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**Former City of Chicago Employee Sentenced in Vote Fraud**

A former superintendent in the city's Department of Streets and Sanitation was sentenced to 364 days in the Cook County Department of Corrections today. Anish Eapen, 39, was found guilty after on June 24 on multiple counts of vote fraud for attempting to persuade voters in the 50th Ward to vote by absentee ballot in two elections in 2007.

Eapen's conviction on 9 misdemeanor counts of vote fraud, including attempted absentee ballot fraud and attempted mutilation of election materials for attempting to convince voters to use absentee ballots during Chicago elections in February and April 2007, violated the Illinois Election Code. Eapen's co-defendant Armando Ramos, 31, was sentenced to 270 days in the Cook County Department of Corrections after assisting Eapen's unlawful efforts to mislead voters. Ramos was convicted on 20 misdemeanor counts of vote fraud, including attempted absentee ballot fraud and attempted mutilation of election materials.

A joint investigation between the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General and the Cook County State's Attorney Office revealed that Eapen and Ramos repeatedly visited the homes of registered voters in the 50<sup>th</sup> Ward and advised them to apply for absentee ballots in the lead-up to elections held on February 27 and April 17 in 2007.

Under Illinois law, voters must meet specific qualifications in order to cast an absentee ballot. Both Eapen and Ramos falsely told voters that they could obtain an absentee ballot to vote for illegal reasons. Neither Eapen nor Ramos held the powers under Illinois law to counsel residents on how to vote.

During the sentencing, Judge Salone stated that the defendants "attempted to steal democracy."

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