Bill Richardson   **Kathryn Falls**
Governor   *Secretary*

Contact: *Betina Gonzales McCracken (505) 476-6205*

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For Immediate Release

NM Human Services Department Issuing LIHEAP Supplemental Benefit to 60,000 Families

Additional Assistance will Average $40 per Household

Santa Fe – The New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) is in the process of notifying all Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) customers that they may be eligible to receive a supplement to the LIHEAP benefit they have already received this year.

"The department has determined there is enough funding in the LIHEAP program that will benefit families further this winter with an average of 40 dollars additional per household," said Katie Falls, HSD Secretary. "This should be a welcomed benefit for families who have used more energy to warm their homes during the past cold winter season."

Since October, 2009, which is when the program begins each year, 60,000 New Mexico families have received the once-a-year LIHEAP benefit, which has averaged $151 per household. Participating families will be eligible to receive the additional benefit to help pay heating costs for gas, electric, or bulk fuels, such as propane, firewood or wood pellet.

Families who are in the same home and using the same energy company will automatically get the benefit. Those families who have moved since their LIHEAP benefit was issued have until August 31, 2010 to contact their local Income Support Division office and provide the new address and energy account information. Any family that has moved out of state is not eligible for the supplement.

Each year New Mexico receives a block of federal funding for the LIHEAP program and the Human Services Department estimates how best to distribute the funds in order to assist as many eligible families as possible. This year's funding of nearly $22.3 million was estimated   fairly conservatively, which is the reason the supplemental benefit is now available.

Households that have not applied for the program are still encouraged to do so, and they will receive the additional funding. The LIHEAP program assists families with incomes at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. For example, a household of three with monthly

income of $2,289 could qualify for a LIHEAP benefit (see guide below). The benefit can be used to help pay heating costs for gas, electric, or bulk fuels, such as propane, firewood or wood pellet.

Family Size	LIHEAP Maximum Monthly Income
1	$1,355
2	$1,823
3	$2,289
4	$2,757
5	$3,225
6	$3,692
7	$4,160
8	$4,628

Households applying for LIHEAP should bring, fax or email the following to one of the department's 35 Income Support offices:

☑ **Application Form** - completed and signed including Social Security Numbers for all members applying for help

☑ **Heating/Cooling Costs**
- Proof that you have a heating/cooling cost, including your account number
- Only give proof of your highest energy cost in the last 12 months if your bill was more than $177
- Crisis LIHEAP – HSD can help you faster if you have:
  - disconnected utility service;
  - disconnect notice; or
  - almost out of wood, propane or other bulk fuels
  - ☑ Give us a copy of your disconnect notice

Households should provide proof of the following when not receiving other benefits from HSD or income has changed:

☑ **Identity** – for one adult applying for help

☑ **Non-Citizen Immigrant Status**– for all applying for help

☑ **Disability** – only give proof if you are not getting disability income

☑ **Income** – only give proof when you are not getting other benefits from HSD or your income has changed. When you give proof, give us proof of income **from the most recent 30 days or all from last month**.

For more information on LIHEAP, please visit your local Income Support Division office, 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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