

UP NEXT:
Here's what you need to know to vote early in Iowa

Iowa

BY JASON NOBLE | JNOBLE2@DMREG.COM | 12:01 am CST December 16, 2013

So far, efforts to seek out and prosecute voter fraud cases have yielded five convictions.



The cases represent a range of voting infractions, although there are definite patterns. Three of the cases involve felons whose voting rights had not been restored. All five were resolved with guilty pleas rather than trials — three to misdemeanors, two to felonies — and generally with lesser charges than those initially filed by county attorneys.

Here are those cases:

Beth Ann Gallagher, Delaware County

Beth Ann Gallagher of Dyersville cast an absentee ballot in 2012 on behalf of her daughter, who had recently moved to Minnesota and thought it was too late to register and vote at her new address.

After casting the ballot, however, Gallagher received a text message from the daughter indicating that she had, in fact, been able to vote in Minnesota.



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Upon learning of her role in facilitating her daughter's double voting, Gallagher reported the incident to the Delaware County auditor's office, which ultimately triggered an investigation and criminal charges.

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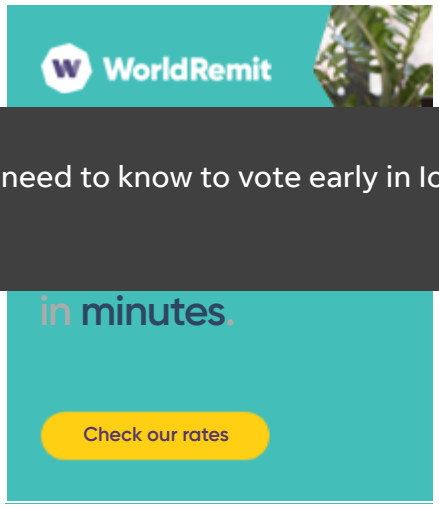
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Gallagher, 52, was charged with — and in July pleaded guilty of — false representation of records or process, a simple misdemeanor. She paid a $147.75 fine.

Terry Hambrick,

Polk County





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A citizen of Bosnia, Murgic, 29, of Clive pleaded guilty of two felonies in Florida in 2007 and 2009.

When confronted in October 2012, Murgic readily admitted to registering and voting. He said he had not read the section of the voter registration form that includes the affirmations of citizenship and criminal records.

But, he added, an election official told him he was eligible despite his citizenship status as long as he didn't vote for president (a race not on the ballot in 2010). The election official later disputed that account when contacted by investigators.

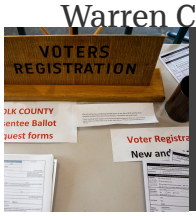
Murgic was charged with felonious election misconduct for registering and voting in the 2010 election and with fraudulent practices, a misdemeanor, for making false statements on his voter registration form.



Ultimately, he pleaded guilty to a lesser misdemeanor election misconduct charge and a trespassing charge, and he was fined about $1,300.

Jason Rawlin,

Warren County



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Under the state's motor-voter program, license applicants are asked if they'd like to register to vote. When an applicant indicates he would like to do so, he's directed to read a sign outlining voter qualifications — including the eligibility restrictions for felons.

When prompted, Rawlin, 38, of Indianola signed his name to the voter application, attesting that he was not a felon.

In an interview with the investigator, Rawlin said he didn't read the sign advising him of his ineligibility because a line had formed behind him at the office and he wanted to get his license as quickly as possible. His attorney, Cami Eslick, said Rawlin was surprised and concerned when he actually received a voter card in the mail. He contacted authorities on his own and never cast a vote.

Although initially charged with felony election misconduct, he ultimately pleaded guilty of fraudulent practices, a misdemeanor. He was fined $750.

Nickie Dean Perkins

Des Moines Register
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On Election Day 2012, Nickie Dean Perkins went to the Marietta-Washington Township polling place in Marshall County, registered to vote and cast a ballot.

Perkins, however, was a felon (convicted in 2010 on a drug charge) whose voting rights had not been restored by the governor.



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Perkins, 54, of Melbourne told investigators he believed his rights had been restored automatically after completing his sentence.

In fact, the probation discharge summary he received after finishing his sentence indicated a recommendation that his citizenship rights be restored, but not an order.

He was charged with two counts of felony election misconduct — one for registering, one for voting — and a count of fraudulent practices. Rather than go to trial, he pleaded guilty to one of the felony charges and received two years of probation.

Eleven other cases identified in probe

Jesus Castorena

Noncitizen registered to vote. Charged with two counts of perjury. Awaiting trial.

Cheri Rupe

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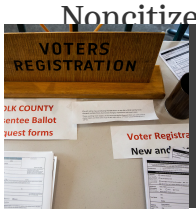
Noncitizen charged with registering to vote and voting in the 2012 election.

Sylvia Rada

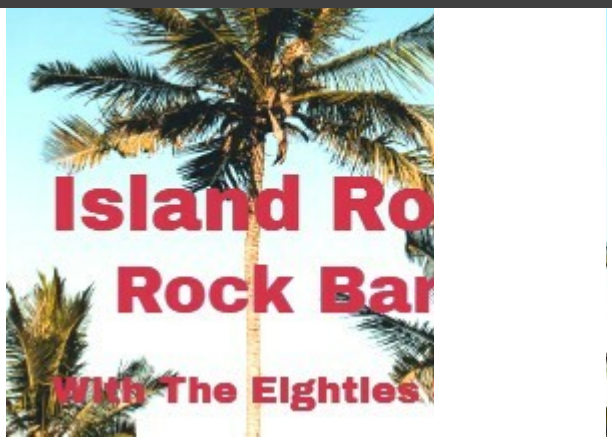
Noncitizen charged with registering to vote and voting in the 2012 election.

Maria Isabel Flores Lopez

Noncitizen registered to vote. Charged with two counts of perjury, one count of election



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Linda Harte-Maxwell

Noncitizen registered to vote. Charged with two counts of election misconduct, one count of fraudulent practices. All charges dismissed.

Albert Harte-Maxwell

Noncitizen registered to vote. Charged with two counts of election misconduct, one count of fraudulent practices. All charges dismissed.

Stacy Brown

Charged with election misconduct and fraudulent practices. Both charges dismissed.

Maria Ayon-Fernandez

Noncitizen registered to vote. Charged with one count of election misconduct and one count of fraudulent practices. Both charges dismissed.

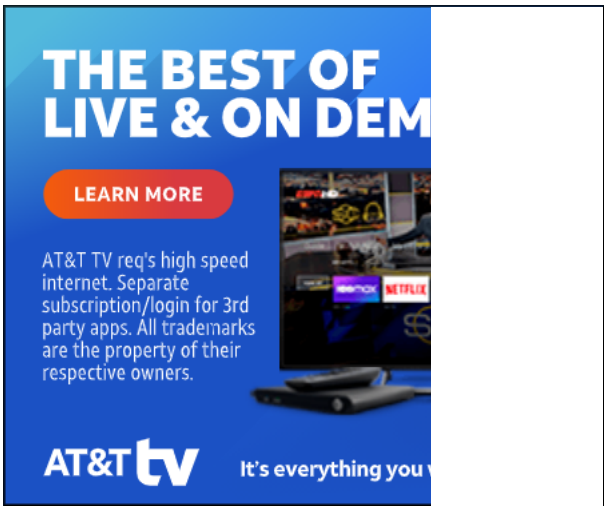
Laurie McCarroll

Identified by secretary of state's office as a noncitizen registered to vote. Possibly fled to Canada. No charges or other case information is on file with Iowa Courts system.

Committing voter fraud was incidental to Terry Hambrick's main objective: stealing his dead brother's identity so that he could obtain a driver's license.



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In the process of obtaining a driver's license under his brother's name, who had died of sudden infant death syndrome in 1991, Hambrick also registered to vote.

His plot unraveled two weeks after that third application, in December 2012, when he was stopped for suspected drunken driving. After his arrest, law enforcement officials deduced that he was in fact Terry Hambrick.

He was booked on four counts of felony perjury and other charges. Ultimately, he pleaded guilty to two of the perjury counts — including one in connection with his voter registration — and identity theft. He's currently serving a 10-year sentence at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility.

Tehvedin Murgic,

Dallas County

Tehvedin Murgic registered to vote and cast a ballot in 2010, despite being a felon and not a U.S. citizen.