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# Carmella Sabaugh

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## County clerk: longer hours, shorter lunch improves service Unions supportive

MT. CLEMENS, MICH - Macomb County Clerk's Office employees are in the final week of a four-week pilot project during which they agreed to a longer work day and a shorter lunch period. The program is designed to improve customer service during peak hours said Macomb County Clerk / Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh. County unions and the Human Resources Department welcomed the change, putting labor and management on the same side to improve customer service at no additional cost to taxpayers.

"This schedule change makes more staff available to help the public during peak demand, such as lunch and at the start and end of each day," said Sabaugh (D-Warren). "AFSCME and UAW members joined me to help our customers and their support improves chances for success."

Employees work up to 8.75 hours per day instead of 7.5 hours per day, by working longer hours and cutting their lunch hour in half. Sabaugh will get more work out of employees on a given day without costing taxpayers extra by compressing the pay period into nine days instead of 10 days. The program is revenue neutral because employees will work a total of 75 hours every two weeks under the new system as they do currently. No other department has a program like this, according to the Macomb County Human Resources Department.

Sabaugh oversees a staff of 71 in the clerk's office and 27 in the Register of Deeds Office. The pilot program will initially affect only the Clerk's Office. The program is voluntary and Sabaugh said 23 employees are participating. Most clerk employees are members of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees union ("AFSCME"), while some are United Auto Workers union members ("UAW").

### Clerk's Office

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Mount Clemens, MI 48043  
586-469-5120  
Fax: 586-783-8184

<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>  
[clerksoffice@macombcountymi.gov](mailto:clerksoffice@macombcountymi.gov)

### Fax-on-Demand

Michigan: 1-888-99-CLERK  
Out-of-State: 310-575-5035

### Register of Deeds

10 N. Main St.  
Mount Clemens, MI 48043  
586-469-5175  
Fax: 586-469-5130

<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/registerdeeds>  
[registerdeeds@macombcountymi.gov](mailto:registerdeeds@macombcountymi.gov)

In addition to improving customer service, Sabaugh says another reason for the change is to retain qualified staff. The county clerk has a higher number of entry level positions than most other county departments. County clerk staff are among the lowest paid county employees. Sabaugh said she hopes this new program will give skilled employees incentive to stay in her office rather than promote out to other departments. Her office currently has six vacancies because the county hiring freeze delays new hires for 20 weeks, limiting the ability to fill positions of employees who promote to other departments.

“This is one more example of how county workers are going the extra mile to serve the public,” said Donna Cangemi, AFSCME Local 411 president. Last year Sabaugh was named “Woman of the Year” by AFSCME.

“Our members work hard for the public and if we can improve customer service by changing work schedules, then we’ll give it a try,” said Tom Wright, UAW Local 889 president. “I salute our members who are voluntarily doing this.”

“Innovation is important for our future and this is one way we’re being innovative,” said P. J. Carr, UAW Local 412 president.

“Carmella Sabaugh proposed this innovative approach that could improve service and employee morale without additional taxpayer expense and I supported her effort to achieve those goals through this initiative,” said Eric Herppich, acting director of Human Resources.

Sabaugh’s office hours remain 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. for vital records, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for court matters, and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for Register of Deeds. She was the first Michigan County Clerk to offer evening hours and continues to be open for vital records processing until 7 p.m. every Wednesday. Internet and toll-free fax-on-demand services are offered 24/7.

Sabaugh’s pilot program is under way and will continue through May 18, when she will evaluate whether to continue it permanently.

“If this improves customer service, we’ll continue, if it doesn’t, we’ll try something else,” said Sabaugh, who, with her unionized staff, has built a reputation for innovation.

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