

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

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

**AMENDED MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER**

**Introduction**

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on March 4, April 1, and May 6, 2026. It concerns an enforcement action brought by the Board’s General Counsel against Lashawn Lopez based on ballots that Ms. Lopez cast in the 2024 General Election. Chairman Gary Thompson and Board member Karyn Greenfield presided over the hearing. Ms. Lopez 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 Maryland.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Ms. 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, 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. 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 referral of this matter to the D.C. Attorney General ("OAG") for criminal investigation at the Board's next regular meeting.

At the Board's regular meeting on April 1, 2026, Ms. Lopez's case was presented and again she did not come forward. The case was heard and, based on the evidence that Ms. Lopez voted twice in the 2024 General Election by voting a ballot issued to her and another ballot issued to another individual, the General Counsel recommended 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 an opportunity to seek reconsideration of the recommended referral order. The Board Chair made a motion to accept the General Counsel's recommendation. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously. On April 3, 2026, a written memorandum opinion and order that referred, Ms. Lopez to the OAG for possible criminal enforcement subject to a timely reconsideration request was posted on the Board's website.

Following the Board hearing and issuance of the written order, Ms. Lopez reached out via email to OGC and requested that the assigned attorney call her. OGC promptly telephoned Ms. Lopez and she agreed to a rescheduled prehearing conference. Ms. Lopez fully cooperated in the OGC investigation and ultimately entered into a stipulated agreement whereby she acknowledged unintentionally casting the ballot of another that was mailed to her address in addition to her own ballot. Ms. Lopez also timely submitted a written request for reconsideration of the Board's referral order. She was duly notified that the Board would consider her request for reconsideration and the stipulated agreement at its regular meeting in May.

At that regular meeting on May 6, 2026, OGC presented the facts of the case. The Board Chair then asked the General Counsel for her recommendation. The General Counsel recommended that the Board reconsider its April 1, 2026 order and reverse its decision to refer Ms. Lopez for possible criminal prosecution. The General Counsel further recommended that the Board impose a civil fine of \$150 on Ms. Lopez for her failure to comply with election requirements.<sup>2</sup> The Board Chair made a motion that the General Counsel's recommendation be adopted. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

## **Discussion**

We start with the procedural issue. The Board issued a written referral order in this matter that was dated April 2, 2026. Ms. Lopez filed a written request shortly thereafter for the Board to reconsider its decision. Our regulations at 3 D.C.M.R. § 429 provide that reconsideration can be sought within ten days of a Board order. Since Ms. Lopez timely requested reconsideration and

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<sup>2</sup> Ms. Lopez was present and offered an opportunity to speak but exercised her option to remain silent.

the April order deferred referral for the express purpose of allowing Ms. Lopez to come forward and assist OGC in resolving this matter, we grant her reconsideration request.

With respect to the appropriate remedy for the misconduct at issue, as stated in the April 2, 2026 order, 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.<sup>3</sup> In addition, voting twice in the same election can trigger prosecution for violating a number of election laws.<sup>4</sup> While the Board’s enforcement powers include imposing civil fines for election law violations (*see* D.C. Code § 1–1001.18(a)-(b)), we were unable to entertain that option without Ms. Lopez’s cooperation. As Ms. Lopez has now been contacted and come forward, the exercise of our referral enforcement power is unnecessary

While it is clear based on the evidence before us that Ms. Lopez failed to comply with voting requirements, Ms. Lopez has credibly stated that her actions were inadvertent and that she did not intentionally to vote both her ballot and the ballot of another (the evidence indicates that the other voter was a former resident of Ms. Lopez’s current address) that was mailed to her address. Under these circumstances, we cannot say that there is substantial evidence that Ms. Lopez had the level of intent required for criminal prosecution. Accordingly, we agree that Ms.

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<sup>3</sup> *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.

<sup>4</sup> *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).

Lopez should face no more than a civil fine. We also conclude that the \$150.00 fine amount recommended by the General Counsel is appropriate.

**Conclusion**

For the reasons indicated above, it is hereby:

**ORDERED** that reconsideration of the Board’s prior decision to refer Ms. Lopez to the D.C. Office of Attorney General is hereby **GRANTED**; it is further

**ORDERED** that the revised recommendation of the General Counsel presented at the Board’s May 6, 2026 meeting is **ACCEPTED**, that the Board’s Office of General Counsel **shall not** refer Lashawn Lopez to the D.C. Office of Attorney General for further investigation and possible prosecution, and that Lashawn Lopez shall pay, by no later than June 30, 2026, a \$150.00 civil fine for election law misconduct.<sup>5</sup>

The Board issues this AMENDED written order today, which is consistent with its oral ruling rendered on May 6, 2026.

Date: May 7, 2026



Gary Thompson  
Chairman  
Board of Elections

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<sup>5</sup> **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.