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## US DOJ Alleges Smartmatic Engaged in Global Bribery

August 20, 2025

— Categories: Breaking News



The U.S. Department of Justice is seeking to prove that voting technology company Smartmatic has a long history of bribing election officials around the world, according to a new court filing unsealed this week.

Federal prosecutors allege that three Smartmatic executives, who were indicted last year on charges of bribery and money laundering, moved funds from a lucrative contract with Los Angeles County into offshore accounts that were previously used to pay bribes in other countries. The DOJ filing claims money from the \$282 million contract, signed in 2018, was

diverted in 2019 into so-called “slush funds” that had earlier been established to secure election deals in Venezuela and the Philippines.

According to prosecutors, the slush funds were created between 2012 and 2016 to influence officials abroad and help Smartmatic win or maintain contracts. The court document does not state whether any of the Los Angeles funds were ultimately used to bribe officials in the United States, but argues that the transfers show a pattern consistent with the company’s prior practices.

Smartmatic, which has been at the center of election controversies in several countries, has denied wrongdoing in the past. The company has also been engaged in high-profile litigation, including a defamation lawsuit against Fox News following false claims about its role in the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

The Justice Department’s filing represents the latest step in its ongoing investigation into the company. Legal analysts note that prosecutors appear to be building a broader case that could establish Smartmatic’s alleged misconduct as part of a global strategy rather than isolated incidents in foreign markets.

The indictment of the three executives last year already marked a significant development for the company, which has faced scrutiny for years over its business dealings. If the DOJ succeeds in proving that funds from U.S. contracts were connected to international bribery efforts, it could lead to serious consequences for Smartmatic’s ability to operate in the United States and abroad.

Los Angeles County officials have not been accused of wrongdoing in the case, and prosecutors have not alleged that any county money was paid directly to officials in California. Instead, the focus remains on the company’s financial practices and the possible misuse of funds.

The case adds to the broader debate about election security and the integrity of companies entrusted with managing voting technology in the United States. As the investigation unfolds, Smartmatic’s role in both domestic and international elections is likely to remain under scrutiny.