

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

In the Matter of)
Lashawn Lopez) Administrative
) Order #26-023

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on April 1, 2026. It concerns a recommendation by the Board’s General Counsel that the Board refer Lashawn Lopez to the D.C. Office of Attorney General (“OAG”) for criminal investigation. Chairman Gary Thompson and Board member Karyn Greenfield presided over the hearing. The Board’s General Counsel, Terri Stroud, was 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 Maryland.¹ In light of the ERIC report findings, Board staff reviewed the signature on the ballot return envelope for the D.C. mail ballot cast in that voter’s name. That signature was reasonably decipherable as a name other than the pre-printed name under the signature line and as a name other than the name of the voter to whom the ballot was issued.

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

Accordingly, OGC commenced an investigation of other voters claiming the same D.C. address as that on 2024 D.C. mail ballot return envelope. That effort revealed that the handwriting on the 2024 D.C. GE mail ballot return envelope matched the handwriting of Lashawn Lopez. In addition, Ms. Lopez's voter file showed that she cast a D.C. ballot in her own name in the 2024 GE.

Based on this evidence, the Board's Office of General Counsel ("OGC") opened an investigation targeted at Ms. Lopez. OGC scheduled a prehearing conference and attempted to notify Ms. Lopez of that proceeding via the email address that was in her voter file. While the email to Ms. Lopez did not bounce back, Ms. Lopez did not appear at the prehearing conference. OGC then sent notice to Ms. Lopez via email and certified mail that her case would be presented to the Board during the Board's regular meeting in March.²

At the Board's March meeting, Ms. Lopez's case was called but she did not appear. Accordingly, the General Counsel advised that her office would seek at the Board's next regular meeting referral of this matter to the OAG.

At the Board's regular meeting on April 1, 2026, Ms. Lopez's case was presented and again she did not come forward. The Board then heard from the General Counsel's Office with respect to the facts of the matter. The General Counsel attorney assigned to the matter explained and requested admission into the record of the evidence that tended to show that Ms. Lopez cast a D.C. ballot issued to another voter in the 2024 GE and also voted in her own name in that election.

Following the presentation of this and other similar enforcement matters, the General Counsel made a recommendation that the matter be referred to the OAG for further investigation and possible prosecution, provided however that her office would delay referral to give Ms. Lopez

² According to USPS tracking information, the letter to Ms. Lopez was delivered to a person at her address.

an opportunity to seek reconsideration.³ The Board Chair made a motion to accept the General Counsel’s recommendation. 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.⁴ In addition, voting twice in the same election can trigger prosecution for violating a number of election laws.⁵ The Board’s enforcement powers with respect to criminal election law matters include referral to the OAG for investigation and prosecution. *See* D.C. Code § 1–1001.18(a)-(b).

The record before us contains sufficient (if not compelling) evidence that Ms. Lopez voted a 2024 GE mail ballot issued to another voter and that Ms. Lopez also voted a ballot issued to her in that same election. This conduct facially violates various election laws.

That said, the capacity of the Board’s OGC to investigate such violations is limited. The OGC has made multiple attempts to contact Ms. Lopez and has been unable to complete its investigation. The statutory power of the Board to refer matters to the OAG suggests that the law is intended to allow the Board to rely on OAG’s investigatory resources in ferreting out election

³ 3 D.C.M.R. 429 sets forth the Board’s rules for seeking reconsideration of an order. Under those rules, reconsideration must be sought by motion within ten days of the order. If that deadline is missed, a party seeking reconsideration would have to ask for leave to file a motion for reconsideration.

⁴ *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.

⁵ *See* 52 U.S. Code § 10307(e) (prohibiting double voting) and D.C. Official Code §1-1001.09(g)(1) (providing that no person shall vote twice in an election) and D.C. Official Code §1-1001.14(a) (penalties for violating D.C. Official Code §1-1001.09(g)(1)). *See also*, with respect to the oath voters take at the time of voting whereby they affirm that they satisfy the qualifications for being a registered voter, including residency requirements, D.C. Code § 1–1001.14(a) (criminalizing “make any false representations as to the person’s qualifications for . . . voting”) and § 1–1001.14(a-1)(1)(D) (criminalizing fraudulently cast a ballot) and 52 U.S. Code § 10307(c) (prohibiting knowingly or willfully giving false residency information for the purpose of establishing eligibility to register or vote in elections to fill federal offices).

fraud. Unless Ms. Lopez cooperates to assist us in resolving this matter, we have little choice other than to refer her for criminal investigation. Before we take that serious step, however, we agree, as suggested by the General Counsel, that the act of referral be delayed until Ms. Lopez has had an opportunity to seek reconsideration of this order.

Conclusion

For the reasons indicated above, it is hereby:

ORDERED that the recommendation of the General Counsel is **ACCEPTED**, and the Board's Office of General Counsel is directed, subject to the lapse of sufficient time for the filing of any accepted motion for reconsideration, to refer Lashawn Lopez to the D.C. Office of Attorney General for further investigation and possible prosecution.

The Board issues this written order today, which is consistent with its oral ruling rendered on April 1, 2026.

Date: April 2, 2026



Gary Thompson
Chairman
Board of Elections