

Couple plead guilty to conspiring to commit voter registration fraud in Minnesota

The state agency that oversees elections previously said no fraudulent ballots were cast in connection with the scheme.

By Sarah Nelson
The Minnesota Star Tribune

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Minnesota Voter Registration Application

Apply online at mvotes.org, or complete lines 1 through 8 of this form. Please print clearly.

Personal Information & Qualification

1. Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		election official use only IP M AB	
2. Will you be at least 18 on or before the next election? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
If you mark "NO" to either of these questions, DO NOT complete this form.			
3. last name or surname	first name	middle name	suffix (Jr., Sr., II, III)
4. address where you live (residence)		apt. number	city zip code
5. if mail cannot be delivered to the address above, provide P.O. Box		city	zip code
6. date of birth (not today's date)	school district (if known)	county where you live	
phone number	email address		
7. mark one box and provide the number that applies to you:			
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a MN-issued driver's license or MN ID card number:		<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a MN-issued driver's license or MN ID card		The last four digits of my Social Security Number are:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a MN-issued driver's license, a MN-issued ID card, or a Social Security Number.		XXX-XX- <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	

A couple pleads guilty to submitting hundreds of fraudulent Minnesota voter registration applications for pay. (State of Minnesota)

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A couple charged in a conspiracy to commit election fraud has pleaded guilty to filling out hundreds of voter applications with fictitious identities that were submitted to county election offices in Minnesota.

Ronnie Williams, 58, of Nevada and formerly of Minnesota, was convicted Tuesday of conspiracy to engage in voter registration fraud in the U.S. District Court in St. Paul. His co-conspirator, Lorraine Lee Combs, 57, pleaded guilty to the same charge late June.

The couple was accused of creating hundreds of voter registration forms filled with fake names, addresses, dates of birth and Social Security numbers from 2021 through 2022. The couple turned in the applications to a foundation seeking to register voters in Minnesota, which paid for the forms. The foundation is not identified in court filings.

Charging documents described one false application sent by Combs in September 2022 under the name "Brad Montly." One month later, Williams sent in a fraudulent application under the name "Harry Johnson."

As part of the work, the couple was required to sign a form certifying that providing false information in the forms carried a felony charge that could lead to a imprisonment of up to five years or a \$10,000 fine, or both.

Sentencing hearings for Combs and Williams have not been scheduled.

A spokesperson for the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office, which oversees elections, previously told the Star Tribune that no fraudulent ballots were cast in the estimated 10 to 15 counties where the couple's applications were submitted during the scheme.

"For more than two years, our office and local election officials have partnered with the FBI on this investigation. Local election officials used the verification tools built into the Minnesota voter registration system and identified inconsistencies on voter registration forms," the office said in a statement.

A fingerprint analysis by the FBI showed the couple's fingerprints on several of the fraudulent applications, court filings said. "Today's guilty plea underscores our commitment to protecting the integrity of the electoral process," acting U.S. Attorney Joe Thompson said. "Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of our democracy. Any attempt to undermine that process through fraud will be investigated and prosecuted. This case sends a clear message – election fraud will not be tolerated in Minnesota."

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Sarah Nelson

REPORTER

Sarah Nelson is a reporter for the Minnesota Star Tribune.

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