



NEWS RELEASE



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County Clerk Hanlon Advises Voters about Pre-filled Vote by Mail Applications Being Sent by an Out-of-State Organization

FREEHOLD, NJ – It has come to the attention of the Monmouth County Clerk's Office that some residents in Monmouth County are receiving pre-filled Vote by Mail applications in their mailboxes. The applications are pre-printed with voter information including name and address. This situation has led many voters to question why they received these applications, how their information was obtained, and who sent the applications to them. It has especially caused confusion for voters who are already on the list to receive mail-in ballots for the Nov. 2 General Election but regardless, received these pre-filled applications.

Monmouth County Clerk Christine Giordano Hanlon is advising voters in Monmouth County that the entity mailing these pre-filled applications to voters is a non-profit organization called the Voter Participation Center based out of Washington, D.C. The applications are not being sent to voters from the Monmouth County Clerk's Office or any of Monmouth County's election offices.

The Voter Participation Center continues to send voters a packet including a letter, prepaid return envelope addressed to the County Clerk's Election Office, and pre-filled Vote by Mail application with the voter's name and address. The packets can be identified by the top right of the form and bottom left of the form including the tags "VCP_NJD" or "CVI_NJD." The back of the form also includes "it's easy as 1-2-3 instructions" with the name of the voter and mailing address usually pre-filled. The letters are signed by Tom Lopach, President of the Voter Participation Center.

"We have received many calls and inquires to our office and have seen many posts on social media by residents concerned about receiving these pre-filled Vote by Mail applications," said Clerk Hanlon. "It is important that voters understand that these applications are not official election mail from Monmouth County's election offices, and are not mandatory to be completed in order to vote in the 2021 General Election. Voters have a choice as to whether to complete the applications and send them in."

Voter data is obtained by organizations, candidates or political committees from the Statewide Voter Registration System, which is under the direction of the New Jersey Division of Elections. Certain voter data, such as name and address, is considered to be an open public record according to New Jersey law.

Voters who receive these pre-filled applications but are already on the list to receive mail-in ballots for the Nov. 2 General Election and/or for all future elections, can disregard and discard the applications. These voters would have recently received a letter from the County Clerk's Office advising of their status. These voters can also call the County Clerk's Election Office at 732-431-7790 during normal business hours to confirm that they are on the list to receive mail-in ballots for the Nov. 2 General Election.

Voters who are not on the list to receive mail-in ballots and who receive this type of pre-filled Vote by Mail application can choose to either discard it or to sign the application and submit it to the Monmouth County Clerk's Election Office in order to obtain a mail-in ballot for the Nov. 2 General Election.

If the application is properly completed and the signature on the application matches the voter signature on file in the Statewide Voter Registration System, the mail-in ballot will be issued to the voter. Please be advised that when completing the application, a voter has the option of checking the box at the top of the application to receive mail-in ballots for one election or for all future elections.

According to a subsequent letter sent by the Voter Participation Center to the New Jersey Division of Elections and all County Clerks in the state, these applications are being mailed to voters across the State of New Jersey with over 167,000 applications being sent to voters in Monmouth County. The mailings are expected to arrive between now and early September.

“I encourage any voters with questions to contact my Election Office by phone to 732-431-7790 or by email to ClerkOfElections@co.monmouth.nj.us,” said Clerk Hanlon.

For further information, voters can visit MonmouthCountyVotes.com or download the Monmouth Votes Mobile App.

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