



Oregon Department of Human Services

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Cindy Becker (503) 947-5150

Technical contact: Gary Whitehouse (503) 945-6934

Department uses technology to increase customer service and save money

The Oregon Department of Human Services has initiated a new email subscription service "eSubscribe" which notifies individuals instantly when new information is put on the agency's Web site and has the potential for improving customer service and saving the department money.

"We will be replacing many of our mailing lists, both for physical mail and email groups," Cindy Becker, DHS deputy director, said. "This technology will enable us to avoid thousands of dollars in annual printing, postage and labor costs by distributing information through eSubscribe."

Following a six-month pilot, DHS started eSubscribe on Jan. 1. The service already has about 3,500 subscribers, each of whom has asked to receive an average of more than 10 items, for a total of more than 36,000 subscriptions.

Since Jan. 1, DHS has sent more than 80,000 electronic bulletins to subscribers. In that period, more than 14,000 have responded to the bulletins by visiting the DHS Web site. The DHS Web site has literally thousands of "pages." Many of these are updated regularly.

"With eSubscribe, we're making it easier for people to get the information they want from the Department of Human Services, while saving time and money," said Becker. "And we're putting our customers in charge of managing the information they get."

Other state and local governments across the country have found e-subscription services to be a more cost effective and efficient means of disseminating information.

For example, the State of California, Department of Insurance, has identified cost savings of more than \$250,000 in one year in savings of combined staff and mailing costs. The City of St. Paul, Minnesota, now reaches more than 11,000 active eSubscribers, making government information more accessible and responsive to local citizens.

DHS information currently available through eSubscribe includes: News releases, job openings, budget updates, Stakeholder and advisory committee agendas and minutes, administrative rule postings and specialized reports, such as Oregon Health Plan enrollment.

"It's easy, free and secure," Becker said.

To subscribe, go to the DHS home page (www.oregon.gov/DHS) and click on the eSubscribe link that says "Sign up for our free email subscription service." Enter your email address (and a password if you wish), and then select the information to which you want to subscribe.