

NEWS

Mom was dead but still cast ballot

By **HOWARD PANKRATZ** | The Denver Post

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Winston Keyes apparently believes so much in the right to vote that he voted for his dead mother, investigators said.

Keyes, 44, is accused of sending in a 2005 general-election ballot for his mother, Della Mayo, in October, although she died in July.

According to an arrest warrant, Keyes provided some critical evidence against himself.

In August, Keyes went to the Denver district attorney's office and filed a complaint against the mortuary that hand led his mother's funeral.

He handwrote the complaint on the district attorney's economic-crime-unit form, which was used to eventually link him to the bogus ballot.

Kent Prose, a handwriting expert for the unit, determined by comparing the handwriting on the complaint with the writing on the ballot that it was Keyes who forged his mother's absentee ballot.

Investigators said in court documents that Keyes admitted to signing the absentee ballot and said he often voted for his mother and signed her name to absentee ballots in previous years.

When the election commission first received the ballot, the signature on the absentee-ballot envelope appeared to match the known signature of Mayo. However, during the signature-verification process, it was discovered by the commission staff that Mayo had died earlier in 2005 and her voter status had changed from “active” to “death delete” on Sept. 20.

Prose said in court documents that an examination of the “Della Mayo” signature revealed unusual pen-lifts, called “patching,” and indications of slow line speed, indicating that the signature was simulated to look like Mayo’s. Keyes has been charged with one count of forgery.

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