



## Denver FBI office investigating more cases of public corruption

McNabb Associates, P.C. (Federal Criminal Defense Lawyers)

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Denver Post on January 22, 2012 released the following:

“By Felisa Cardona

The Denver Post

The Denver FBI is investigating more than a dozen cases of public corruption in Colorado, Wyoming and Indian country.

The number of investigations is up from three years ago, when agents in the public-corruption unit launched a special hotline urging people to come forward with information.

At the time, the FBI said either no public corruption existed in the region, which was unlikely, or it was underreported. But things have changed.

“We are very busy right now,” said Supervising Special Agent Brian Schmitt. “I don’t know if it is a result of the down economy or if there are more avenues to report.”

Public corruption is defined as an abuse of public office or position within the government for personal gain.

Agents won’t provide details about pending cases but say theft and mishandling of stimulus funds, legislative corruption and law enforcement corruption are the types of crimes they look into.

White-collar crimes such as bribery, fraud, extortion, embezzlement, insider trading and influence peddling take a long time to investigate and require agents who

have special skills.

In 2010, the FBI opened an investigation into a Denver driving-school instructor who was taking bribes in exchange for passing tests.

Criminal charges haven’t been filed against Sikiru Fadeyi, the owner of Ola’s Driving School, but undercover agents infiltrated his business and recorded him accepting bribes, court records show.

The reason charges have not materialized against Fadeyi — who was an agent of the state because he was licensed to administer tests — is because of the complex nature of the investigation. Leads from that case extend to other states as far away as New York and Hawaii.

For now, Fadeyi’s license is suspended and he is not allowed to operate the driving school.

FBI agents routinely work cases with local law enforcement, but when it comes to corruption investigations, the agents tackle them alone. They don’t want local officers with ties to a particular city or agency in conflict with the investigation.

Public-corruption cases — such as the charges against former Democratic Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich — receive intense coverage by the media and are followed closely by the public, which can complicate investigations for the FBI.

Witnesses are less likely to come forward when there is too much attention on a case, Schmitt said.

Also, agents and federal prosecutors are aware that the targets of white-collar

investigations typically hire top-notch defense lawyers to fight the charges.

“The cases we put together have to be rock solid,” he said.

Schmitt said corruption in the region isn’t rampant as it is in places such as Detroit and New Orleans, but that doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist.

“Anywhere you have money and power, corruption follows,” he said.”

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