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New Mexico Awarded Nearly \$2.5 Million for UI Integrity
NMDWS receives USDOL grant to address overpayments and fraud

(Albuquerque, NM) – The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) announced that the department will receive \$2,499,029 in grant funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to address unemployment insurance (UI) program integrity. These funds will primarily be used to enhance the new, fully integrated UI tax and claims system (uFACTS), to be launched in 2012. New Mexico received the second highest grant out of more than \$191 million awarded to 40 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

In order to increase the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper UI payments, system enhancements will include automated, technology-based tools such as the State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES). This is an electronic-based information sharing platform between the department and employers that will expedite correspondence on why the employment separation occurred. Another enhancement will include the automation of cross-matches between systems, such as National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) with the UI system. The NDNH will increase the detection of claimants who continue to certify and receive benefits after they have returned to work. The grant will also provide increased integration between UI systems and NMDWS Employment Services systems and processes, which will enable enhanced monitoring and enforcement of claimant registration and participation in reemployment services.

“Unemployment insurance improper payments are top priority for the department and Governor Martinez’s administration,” said Cabinet Secretary Celina Bussey. “The system enhancements and improved functionality funded by this grant opportunity will assist the department in tackling issues of overpayments and fraud.”

The award will also provide funding for employer and claimant messaging to increase awareness of the need for accurate and timely responses to claims and information about unemployment insurance law and process. As part of the grant requirements, a Cross Functional Task Force will be comprised of representation of all UI related units in the department to create a state strategic plan and track progress on initiatives and grant activities. The UI Integrity grant period will be through December 2013.

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