

# STATE OF NEBRASKA

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Dave Heineman  
Governor

## DEPARTMENT OF BANKING AND FINANCE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Sweepstakes Scam Hits Nebraska

A financial scam, reported in Colorado, Wyoming, Nevada and Texas, is now targeting Nebraskans according to a Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance Securities Bureau investigation.

"The Department first became aware of this scam from a report by a University of Nebraska Lincoln student. He received a letter marked 'absolutely confidential' from the Las Vegas Nevada Actionable Award Program informing him he had won \$3,341,006 in a sweepstakes. He was notified that he was 'officially sworn to secrecy' about the winnings and needed to send \$20 to receive his sweepstakes award," said Bureau Securities Analyst Jerry McFarland.

The Department has received other complaints about the scheme which operates out of Las Vegas under the company name Lapham, Vargas & Cornell. The initial contact described above is typically followed by a second letter requesting the Nebraskan fill out an official looking, yet bogus, form W-915.

This "form" serves as a vehicle for theft of confidential information, and individuals who succumb to this "too good to be true" scam will notice money is soon withdrawn from accounts that they have given information on. "I spoke with one person who discovered his personal checking account had been depleted on three separate occasions for the amounts of \$199.99, \$99.99 and \$90," said McFarland.

The Department reminds Nebraskans to never give confidential information to anyone and asks that they call toll free (877)471-3445 to report suspicious contacts.

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