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Workforce Solutions and Human Services Issue New Benefit Payment and Pre-Paid Debit Cards

Wells Fargo New Fiscal Agent

(Albuquerque, NM) – The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) and the New Mexico Human Services Department (NMHSD) issued new Unemployment Insurance and Child Support Prepaid Debit Cards. The departments offer prepaid debit cards for all eligible unemployment insurance benefit claimants and custodial parents currently receiving child support payments. Wells Fargo is the new fiscal agent.

“The new Visa® Debit Cards should be arriving in mailboxes soon,” said Ken Ortiz, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. “Claimants need to activate and select a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for their new cards. We encourage all claimants to read and retain the fee schedules.”

“The new Wells Fargo cards will be more convenient for the more than 7,000 custodial parents who use pre-paid debit cards to receive their child support payments, as there are many locations for them to access their funds,” said Stephen Klump, HSD Child Support Enforcement Division Acting Director.

Electronic payment enable NMDWS and NMHSD to offer a faster, more secure method of payment to unemployment insurance customers and child support beneficiaries. NMDWS is currently serving an estimated 60,000 unemployment insurance claimants and has been issuing prepaid debit cards since October 2008. Currently, 62 percent of unemployment insurance claimants receive payments via debit card, and 34 percent choose direct deposit.

Some of the reasons HSD made available prepaid debit cards for custodial parents back in 2007 are to avoid the possibility of lost or stolen checks and add a convenience for those who did not have a personal banking account. About 68% of New Mexico’s child support payments are issued electronically, either through direct deposit to individual bank accounts or through the pre-paid debit cards.

All unemployment insurance payments will be deposited to the Visa® Debit Cards after August 29, 2010, and cardholders are directed to go to Wells Fargo ATMs for their allotted number of free withdrawals. No additional unemployment insurance deposits will be made to old Bank of America cards after August 27, 2010.

All child support payments will be deposited to the new Visa® Debit Cards beginning August 24, 2010. The NMHSD Child Support Enforcement Division will continue to send payments to current Bank of America Prepaid Visa® Debit Cards until August 23, 2010.

Claimants and child support payment recipients are reminded not to discard their current Bank of America Prepaid Visa® Debit Cards. Any deposits posted to the Bank of America Prepaid Visa® Debit Card will be maintained until May 2011 or until balances have been exhausted.

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