GalaBid

FREE COMPLIANCE WORKBOOK

Charity Raffle Compliance Checklist

The regulator to check and the questions to answer before you sell your first ticket, across Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the US, Canada, Ireland and the EU. General information, not legal advice.

READ THIS FIRST

How to Use This Workbook

This is general information, not legal advice. Rules change, they differ between states and provinces as well as between countries, and the regulator's own guidance is always the source of truth. Any figure in this workbook is included for orientation only. Confirm the current position with your regulator before you sell a ticket.

Raffles are regulated as a form of lottery almost everywhere. This workbook gives you the regulator to check and the questions to answer for each major market, plus a record sheet so you can show what you confirmed, who told you, and when.

Work through the universal checklist first, then your own country page, then log your answers. Anything in [square brackets] is for you to complete.

You'll Find

1. **The universal checklist, with space to record your answers**
2. **A page each for Australia, New Zealand and the UK**
3. **A page each for the US, and for Canada, Ireland and the EU**
4. **What your platform needs to support**
5. **A compliance record sheet**
6. **A final gate to clear before you open sales**

Three Things That Catch People Out

✓ **The permit must predate the first sale.** Not the draw. Selling before your authorisation is issued is the most common and most avoidable breach.

✓ **Online and cross-border sales are separate permissions.** Being allowed to run a raffle does not automatically mean you may sell online, or sell to the next state or country.

✓ **The conditions matter as much as the permit.** Ticket caps, per-person limits, required wording and draw method are usually written into the authorisation itself.

CHECKLIST

The Universal Checklist

Wherever you are, confirm all nine before launch, and write down where each answer came from.

What to confirm	Done	Source or reference	Date
1. Our organisation is eligible to run a raffle	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
2. Whether our size needs a permit, licence or registration	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
3. That the authorisation is issued before ticket sales start	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
4. Where tickets may legally be sold, and whether online is permitted	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
5. Minimum purchase age, and that it is stated in our terms	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
6. Rules on pricing, bundles and maximum tickets per person	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
7. What must appear on the ticket or campaign page	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
8. How the draw must be conducted and results published	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
9. What records we must keep, and for how long	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Item seven usually means price, draw date, permit number and total tickets, but the exact wording is set by your regulator and several jurisdictions specify it in detail.

AUSTRALIA

Australia

Raffles are regulated at state and territory level, so the rules depend on where your organisation is based and where you sell. The common pattern is that small raffles drawn at a single event are usually permit-free, larger raffles require a permit or authority above prize-value thresholds that differ by state, and online sales are generally permitted but often limited to residents of states where your raffle is authorised.

Who Regulates It

NSW Fair Trading, the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission, Queensland's Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation, and their counterparts in every other state and territory.

What to Check

- ☐ Your state regulator's threshold for needing a permit, based on total prize value or gross proceeds
- ☐ Whether your permit covers interstate ticket sales, before you promote nationally
- ☐ Ticket information requirements, which several states specify in detail
- ☐ Record-keeping obligations, and for larger raffles any audit or return requirement
- ☐ Which states you are authorised to sell into, and that your campaign is restricted to match

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand

Raffles fall under the Gambling Act 2003, administered by the Department of Internal Affairs, with three classes based on size. Raffles above the smallest class must be run by a society, and all proceeds must benefit the community.

Who Regulates It

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA).

For orientation only, confirm current figures with the regulator: as stated at the time of writing, no licence is required where total prize value for a session is $5,000 or less and turnover is $25,000 or less. Above $5,000 in prizes, your organisation must be a society and hold a Class 3 licence from the DIA. Licensed Class 3 raffles may be run fully online, a rule made permanent from November 2024, and Class 3 licence holders may use a third-party platform to issue tickets and manage payments provided no commission is paid on those services.

What to Check

- ☐ Which class your raffle falls into, based on prize value and turnover
- ☐ Class 3 licence obtained from the DIA before tickets are printed or sold
- ☐ Ticket numbering and information requirements
- ☐ Authorised purposes rules, for how proceeds are applied
- ☐ That any platform arrangement matches the no-commission condition on your class

UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom

Fundraising raffles are regulated under the Gambling Act 2005 as society lotteries. Which category you fall into decides whether you register with your council, hold a Gambling Commission licence, or are exempt altogether.

Who Regulates It

Your local licensing authority for small society lotteries, and the Gambling Commission for large society lotteries.

> ***For orientation only, confirm current figures with the regulator:*** as stated at the time of writing, a small society lottery, where tickets for a single draw total £20,000 or less and the society's annual aggregate is £250,000 or less, does not need a Gambling Commission licence but must register with the local licensing authority where the society's principal office sits. At least 20% of proceeds must go to the society's purposes. Above those thresholds you are a large society lottery and need a Commission licence. Incidental lotteries held entirely at a single event, with no rollover and tickets sold and drawn at the event, are exempt from registration.

What to Check

- ☐ Whether your raffle is incidental, small society or large society
- ☐ Registration in place before any advance ticket sales begin
- ☐ The post-draw return submitted to your licensing authority within three months
- ☐ The minimum share of proceeds applied to your cause
- ☐ That your ticket and campaign page carry the required information

UNITED STATES

United States

Raffle law is state by state, and the spread is wide. Most states permit nonprofit raffles with registration or a licence, a few restrict them tightly, and online ticket sales are allowed in some states and prohibited in others. Eligibility usually requires recognised nonprofit status.

Who Regulates It

Typically the state attorney general, a gaming commission, or a local licensing body. Some states layer county or city requirements on top.

> ***For orientation only, confirm current figures with the regulator:*** federal tax rules add a layer. Significant prizes can trigger IRS reporting and withholding obligations for the organisation, and raffle ticket purchases are not tax-deductible contributions. Confirm thresholds with your accountant.

What to Check

- ☐ Your state's registration or licence requirement, and its eligibility rules
- ☐ Whether online sales are permitted in your state, before you sell digitally
- ☐ Whether sales to residents of other states are allowed
- ☐ Prize reporting and withholding thresholds, checked with your accountant
- ☐ Local county or city requirements, where your state layers them on
- ☐ That your receipts and messaging do not describe ticket purchases as deductible donations

Canada, Ireland and the EU

Canada licenses raffles provincially. Ireland operates charitable lotteries under licence or permit depending on size. Across the EU more broadly, lottery regulation is national, and several countries reserve lotteries to state operators with narrow charity exemptions.

Who Regulates It

In Canada, your provincial regulator, or your municipality for smaller raffles. Ontario's Alcohol and Gaming Commission oversees charitable gaming including electronic raffles. In Ireland, the gambling regulator established under the Gambling Regulation Act. Across the EU, the national regulator in each country you sell into.

> ***For orientation only, confirm current figures with the regulator:*** electronic and online raffle sales are permitted in several Canadian provinces under specific technical rules. Never assume a raffle that is routine in one EU country is lawful in a neighbouring one.

What to Check

- ☐ Your provincial regulator's licence classes, and where your prize value places you
- ☐ Whether electronic or online sales are approved in your province, and on what conditions
- ☐ Municipal licensing requirements for smaller raffles
- ☐ Reporting obligations after the draw
- ☐ In Ireland, whether your size needs a licence or a permit
- ☐ The national regulator in every EU country before any cross-border promotion

YOUR TOOLS

What Your Platform Needs to Support

Compliance is mostly about control and records. Whatever platform you use, these are the capabilities your permit conditions are most likely to depend on. Check them before you commit, not after your authorisation arrives.

- ☐ Individually numbered tickets, issued automatically to every buyer
- ☐ A random draw method you can describe accurately to a regulator
- ☐ Winners recorded at the moment of the draw, not reconstructed afterwards
- ☐ A winners and tickets report that gives you an audit trail
- ☐ A cap on total tickets, so you can match an authorised limit
- ☐ Per-person purchase limits, where your conditions impose them
- ☐ Control over where you sell, so you stay inside the states or countries you are authorised for
- ☐ Room on the campaign page for your permit number and any required wording
- ☐ Records you can export and keep for the retention period you are given

KEEP THE RECEIPTS

Your Compliance Record

Write down what you asked, who answered, and when. If anything is ever queried, this page is the difference between a conversation and a problem.

What we asked	Who answered	Their answer	Reference	Date
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Keep the permit itself, its conditions, and any correspondence with the regulator together with this sheet, for whatever retentin period applies to you.

FINAL GATE

Before You Open Sales

- ☐ Permit, licence or registration number in hand, dated before our first sale
- ☐ Permit conditions read in full, and the campaign configured to match them
- ☐ Ticket cap and per-person limits set to match those conditions
- ☐ Price, draw date, permit number and total tickets shown where required
- ☐ Minimum purchase age stated in our terms
- ☐ Sales restricted to the states or countries we are authorised for
- ☐ Draw method matches what the regulator requires
- ☐ Record-keeping plan agreed, with a retention period
- ☐ Post-draw return or reporting obligation diarised

Records You Can Show a Regulator

Compliance is mostly control and records, and a digital raffle concentrates both into one place:

- ✓ Digital tickets delivered instantly via email or SMS, individually issued
- ✓ A secure random draw system, with winners notified instantly by email or SMS
- ✓ A direct link and QR code for every raffle
- ✓ No app download needed for your supporters
- ✓ Funds go straight to your own account. GalaBid never touches them

Real fundraising experts, not chatbots. Trusted by fundraisers since 2011.

GET STARTED →

SEE PRICING FOR YOUR REGION →