



## NEW MEXICO TASK FORCE TO END HUNGER

### For Immediate Release

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## New Mexico's Collaboration to End Hunger Results in Improved State Ratings for Hunger and Food Insecurity

*Albuquerque, June 9, 2005*—The New Mexico Task Force to end Hunger, led by the Human Services Department (HSD), the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and other state and private agencies announced today that New Mexico has moved from first in the nation for food insecurity to fifth, and from third in hunger to thirteenth, according to the Food Research and Action Center's State of States 2005 report. "Our battle against food insecurity and hunger started in October 2003 with the Governor's Hunger Summit where we recognized that to improve in these two areas it was going to take public and private organizations working together to help New Mexicans have better access to basic things like food to be successful in life," said Liz Stefanics, Deputy Secretary of HSD.

Although there are many programs that help fight hunger, like the School Lunch Program, the Women, Infant and Children's Program, the Summer Food Service Programs and hundreds of food pantries, the number one defense in battling hunger and food insecurity is the Food Stamp Program. Last year, the number of families receiving food stamps surpassed the 90,000 mark for the first time, and now there are 93,000 families on the program, helping about 240,000 people. So far this fiscal year, the fully federal-funded Food Stamp Program has brought in \$224 million dollars, helping local economies throughout the state. "While the good news is, we are helping more New Mexico families, the bad news is there are thousands more families that are eligible for the food stamp program, but, are not participating. Those are the families we want to reach," said Katie Falls, HSD Income Support Division Director.

The program is designed to help low-income working families: For example: a two person household with an income from \$0 to \$1,350, could qualify for from \$274 to \$10 in food stamps each month. A three-person household earning from \$0 to \$1,697 each month could qualify for from \$393 to \$10 each month, and a four-person household earning from \$0 to \$2,042 each could qualify for from \$499 to \$10 each month.

**To find out if you qualify for The Food Stamp Program, call the Human Services Department at 1-800-283-4465.**

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