

CALGARY HERALD

Lotto winner misses deadline for Stampede Showband 50/50, loses out on over \$125,000

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Curtis Geiger holds a screenshot of his winning Stampede 50-50 ticket number in Calgary on Thursday, August 13, 2026. He is in a possible dispute with the Stampede because of the deadline to claim the winnings.

Winning a lottery is a dream for millions of people.

That sliver of hope has driven Curtis Geiger to buy raffle tickets for 35 years — including this summer when he actually held the winning slip.

But the ecstasy soon turned to despair after the Calgary Stampede told him he was too late in claiming the prize of its Showband 50/50 draw, worth \$125,150. The deadline he was told was 48 hours from the time the winning ticket was

The deadline, he was told, was 48 hours from the time the winning ticket was announced, a rule he says is too restrictive.

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Geiger, a plant manager for a beverage manufacturing company, spent \$100 on tickets at the Stampede on July 11. Soon after, he left for a planned vacation in Greece and forgot about the draw. On Aug. 9, 30 days after the winner was announced, he found his ticket and checked online.

"I'm reading the number and I'm looking at my ticket, and I'm kind of like, holy cow," Geiger said.

He was so overwhelmed that he asked his colleagues to validate his ticket number against the winner.

"We all got pretty excited, and I'm like, ah, it's too good to be true," Geiger said.

Several hours later, he received a response from the Stampede that the window for collecting the prize had passed.

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"You go from a high to an extreme low, and disappointment and frustrated," he said.





Curtis Geiger with his Stampede 50/50 ticket that was not claimed in time.

The Stampede said in an emailed statement that its 50/50 draw is conducted under a lottery licence issued by Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) and "in accordance with the approved rules of the lottery.

"Under those rules, winning ticket-holders have 48 hours following the applicable draw to contact Calgary Stampede Lotteries to claim their prize. The 48-hour claim period is outlined in the publicly available 50/50 rules and FAQs," a spokesperson wrote.

"We understand this is a disappointing situation for the individual involved. However, Calgary Stampede Lotteries is required to administer the lottery consistently and in accordance with the approved rules," the email reads. "In this instance, the winning ticket-holder contacted Calgary Stampede Lotteries after the 48-hour claim period had expired and the prize therefore could not be awarded."

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The spokesperson said the unclaimed prize money will go back to the organization and Showband.

Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis told Postmedia that under its terms and conditions, licensed charities have between 48 hours and 30 days to award prizes to their claimants, and the specific time period is "up to the discretion of the licensee."

Claim deadlines vary between lotteries. The Stampede gives winners of the Rotary Dream Home 90 days to claim the reward. Recipients of the [Edmonton Oilers 50/50](#) lotto have four days to redeem their winnings, while the [Calgary](#)

[Oilers](#) 50/50 lotto have four days to redeem their winnings, while the [Calgary Flames](#) give 50/50 winners 30 days.

The Stampede spokesperson said the lottery has a shorter window because it's a daily draw that runs the length of the festival.

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Geiger, who tried collecting the money on Day 30, said the 48-hour rule is too restrictive and is not transparent.

The condition wasn't noted on the ticket. On the Calgary's Stampede Lotteries website, the rule states, the prize "may" be claimed within 48 hours of the applicable draw.

Meanwhile, the organization's [official FAQ page](#) doesn't detail the deadline. [A separate web page that isn't on its official website](#) states, "The winning ticket-holder will have 48 hours to contact Stampede lotteries to claim the prize."

"Some people don't even have the internet," Geiger said. "If this was my mom . . . she'd buy a ticket, and by the time she'd reach out and find internet access, she would miss it, right?" Geiger said.

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Sancia Pinto, a civil litigation lawyer in Toronto and partner at Pinto Shekib, said Geiger might have a case, especially if the time window wasn't transparently communicated at the time of the purchase.

"There may be a legitimate issue as to whether the winner had adequate notice of that condition, and that's important," Pinto said.

"You're a layperson. You're not a lawyer. You're not a sophisticated party. And even if you are, you're not a lawyer. You're not thinking of anything. The ticket itself doesn't have anything on it. It requires him to go on some website. How would he even have noticed that he has to do this in 48 hours?"

Pinto said the Stampede could face an argument that the ambiguity should not

operate against the consumer.

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"However, whether that argument succeeds will depend on the complete terms, how they were displayed and the circumstances surrounding the purchase and notification of the winning ticket," she added.

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