



NEW MEXICO HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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New Mexico Human Services Department Releases Investigation Details of Internet Hacking Incident

Department Encourages Clients and Employees to Enroll in Free Credit Reporting Services

Santa Fe, New Mexico - The New Mexico Human Services Department is releasing some details into the investigation of unauthorized access to one of the department's websites uncovered earlier this year.

In July, department staff discovered and stopped access to one of the department's websites that had been vulnerable for nearly two years. At the request of Governor Bill Richardson, the department began a complete assessment of the computer hacking incidents to protect private information from future attacks. "Our team worked quickly to secure the department's website and data and we are confident the our systems are at their safest levels ever," said Pamela Hyde, HSD Secretary

The investigation is ongoing, but has determined that customer data from the department's child support enforcement and income support systems between the dates of September 9, 2006 and July 13, 2008 were accessed by multiple internet hackers. Customers of the department include; clients, custodial parents, non-custodial parents, employers, and department employees.

The department has worked closely with the New Mexico Department of Information Technology and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate thoroughly the extent of the information technology breach.

Internet hacking has become more prevalent worldwide. The Department of Information Technology is working with the Human Services Department and other state departments to evaluate their security systems in place and to ensure they are operating at the highest level. "We have made significant improvements to our systems to protect confidential

information,” said Marlin Mackey, New Mexico’s Chief Information Officer. “Our staff is on constant alert to ensure state data is as safe as possible.”

“Because the investigation so far has unveiled that some client, employee, and employer information has been accessed the Human Services Department is encouraging people who have had contact with the department through child support, income support, medical assistance services, as well as department employees to place a fraud alert on their credit files as soon as possible,” said Hyde.

A free 90-day fraud alert tells creditors to contact the individual before any new accounts are opened or existing accounts are changed. Individuals may contact any one of the three major credit bureaus to process a fraud alert. The one credit bureau you notify will notify the other two, which then also must place fraud alerts in your file.

- Equifax – 1-800-685-1111, www.equifax.com
- Experian – 1-888-397-3742, www.experian.com
- TransUnionCorp – 1-800-680-7289, www.transunion.com

The Human Services Department has set up a page on its website with helpful identity protection resources, including a link to the Attorney General’s Identity Theft Prevention and Repair Kit, as well as the links to the credit reporting bureaus. The website is www.hsd.state.nm.us.

The Human Services Department is also setting up a toll free call center to help customers who do not have access to the internet. The call center will be up and running on November 24, 2008. The toll free number and other details will be released by the department next week.

The Human Services Department will also be partnering with the New Mexico Broadcasters Association and their member radio stations across the state to air public service announcements encouraging customers to enroll in identity protection services. Print notices will also be placed in newspapers across the state alerting customers about the situation and their opportunities for protection.

“We also encourage family and friends of HSD customers to pass on information about the call center in case they haven’t heard about it through the radio, television or newspapers,” said Hyde.

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