

## ***JIM HOGG COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE***

### **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC:**

**Our office has received information concerning illegal gambling activity occurring in Jim Hogg County, using Facebook and other social media, including illegal raffles, loterias and pyramid schemes.**

**We have received reports of individuals operating raffles for profit and not for a qualified charity. This involves individuals selling tickets for a chance to win a cash prize. For example, a person may sell \$10 chances to win a \$1000 prize. If the person sells 500 tickets, the winner may win \$1000, but the organizer of the raffle makes a \$4000 profit.**

**This type of gambling is considered an "illegal lottery" under Chapter 47 of the Texas Penal Code. The person or persons organizing the raffle can be charged with Gambling Promotion, a Class A Misdemeanor, which carries a punishment up to 6 months in jail, plus a \$4000 fine.**

**The persons buying the raffle tickets may also be charged with Gambling, a Class C Misdemeanor, carrying a punishment up to a \$500 fine.**

**In addition, all proceeds gained from this type of illegal gambling, including any winnings or profits, may be seized and forfeited upon conviction.**

**There is an exception which allows raffles to be conducted for charitable purposes only. However, these raffles have to be conducted by "qualified organizations", such as religious societies, volunteer fire departments and certain qualified Non-Profit organizations who have obtained an exemption under IRS Section 501(c). and all the proceeds must be spent for charitable purposes.**

**If you feel that your organization qualifies for this exemption, before you proceed, please consult Chapter 2002 of the Texas Occupations Code, or contact the County Attorney's Office, for more information.**

**While we do not want to discourage legitimate raffles for charitable purposes, our office will begin working with law enforcement to investigate and prosecute individuals involved in this type of illegal gambling.**

**Rodolfo V. Gutierrez  
County Attorney**