

# **NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services**

**600 East Boulevard Avenue – Department 325, Bismarck ND 58505-0250**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Human Services Dept. to host public meeting Sept. 11 in Grand Forks**

### **Agency seeks input from stakeholders for program planning and budgeting**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services is hosting a public meeting September 11, 2007, in Grand Forks and clients, service providers, advocates, county officials, legislators, and other stakeholders are invited to attend. Agency officials are seeking input on community needs and successes in serving vulnerable individuals. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. in the Grand Forks County Office Building, sixth floor, 151 S 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

This is the first of eight meetings the department is holding this fall in the state's largest communities. A meeting in Devils Lake is scheduled for September 12 at the Ramsey County Courthouse.

"We hope to identify broad areas of interest and to seek ideas and recommendations from our partners in North Dakota's human services system," said Department Executive Director Carol K. Olson. "These public meetings are a vital part of the planning that shapes how services are provided, and they also factor into preliminary work on the department's 2009-2011 budget request."

The department, counties, Tribes, and other public and private organizations deliver human services in North Dakota. The department is responsible for administering child protection services, child support enforcement, disability services, foster care, Medicaid, the children's health insurance program, home and community-based long term care services, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, economic assistance programs including food stamps; and aging services including senior meals and related services.

The department also includes the Developmental Center, which provides specialized residential services to individuals with developmental disabilities, and the State Hospital, which provides specialized inpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment services. The department's eight regional human service centers provide community-based mental health and substance abuse treatment and other human services at the local level.

Olson said members of the department's leadership cabinet, along with regional human service center directors, attend each meeting. Individuals who need accommodations to participate on Sept. 11 should contact Northeast Human Service Center at 701-795-3154.

Individuals who are unable to attend can submit comments and recommendations about human service needs to the department at 600 E Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325, Bismarck ND 58505-0250.

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