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## **Local Clerks Warn: “Don’t Throw Away Your Ballot By Mistake”**

### ***Newly Redesigned Absentee Voting Envelopes Utilized in Upcoming March 10 Election***

**MACOMB COUNTY, MI** -- Envelopes containing Absentee Ballots will have a new look for the upcoming Presidential Primary election on March 10 and local clerks want to make sure voters are prepared.

“New envelopes containing absentee ballots have a new look. Starting with this March 10 election, absentee ballots will arrive in newly redesigned blue and white envelopes developed in cooperation with the US Postal Service,” said **Macomb County Clerk Fred Miller**. “The new design will make them easier to be processed by the postal service but we don’t want any voters who may be used to the traditional manilla envelopes to accidentally throw away their ballot.”

Initially announced in September, the Michigan Secretary of State has been working with local clerks across the state to make the change. The previous design was encountering more and more issues with the United States Postal Service (USPS) that sometimes led to the misdirection of ballots. The primary purpose of this redesign was to prevent those issues and to prevent the disenfranchisement of voters.

The new design has a more modern look and feel including a few small details that should have big impacts on voters properly returning their ballot and process efficiencies, including:

- The voter’s signature on the backside of the envelope, the side they will see when sealing the envelope.
- The ballot label will be on the backside of the envelope, allowing staff issuing ballots and election inspectors processing ballots on Election Day to view the ballot number without flipping over the envelope.
- Clear language (when not prescribed by law) to explain delivery options.
- Different and distinct coloring for outgoing and return envelopes to let USPS know that blue should be going to a voter, green to a clerk. Other states are adopting the same color scheme which will help with ballots being sent outside of Michigan as well.

- A smaller size which has been requested by USPS as the former size was the maximum for first class mail. This allows for better automation and easier handling by carriers.

Absentee voting, or voting by mail/ voting at home, is on the rise. With the adoption of the State Constitutional Amendment in 2018, commonly known as "Proposition 3" all voters are eligible to vote an absentee ballot. Voters must complete an absentee voter application and return it to their city or township clerk's office who will then send the voter a ballot. Absentee applications are available at clerk's offices or to download on the Secretary of State or County Clerk websites.

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