DANE COUNTY CLERK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dane County Clerk Scott McDonell Urges Absentee Voters to Mail Ballots Early to Help Ensure Delivery

MADISON, WI — Today, Dane County Clerk Scott McDonell issued an advisory to all Dane County residents who plan to vote by mail in the upcoming August 11 election to place their completed absentee ballots in the mail at least two weeks prior to Election Day.

“The primary election this year is August 11, so voters should request, receive, and then mail their ballot by July 28. This proactive window helps ensure that mail-in votes reach local election officials in time to be counted” said McDonell.

The Deadline to be Counted

Under Wisconsin state law, postmark dates are not taken into consideration for ballot tabulation. All absentee ballots must be in the physical possession of local election officials by 8 pm on Election Night to be counted. In Dane County that includes having the ballot received on Election Day to be delivered to the correct polling location by 8 pm.

"Every single vote matters, and a ballot cannot count if it is still sitting in a postal facility when the polls close," said McDonell.

Dane County partnered with a new printer, WPS Data Logistics, to print ballots sooner so residents can receive their ballot earlier.

“The return trip is entirely in the hands of the postal system, McDonell stressed. “The USPS has inexplicably stopped using ‘extraordinary measures’ to ensure ballots are delivered in time to be counted. That does a big disservice to our democracy.”

McDonell explained that the change means USPS will no longer put in overtime on Election Day to sort arriving mailed ballots. “Mailing your ballot back in advance of the election helps eliminate the danger of last-minute mail delays that could invalidate your vote. We saw many more ballots arrive after Election Day in April than in previous elections"

How to Help Ensure Your Vote Counts
To help ensure eligibility, the Dane County Clerk advises voters to utilize the following guidelines and return methods:

- **Mail Early:** Place your ballot in the mail two weeks in advance of Election Day.
- **Verify Your Witness:** Ensure an adult U.S. citizen witnesses you filling out the ballot and signs the envelope where required. Requirements for witness criteria must be met. The earlier your ballot arrives, the greater the chance that any errors can be remedied.

- **Track the Ballot:** Monitor your ballot's status online via the state's MyVote Wisconsin portal.

- **Alternative In-Person Options:** Voters who are concerned about missing mailing deadlines should consider dropping off their ballots directly at their municipal clerk's office, using an authorized local drop box option, or voting via an official early in-person absentee voting location.

For comprehensive local deadlines, localized clerk contact directories, and specific drop-off locations, residents are encouraged to cross-reference their address on the MyVote Wisconsin Website.

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