



---

## **Consumer Alert – Beware Fake Publisher’s Clearinghouse Award Letters**

**BALTIMORE, MD (April 26, 2021)** – The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division has been notified about a fraudulent “Publisher’s Clearing House” (PCH) letter that claims the recipient has won an award of a million dollars, or more, from a random drawing of a serial number called the 2021 Mega Prize Payout. The letter claims that the recipient has been approved for a lump sum payment.

At the top of the scam letter, “Payment of Winnings and Final Notice” is typed in bold, uppercase letters, and just under this is a Reference Number. The letter advises the recipient to contact a “claims agent,” and to keep the award confidential until payment has been made to the recipient’s account. At the bottom of the letter is a photocopied signature and picture of PHC’s Executive Vice President Deborah Holland.

This letter contains several red flags that it is a scam:

- It asks the recipient to act quickly and confidentially to obtain a prize.
- It contains awkward phrases and grammatical errors
- The signature and photo at the bottom of the letter are poorly reproduced photocopies.

Always be wary of unsolicited “award” letters, emails, text messages, or other forms of communication, especially if you didn’t enter any contests, sweepstakes, or lotteries.

If you receive this letter, report it to our Consumer Protection Division at [consumer@oag.state.md.us](mailto:consumer@oag.state.md.us). Do not call any phone numbers listed on the letter.

If you suspect you have been a victim of this scam, call or email our Identity Theft Unit at 410-576- 6491 or [idtheft@oag.state.md.us](mailto:idtheft@oag.state.md.us) to learn how to protect your identity and financial information.