Sheriff Steve Stovall
Stephenson County Sheriff's Office

For Immediate Release
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SHERIFF'S OFFICE RELEASES INFORMATION REGARDING OVERNIGHT PURSUIT AND DEATH INVESTIGATION

The Stephenson County Sheriff's Office is releasing information regarding an incident that occurred late Saturday evening, November 7, 2026, which resulted in a vehicle pursuit and the death of a 36-year-old male.

At approximately 11:36 p.m., a Stephenson County Sheriff's Deputy was dispatched to a residence in the 300 block of East South Street in Dakota, Illinois, following a 9-1-1 call in which no background noise was heard. Attempts by dispatch personnel to contact the caller were initially unsuccessful.

As the deputy arrived in the area, the caller contacted 9-1-1 again and reported that her former boyfriend had been at her residence and had held her at gunpoint. The caller provided a description of the suspect's vehicle and a possible direction of travel.

Shortly thereafter, the responding deputy observed a vehicle matching the description provided by the caller. The deputy attempted to conduct a traffic stop, but the driver failed to stop, resulting in a vehicle pursuit.

The pursuit continued out of Dakota and onto McConnell Road, with speeds remaining at or below posted speed limits. During the pursuit, an assisting deputy successfully deployed a tire deflation device, which deflated the suspect vehicle's left front tire. The vehicle eventually came to a stop on McConnell Road near Red Oak Road.

As deputies exited their patrol vehicles following the stop, they heard a loud bang originating from the area of the suspect vehicle. Upon approaching the vehicle, deputies discovered the 36-year-old male driver suffering from a gunshot wound to the head, with a handgun in his hand.

Leamon's Ambulance responded to the scene and initiated lifesaving measures. The male was transported to Mercyhealth Hospital in Freeport, where he was pronounced deceased shortly after arrival.

No Sheriff's Office personnel discharged their firearms during this incident**.** No law enforcement personnel were injured, and the female who initially contacted 9-1-1 was not physically injured.

The investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death has been turned over to the Illinois State Police Division of Criminal Investigation. This referral is a procedural measure intended to ensure an

independent, fair, and impartial investigation, as Sheriff's Office personnel were actively involved in the incident preceding the individual's death.

The Stephenson County Sheriff's Office is cooperating fully with the Illinois State Police investigation.

To preserve the integrity and independence of the ongoing investigation, the Stephenson County Sheriff's Office will not be releasing additional information or providing further statements regarding this incident. All subsequent media inquiries and requests for information should be directed to the Illinois State Police.

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