



Colorado  
Secretary of State  
Wayne W. Williams



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## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### Colorado Secretary of State responds to report about dead voters

DENVER, Sept. 22, 2016 – Colorado Secretary of State Wayne Williams has been working with county clerks since CBS4 informed the office it had uncovered a handful of potential fraudulent votes cast in the names of Coloradans who were dead.

"While vote fraud is rare, it does indeed occur," noted Williams. "Our office is working to ensure all such incidents are prosecuted and that laws and rules are adjusted to make vote fraud as difficult as possible."

CBS4 provided the office with a list of names last month, and aired a story about the investigation tonight. Reporter Brian Maass identified votes cast for four dead Coloradans. District attorneys are investigating for possible prosecution.

The Secretary of State already had made changes that had resulted in each of the deceased voters in question being removed from the voter registration lists. Voters should know that since 2013, the Secretary of State and county election officials have employed new strategies to cancel as many dead voters as possible, leading to a much more complete cancellation program.

Under federal and state law, it's difficult to cancel a voter unless there is an exact match on name, birthdate, and either full address or social security number. Unfortunately, this means not every dead voter can be canceled without extensive research. Secretary Williams will work with legislators to make it easier to cancel dead voters in the future.

In some cases, people die out of state or in another country. In those cases, election officials might not receive word that a registered voter has died.

Every single mail ballot cast in Colorado must have a signature on the return envelope. That signature is matched to a signature on file from the voter (typically a recent voter or DMV transaction). Only when a person's signature is forged or a person fraudulently witnesses a signature could a ballot be counted when it was fraudulently cast.

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