

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

In the Matter of)	
Jocelyn Fant)	Administrative
)	Order #25-015

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on October 1, 2025. It concerns a recommendation by the Board’s General Counsel that the Board take civil enforcement action against Jocelyn Fant based on stipulated facts concerning her having inadvertently voted a mail ballot issued to another voter. Chairman Gary Thompson and Board member Karyn Greenfield presided over the hearing. Ms. Fant, and her attorneys, William Sokolove and Heather Finstuen, and the Board’s General Counsel, Terri Stroud, were also present.

Background

As a result of a Voter Participation Project report issued by the Election Registration Information Center (“ERIC report”), the Board’s Office of General Counsel (“OGC”) became aware of evidence that ballots were cast in the same voter’s name in the D.C. 2024 General Election (“GE”) and in the 2024 GE in Colorado.¹ Based on the ERIC report findings, Board staff checked the ballot return envelope for the ballot that had been cast by mail in D.C. and saw that the signature on that envelope was reasonably decipherable as a name that was different from the printed name just below the signature of the voter to whom the ballot was issued.

¹ Such evidence of voting twice presented the prospect of, *inter alia*, violations of 52 (“Voting and Elections”) U.S. Code § 10307 (“Prohibited Acts”).

In response to this information, OGC launched an investigation into the 2024 D.C. GE ballot that was cast by someone other than the voter to whom it was issued. OGC was able to ascertain that the signature on the ballot return envelope was for Jocelyn Fant and sent her notice of a pre-hearing conference in the matter. Through her counsel, Ms. Fant promptly contacted the Office of General Counsel (“OGC”) and fully cooperated with the ensuing investigation. She appeared at the pre-hearing conference held on August 27, 2025, and explained that she resided at the address to which the ballot in question was sent in October 2024. Ms. Fant, who resided alone at the aforementioned address, anticipated receiving an election ballot issued in her own name. Not noticing that the ballot delivered was instead addressed to another voter, Ms. Fant inadvertently completed and cast the ballot. She signed her own name on the signature line of the ballot return envelope, entered the date of October 16, 2024, and subsequently mailed the ballot to the Board.

The OGC’s investigation confirmed that a District of Columbia 2024 General Election ballot was sent to Ms. Fant’s address in the name of another voter, a former resident of that address who remained a registered voter in the District and had not canceled their voter registration upon relocating to Colorado.

Following discussions at the pre-hearing conference, Ms. Fant was sent a stipulated agreement in the matter and she later executed that agreement. By that stipulation, Ms. Fant acknowledged that the signature on the signature line appearing above another person’s pre-printed name on the D.C. 2024 GE ballot return envelope was her signature, and she stipulated to the admission into evidence of the scanned image of that ballot return envelope. Ms. Fant agreed in the stipulation that she inadvertently voted a D.C. 2024 GE ballot that was issued to another voter.²

² The General Counsel’s investigation did not reveal any evidence that a D.C. 2024 General Election ballot that had been issued to Ms. Fant had been voted. Accordingly, there is no evidence here of double voting in D.C.

She admitted that she failed to exercise care and caution in completing and returning the ballot to the Board. Ms. Fant further stipulated that she did not intend to vote a ballot issued to another voter.

At the hearing before the Board, the General Counsel requested that the OGC attorney who investigated the matter state the facts of the case. The OGC attorney reiterated the facts described above and that Ms. Fant had stipulated that she had inadvertently voted the ballot of another in the 2024 GE. The attorney asked that the stipulation and supporting documents be accepted into the record and the Board Chair granted that request.

Ms. Fant was offered an opportunity to speak and through Counsel stated that her actions were entirely inadvertent as it was her intention to submit her own ballot that she received at her home address, not actually recognizing that she had actually received the ballot in the name of another. With this presentation of case and the evidence, the General Counsel made a recommendation that a civil fine of \$100.00 be imposed on Ms. Fant for inadvertently voting another's ballot.

After hearing from the General Counsel and her staff, and considering Ms. Fant's statement, the Board Chair made a motion that a civil fine of \$100.00 be imposed on Ms. Fant for her voting another person's ballot. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion

The election laws provide that it is a crime to “make any false representations as to the person's qualifications for . . . voting” or to fraudulently cast a ballot.³ The Board can, upon the

³ See D.C. Code § 1–1001.14(a) and § 1–1001.14(a-1)(1)(D), respectively. The penalty for violating either of those provisions is a fine up to a \$10,000 and/or a term of incarceration of up to 5 years. In addition, D.C. Official Code § 22-2405(b) criminalizes willfully making false statements to D.C. government entities. The penalty for that violation is a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment of not more than 180 days, or both.

General Counsel’s recommendation, initiate enforcement with respect to criminal matters by referral to the U.S. Department of Justice and/or to the Attorney General for the District of Columbia.⁴ We may also impose civil fines of up to \$2,000 for each election law violation upon the recommendation of the General Counsel.⁵ Our task, therefore, is to determine whether there is sufficient proof of an attempt to vote falsely or fraudulently in violation of the election laws and, if so, to determine the appropriate enforcement action.

In this matter, the facts are undisputed. Ms. Fant has admitted that, contrary to the qualifications for voting specified in the instructions provided with the ballot, she signed a name on the ballot return envelope signature line that was not the “[s]ignature of voter to whom this ballot was sent[.]” She has acknowledged facts showing that she cast a ballot issued to another party.

That said, Ms. Fant has stipulated that her conduct was inadvertent and that she did not intend to vote a ballot that was issued to another voter. Ms. Fant’s claim is supported by the fact that she did not sign the name of the intended recipient of the ballot or otherwise attempt to forge the name of the voter. Instead, the ballot return envelope evidence shows a hand-written signature that is reasonably decipherable as a name that differs considerably from the type-printed voter name appearing immediately below it, a fact which reasonably suggests Ms. Fant attempted to vote another’s ballot by mistake. Because Ms. Fant did not vote in her own name in the D.C. 2024 GE, Ms. Fant’s actions did not result in her casting more than one ballot. Thus, there is no evidence of anything nefarious here. Rather, the evidence is that, because Ms. Fant did not exercise care

⁴ See D.C. Code § 1–1001.18(a)-(b). Civil penalties for voter fraud may be imposed in addition to criminal ones. See D.C. Code § 1–1001.14 (c) (“The provisions of this section shall be supplemental to, and not in derogation of, any penalties under other laws of the District of Columbia.”).

⁵ *Id.* (authorizing such civil penalty for a violation of “any provision” of the election laws). See also D.C. Code § 1–1001.05(a)(16) (authorizing the Board to “[p]erform such other duties as are imposed upon it by this subchapter”).

and caution in voting the ballot, she unintentionally completed and returned another voter's ballot to the Board.

Based on the record before us, we decline to find that Ms. Fant had the level of intent required for a criminal conviction. That said, the General Counsel has recommended that a civil penalty be imposed. We concur that Ms. Fant's conduct should have consequences. Under the circumstances, we believe that a fine of \$100.00 is appropriate.

Conclusion

For the reasons indicated above, it is hereby:

ORDERED that the recommendation of the General Counsel is **ACCEPTED**, and that Ms. Fant is directed to pay a civil fine of \$100 by no later than no later than November 1, 2025.⁶

Date: October 2, 2025



Gary Thompson
Chairman
Board of Elections

⁶ **Payment must be made by check or money order made out to the "D.C. Treasurer."** It may be mailed to the attention of the General Counsel at the Board's offices (1015 Half Street, Suite 750, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003) or hand delivered at that address.