



Hialeah Woman Arrested for Absentee Ballot Fraud

Woman violated ordinance prohibiting having more than two ballots: Authorities

By Brian Hamacher and Willard Shepard • Published August 2, 2012 • Updated on August 2, 2012 at 8:26 pm





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A week after the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office [confirmed it was investigating allegations of absentee-ballot fraud](#), a Hialeah woman has been arrested for violation of a county ordinance that prohibits having more than two ballots.

Deisy Penton de Cabrera, 56, was arrested Thursday on two counts of violating the ordinance and one count of absentee-ballot fraud, a third-degree felony, according to an arrest warrant.

According to the warrant, detectives with the Public Corruption Investigations Bureau of the Miami-Dade Police Department began surveillance on Cabrera based on a tip on July 24, and spotted her collecting absentee ballots from numerous residences in Hialeah.

The same day, Cabrera was followed to the Miami-Dade Elections Department at 2700 Northwest 87th Avenue in Doral, where she submitted a small stack of absentee ballot request forms, the warrant said.

She was later spotted at a post office putting absentee ballots in a mail service slot, the warrant said. Detectives found a total of 19 ballots in the slot, the warrant said.

The next day, detectives followed Cabrera and another woman to a nursing home where they met with an elderly female resident identified as "Z.G." the warrant said.

Cabrera was seen introducing herself to "Z.G." and told her she was sent by "Z.G.'s" sister to get her signature, the warrant said. The elderly woman didn't respond to any questions from Cabrera and detectives later learned that she is terminally ill and her illnesses have severely affected her mental and physical capacities.

According to the warrant, when detectives reviewed "Z.G.'s" ballot, it had a handwritten note in Spanish above the signature block that said "The lady who is my sister signed this way because she has arthritis...it's hard for her to sign. Thanks."

Detectives followed Cabrera to five other residential locations that appeared to be assisted living

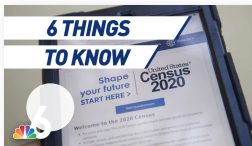


When Cabrera was stopped, she was found to have 12 absentee ballots which were signed, sealed and appeared completed, the warrant said.

The two candidates for mayor weighed in on the alleged fraud Thursday afternoon.

"She does not work for my campaign. I detest this kind of activity, and hope we can get to the bottom of it, and stop it," Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez.

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His challenger, County Commission Chairman Joe Martinez, said, "It's not a crime to know the lady. That wouldn't have been a problem at all. 'Yes, I do know her,' if he did. But if he says he doesn't, OK, then he doesn't. The crime was what she was doing."

The county's election headquarters was bustling Thursday as workers opened absentee ballots. Voters have sent in about 50,000 such ballots so far.

Records showed Cabrera was booked into jail Thursday afternoon and was being held on \$7,000 bond. It was unknown whether she has an attorney.



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