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For Immediate Release

Human Services Department Reminds New Mexicans Low-Income Home Heating Funds Still Available

Average Eligible Household Could Receive Nearly \$130 toward Their Heating Bill

Santa Fe, February 2, 2007 – So far, 38,022 New Mexico families have signed up for home-heating assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which this year's once-a-year benefit is averaging \$129.

“Typically, 65 percent of the people using the program do so between Oct. 1 and Jan. 31,” said Deputy Secretary Katie Falls, Human Services Department. “Last year the department served a record number of households, 71,794 and hopes to serve as many this year.”

Households qualifying for LIHEAP earn less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Level; for example, a family of three with a monthly income below \$2,076 would qualify. The benefit can be used to help pay gas, electric, propane or even fire wood bills.

LIHEAP applications can be completed at any of the department's 35 Income Support Division offices. Applicants should bring with them the following information when applying for LIHEAP:

- Proof of household income for the past 30 days;
- Identification of the person filing the application;
- A Social Security Number (SSN) for all household members;
- Statement of citizenship or proof of immigration status for all household members; and
- One of the following from the past 12 months:
 - Highest gas or electric bill for 30 days of service;
 - Account history printout from a propane company, or receipts for two propane fills with the fewest days in between;
 - A receipt for the purchase of firewood; or
 - A disconnect notice, if you have received one, or the cost of starting utility service at your home.

For more information on LIHEAP, please call 1-800-283-4465, or visit the department's LIHEAP website at <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/isd/liheap.html>.

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