The Diversity Visa Lottery Scam

*Dishonest people sometimes charge for blank government forms, say they have a special relationship with the government, or guarantee to get you results. They may promise to get you a winning slot in the **Diversity Visa lottery** if you pay a fee. They might charge a lot of money, supposedly to guarantee temporary protected status or get you benefits you don't qualify for. They are very clever about finding ways to cheat people.

Here is how to **avoid scams** and get the right help.

How to Avoid a Scam

- Don't go to a notario, notario público, or a notary public for legal advice. In the U.S., notarios are not lawyers: they can't give you legal advice or talk to government agencies for you, like the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) or the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). A notary public doesn't have to be a lawyer either, and is not allowed to give you legal advice.
- Never pay for blank government forms. Government forms are free, though you'll probably have to pay when you submit them to USCIS. You can get free immigration forms at **www.uscis.gov/forms**, by calling USCIS at 1-800-870-3676, or by visiting your local USCIS office.
- Get immigration information from U.S. government websites. Some scammers set up websites that look like they are run by the government, but they aren't. Make sure that the website that looks like a government site is a dot gov (.gov). That means it is from the U.S. government.
- Don't let anyone keep your original documents, like your birth certificate or passport. Scammers may keep them until you pay to get them back.
- Never sign a form before it has been filled out, or a form that has false information in it. Never sign a document that you don't understand.
- Keep a copy of every form that you submit, as well as every letter from the government about your application or petition.
- You will get a receipt from USCIS when you turn in your paperwork. Keep it! It proves that USCIS received your application or petition. You will need the receipt to check on the status of your application, so be sure you get a copy.

If you suspect a scam, please report it to the Federal Trade Commission:

- Call 1-877-382-4357.
- Go to https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/.

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