



Seeking Second-Hand Bears/Packers Tickets? Be Cautious.

Release Date: November 24, 2015

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MADISON – With the rival Bears next on the schedule, some Packers fans may be scrambling to secure last-minute tickets to the Thanksgiving Day game. But use caution in your search – the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has received reports of online ticket scams for other games this year, and the combination of a rivalry game being held on a holiday could drive con artists to post even more fake ticket listings.

“Any time the Bears come to town there is big demand for tickets, and scammers know that this creates an opportunity to rip off unsuspecting fans,” said Frank Frassetto, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. “Buy tickets in person from businesses or people that you know and trust and be skeptical of too-good-to-be-true deals or requests to pay by wire transfer or pre-paid debit card.”

DATCP recently received two similar ticket fraud complaints involving Craigslist postings for the Rams and Lions games. One of the complainants paid \$500 for tickets but received nothing in return. She was given step-by-step instructions by the seller on how to make the payment:

- He told her to expect an emailed invoice from Ticketmaster.
- After she received what appeared to be a legitimate invoice, she was instructed to pay with a “paypal Mycash card” that she could purchase from a local pharmacy.
- She loaded the card with cash and emailed the code on the card to ticketmaster_@representative.com.
- The funds were drained from the card and she never heard from the seller again.

DATCP offers these tips to avoid becoming a victim of ticket fraud:

- Try to deal with "official" sources for tickets such as the NFL Ticket Exchange at NFL.com or those that are members of the National Association of Ticket Brokers. These businesses carefully screen ticket offers and take other measures to protect consumers from fraud.
- Legitimate NFL tickets are typically printed on thick, heavy paper with barcodes, holograms and raised ink and may also include heat sensitive logos that disappear with the touch of a thumb.
- If you are buying from a third-party dealer, ask the seller to e-mail or fax you a copy of the actual tickets before making a payment. Fake tickets may include misspellings, have low-resolution graphics and be short on details about the event. Make sure the ticket information includes the correct date, time, location and seating details.
- Use a credit card rather than cash, check or debit card to purchase tickets since it may provide some protection if you do not receive the tickets. However, do not give out your credit card number if you question the legitimacy of the seller.
- If you plan to buy tickets from an online classified ad, ask to meet the seller in person at a police station. If the seller refuses, it is likely a scam.

For additional information, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at <http://datcp.wisconsin.gov>, send an e-mail to datcp@wisconsin.gov or call the Consumer Information Hotline at 1-800-422-7128.

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