



*United States Attorney
District of New Jersey*

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JAMAICAN MAN CHARGED IN LOTTERY FRAUD SCHEME

NEWARK, N.J. – A Jamaican man was charged today with defrauding residents of the United States and Canada by allegedly tricking them into believing they had won multimillion-dollar lotteries and sweepstakes, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Ricardo Reid, 30, of Jamaica, West Indies, was indicted by a federal grand jury on one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. He will be arraigned at a date to be determined.

According to the indictment:

Reid and others would target their victims by purchasing client lists of elderly and vulnerable individuals from brokers specializing in such information. Reid and his conspirators would initiate contact with the victims by telephone calls from Jamaica and falsely represent themselves to be lottery officials, bankers, or IRS agents.

Reid and his conspirators would then falsely inform the victims that they had won millions of dollars in a lottery or sweepstakes, but in order to redeem these winnings, they had to pay registration and/or other fees and taxes. Reid and his conspirators would direct the victims to pay the bogus fees using several methods, including mailing cash or money orders to other victims or to other members of the conspiracy in the United States. The money was then either smuggled to Jamaica or deposited into United States bank accounts and withdrawn from ATMs located in Jamaica. In other instances, the victims were directed to either wire the bogus fees through Western Union or Money Gram directly to Jamaica.

Reid and his conspirators would generally direct the victims to make repeated payments of fees until either the victim's funds were depleted or, after realizing they had been scammed, the victims refused to make additional payments. At times, Reid and his conspirators induced and caused the victims to liquidate assets in order to pay the bogus fees.

Reid and his conspirators would conceal their identities using various methods, including aliases like "Robert Gates," "Mr. Bogohazian," "Damien Boswell," "Mr. Washington," and "Mark Anderson," and the use of call forwarding and Magic Jack to make and receive calls while masking their phone number and location.

The alleged victims include an 88-year-old resident of Arkansas who lost \$110,932; a 57-year-old New Jersey resident who lost \$249,394; a 76-year-old Canadian resident who lost \$71,919; and a 74-year-old resident of Puerto Rico, who lost \$64,433.

The conspiracy count with which Reid is charged carries maximum punishment of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Terence Opiola in Newark; and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Acting Postal Inspector in Charge James Ball, with the investigation leading to today's indictment.

The USPIS is warning older Americans and caregivers to beware foreign lottery or sweepstakes schemes. No legitimate sweepstakes or lottery will ask for fees or taxes to be paid in order to claim a prize. Anyone contacted to play a foreign lottery or sweepstakes should follow these tips:

- Don't give out personal or financial information to anyone over the Internet or phone;
- Never wire or send money to anyone, anywhere who says you've won a foreign lottery or sweepstakes;
- Don't be pressured into making an immediate decision;
- Never purchase anything until you get all the information in writing.
- Visit deliveringtrust.com for helpful information on protection from fraud.

Mail fraud can be reported online at: www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov or by phone at 1-877-876-2455.

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Defense counsel: K. Anthony Thomas Esq. Assistant Federal Public Defender, Newark

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA : Hon.
v. : Crim. No.
RICARDO REID : 18 U.S.C. § 1349

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury in and for the District of New Jersey, sitting at Newark, charges:

1. At all times relevant to this Indictment, the defendant Ricardo Reid (“defendant Reid”) was a resident of Jamaica, West Indies.

Conspiracy to Defraud

2. From in or about 2011, through in or about February 2016, in Essex County, in the District of New Jersey, and elsewhere, the defendant,

RICARDO REID,

did knowingly and intentionally conspire and agree with others to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud, and to obtain money and property by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and, for the purpose of executing such scheme and artifice to defraud, to use the United States mails, private and commercial carriers, and wire communications in interstate and foreign commerce, contrary to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1341 and 1343.

Object of the Conspiracy

3. It was the object of the conspiracy for defendant REID and his co-conspirators to enrich themselves by obtaining money from elderly and vulnerable individuals in the United States and Canada, through a scheme to trick these victims into believing they had won millions of dollars in a lottery or sweepstakes.

Means and Methods of the Conspiracy

4. It was part of the conspiracy that defendant REID and his co-conspirators would purchase "client lists" of elderly and vulnerable individuals (the "Elderly Victims") from brokers specializing in such information.

5. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant REID and his co-conspirators would initiate contact with the Elderly Victims by telephone calls from Jamaica and falsely represent themselves to be lottery officials, bankers, or Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") agents.

6. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant REID and his co-conspirators would then falsely inform the Elderly Victims that they had won millions of dollars in a lottery or sweepstakes, but that in order to redeem these winnings, they had to pay registration and/or other fees and taxes (the "Bogus Lottery Fees").

7. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant REID and his coconspirators would direct the Elderly Victims to pay the Bogus Lottery Fees using several methods, for ultimate transfer to Jamaica, including mailing cash or money orders to other Elderly Victims or to other members of the conspiracy

in the United States, where it was then either smuggled to Jamaica or deposited into United States bank accounts and withdrawn from ATMs located in Jamaica. In other instances, the Elderly Victims were directed either to wire Bogus Lottery Fees to bank accounts held by other Elderly Victims or other co-conspirators, or to wire funds using Western Union or Money Gram directly to Jamaica.

8. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant REID and his co-conspirators would generally direct the Elderly Victims to make repeated payments of Bogus Lottery Fees until either the Elderly Victim's funds were depleted or, after realizing they had been scammed, the Elderly Victims refused to make additional payments. At times, defendant REID and his coconspirators induced and caused the Elderly Victims to incur debt in order to pay the Bogus Lottery Fees.

9. It was further part of the conspiracy that defendant REID would conceal his identity using various methods, including the use of aliases including "Robert Gates," "Mr. Bogohazian," and "Damien Boswel," and the use of call forwarding and Magic Jack, a device that conceals the identity and location of the caller.

10. To effect the object of the conspiracy, the following acts, among others, were taken or caused:

a. Between in or around June 2014 and in or around April 2015, defendant REID induced Victim 1, an 88-year-old resident of Arkansas,

to wire and mail a total of approximately \$110,932.35 in Bogus Lottery Fees to various individuals and locations, as directed by defendant REID.

b. Between in or around July 2012 and in or around November 2014, defendant REID induced Victim 2, a 57-year-old resident of New Jersey, wired and mailed a total of approximately \$249,394.03 in Bogus Lottery Fees to various individuals and locations, as directed by defendant REID.

c. Between in or around November 2011 and in or around March 2015, defendant REID induced Victim 3, a 76-year-old resident of Canada, wired a total of approximately \$71,919.88 in Bogus Lottery Fees to various individuals and locations, as directed by defendant REID.

d. Between in or around March 2015, and in or around December 2015, defendant REID induced Victim 4, a 74-year-old resident of Puerto Rico, wired a total of approximately \$64,433.52 in Bogus Lottery Fees to various individuals and locations, as directed by defendant REID.

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349.

A TRUE BILL

FOREPERSON



PAUL J. FISHMAN
United States Attorney

**United States District Court
District of New Jersey**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
v.
RICARDO REID**

INDICTMENT FOR

18 U.S.C. § 1349

A True Bill,

Foreperson

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