require house raffles be held by legitimate charity organizations as determined by the IRS ruling 501(c)(3). For instance, if the raffled house is in Florida, then it must be done by a charity organization, and the charity must follow the state laws for Florida on anything to do with that particular raffle. Any lawful charity will not be afraid to name its board members, the work they do, who is overseeing the raffle and how to contact them, how to contact the charity itself, and what state they are incorporated in. This information can give you the skill to check with the Secretary of State, Chamber of Commerce, Better Business Bureau, and an online name search for any negative information that may be out there or that the named organizations may have been given. Exact addresses of the houses should also be easily seen or readily obtainable. If you know the house address, then you can find out from the raffle overseer just how real this raffle is. In other words, if the raffle is on the level, then there should be absolutely NO information that you cannot acquire from the charity itself, or anyone associated with the raffle.

So now you must consider if you want to buy a house raffle ticket. Winning a house could be great. If the raffle is performed as Joyful Hearts, Inc. does them, then if you won, you would own a house free and clear. You could live in the house, or if it is not in your area you could keep it as a second house, or sell it quickly under the market price, since you have no amount you have to get to pay off any liens. Truly, in this case, you have nothing to lose, since the money you spent on the ticket would go to help someone else in some way.

We all want to help others and performing good deeds is something everyone does when they can. We all talk about charities whether it's children charities or families or any charitable work, especially in times of disasters, but not all of us make it a point or find the time to engage in these activities on a regular basis. We all want to, and agree it is a wonderful thing to do, but let's face facts. Our society is in high gear movement all the time. We don't take the time, or in a lot of cases, have the time to stop and smell the roses. We want to, we just don't or can't. We feel envious of others who volunteer for charities or their church or their community center, and wonder how they do it. We don't have the time to, but would love to feel the emotional rewards of doing so. One way to do a good deed is a house raffle. A house raffle really is a volunteer situation. A volunteer is somebody who works without being paid. You may have worked for the raffle ticket money, but when you gave it to help someone else, you were not really paid. The raffle ticket you purchased is volunteering a

helping hand for those in need, and for the winner, it is also a gift that will improve their own future. How can you go wrong?

If you are looking for inspiration, or you want to take part in a legal charity helping children and families, please visit Joyful Hearts website www.joyfulheartsinc.com and their blog www.joyfulheartsinc.com/ourjoys. Charity work is never done, always rewarding, and with your helping hand we can keep on track to help as many children and families as possible. Thanks for offering a helping hand to those in need. I know your reward will be joyful, and well deserved.

Joyful Hearts, Inc. is a charity for children and families. Our work and goals may be seen on our website. To read more about us and our mission, please visit Joyful Hearts at our website. The littlest things can make such a big difference.