

Grand jury indicts two in vote fraud case

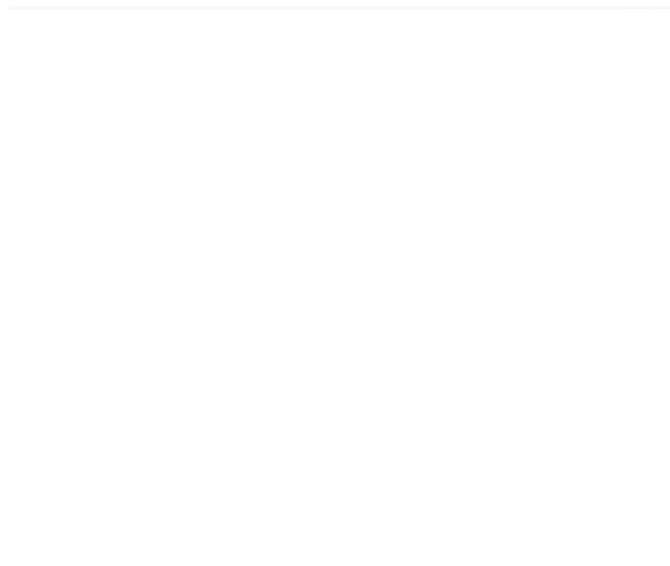
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A woman accused of sending a mail-in ballot for her dead mother and a county commissioner accused of handling other people's ballots have been indicted in separate voter fraud cases, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott announced Friday.

The woman, Melva Kay Ponce of Beeville, was indicted on a felony count of illegal voting after being accused of submitting her mother's ballot during the November general election. The third-degree felony is punishable by up to 10 years in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

Ponce could not be reached for comment Friday.

Johnny Akers, a Hardeman County commissioner, was indicted late Thursday on six counts of election fraud. He was accused of mailing or handling six ballots for people not related to him during an April 2004 runoff and in the November election. The class B misdemeanor is punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine.



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The image shows a screenshot of a website's header and navigation menu. At the top right, there is a small square button with an 'X' icon. Below it, the navigation menu includes links for "Advertising", "Privacy Notice", and "Your California Privacy Rights". A second row of links includes "Internet Based Ads", "Terms of Use", and "Contact Us". Below the navigation menu, there is a video player interface. The video player shows a thumbnail of a person's face, the URL "sculptnation.com/", and a "SKIP AD" button. A progress bar at the bottom of the video player indicates "Ad : (0:36)" with a question mark icon.

Akers also could not be reached Friday.

Tom Kelley, a spokesman for Abbott's office, said the indictments should serve as a warning that voting improprieties are taken seriously in the state.

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