



Susana Martinez, Governor
Sidonie Squier, Secretary

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Child Support Enforcement Division Begins Bench Warrant Amnesty Week

Delinquent Non-Custodial Parents Given Opportunity to Pay Up Before Being Arrested

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Human Services Department’s (HSD) Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) is encouraging every one of the more than 700 individuals with bench warrants issued due to delinquent child support payments to visit one of the 14 CSED offices across the state and pay up to get their bench warrant quashed before law enforcement begin their round-up later this month.

“The amnesty period began this morning at 8 a.m. and goes through 5 p.m. on Friday,” said HSD Secretary Sidonie Squier. “This gives people a full week to stop into one of our child support offices and begin the process of taking care of outstanding debt to their children.”

The total amount in bond payments due equals more than \$2.4 million and there is over \$17.6 million in arrears due from the bench warrant list. A list of all non-custodial parents having outstanding bench warrants issued throughout the state is posted on the HSD website at <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/CSEDBenchWarrants.html>.

The CSED offices will accept payments in the form of cashier’s check or money order. Upon full payment of the bond, an order cancelling the bench warrant will be filed with the district court. If an individual is unable to pay the full amount of the bond set by the court, a negotiated, reduced bond payment or payment plan may be worked out. The payment plan amount of past due child support can be worked out with the consent of the parent to whom the support obligation is owed. The payment plan must have final approval of the court.

Individuals having questions may contact CSED toll free at: (800) 288-7207 in-state or (800) 585-7631 out-of-state. A list of the CSED offices across the state can be found on the HSD website at <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/csed/fieldoffices.html#top>.

Following the amnesty week, those still outstanding bench warrants will be shared with the New Mexico State Police (NMSP), in collaboration with local law enforcement partners statewide, who will begin the “round-up” portion of the Bench Warrant Program.



“We would much rather see the non-custodial parents pay what they owe, rather than be arrested,” said Andrew Vallejos, CSED Director. “But if they don’t take advantage of the amnesty week, we have no other choice but to work with law enforcement and see that the outstanding bench warrants be appropriately handled.”

Last week Governor Susana Martinez proclaimed August Child Support Awareness Month, and encouraged all New Mexicans to work together to foster a better understanding of the importance of fulfilling financial responsibilities to our children. The Bench Warrant Program is one tool in that effort.

The CSED set yet another record in child support collections during State Fiscal Year 2013 with a total of \$132.1 million, which is more than \$16 million above the goal set for CSED by the Legislative Finance Committee. The Bench Warrant Program, which started in 2011, as well as other initiatives has helped improved CSED performance measures nationally, including establishing court orders for existing child support cases which is now above 83%.

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