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Pensacola convicted felon arrested for illegally voting in 2020 election

by WEAR staff

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Escambia County Jail

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ESCAMBIA COUNTY, Fla. -- A 41-year-old Pensacola man who is a convicted felon was arrested last week for voting fraud.

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Michael Dewayne Collins Jr. is charged with:

- Fraud - Election Voting by Unqualified Voter
- Perjury - False Swearing of Voter Registration Information (four counts)

The FDLE arrested Collins last Wednesday.

According to court documents, Collins was convicted in 2001 of lewd/lascivious battery on a victim over 12 but under 16 -- a second-degree felony sexual offense. As a result, Collins forfeited his right to vote.

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The court documents state that Collins completed four separate Florida Voter Registration Applications on:

- Aug. 27, 2020
- Sept. 8, 2021
- July 14, 2022
- Oct. 4, 2022

According to documents, on all four applications, Collins stated: "I affirm that I am not a convicted felon, or if I am, my right to vote has been restored." Authorities say the affirmations were false.

The documents state Collins voted in person on Nov. 3, 2020, in Escambia County in the General Election.

The Escambia Supervisor of Elections sent a letter to Collins' address in 2009 telling him he was not eligible to vote. However, Collins said he received a letter from an unknown organization in 2019 stating he could vote.

Collins never petitioned the state to restore his rights.

Collins was released from Escambia County Jail on Thursday on \$12,500 bond.