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For Immediate Release

Hundreds of New Mexico Custodial Parents Opting for the New Prepaid Debit Cards

Toll Free Number (1-800-288-7207) Offers Fastest Way to Get on Board

Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 10, 2007 – Last month the Human Services Department (HSD) announced that parents receiving their child support checks by mail could begin receiving their payments faster and safer through the state prepaid debit card for child support. Already 500 families have made the switch. “Our goal is to have 10,000 families enrolled in the new system by the end of the year, so this is a good start,” said Pamela Hyde, HSD Secretary. “As word gets out about the advantages of prepaid debit cards, we expect the number of families enrolling in the program to grow significantly each month.”

The prepaid debit card is a big convenience for the custodial parent, who is currently waiting for their child support check to arrive in the mail each month. Currently the department verifies, prints and mails checks to 27,000 parents monthly. Parents who enroll in the new program will simply receive a deposit to their debit card soon after the payment is received by the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED).

The prepaid debit card is also cost effective for the state. If everyone opts for the more convenient debit card the HSD could save \$6 million a year.

“The benefits of a prepaid debit card, versus a check in the mail, are well-known and time tested, as dozens of other states have already implemented similar systems,” said Cathi Valdes, acting Director of the CSED. “I’m excited about being able to offer debit cards to our customers who will have much quicker access to their child support payments – instead of the seven to ten day waiting period for a check to arrive in the mail.”

The New Mexico prepaid debit cards for child support can be used everywhere *Visa* debit cards are accepted: in stores, online and by telephone. Other benefits include 24/7 toll-free access to customer service; if a card is lost or stolen there is protection from unauthorized transactions; and one does not have to open a checking account to participate.

Television and radio public service announcements are currently airing across the state encouraging custodial parents to enroll in the new program and begin receiving their child support payments a faster and more secure way. Those wanting to learn more about program and how to enroll and begin receiving their child support payments through the prepaid debit cards are encouraged to call the CSED Customer Service Center at 1-800-288-7207.

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