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EXECUTIVE ORDER
Implementation of the
Colorado Benefits Management System

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order concerning the implementation of the Colorado Benefits Management System.

1. Background and Need

The Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) is a state of the art eligibility and payment system for issuing benefits to clients across Colorado for a variety of social service programs administered by counties and select medical assistance sites. The Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) began developing CBMS in 1995 after receiving approval from the Colorado General Assembly and federal agencies. Increasingly complex programs and regulations drove the need for CBMS amid concerns that Colorado could no longer rely upon outdated technology and inconsistent methods of determining eligibility to state and federal programs.

CBMS will replace six existing computer systems with one unified system for collecting data, establishing eligibility, and processing payments. CBMS will support the following federal and state programs: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Stamps, Medicaid, Adult Protective Services, Old Age Pension, Aid to the Blind, Aid to the Needy Disabled, and the Children's Health Plan Plus. Federal and state laws and regulations related to these programs and eligibility requirements are not altered by the implementation of CBMS.

CBMS will improve access to public assistance and medical benefits by integrating the functions of the existing automated systems, providing one-stop shopping for clients, permitting faster eligibility determinations, and providing increased accuracy and consistency in eligibility determinations and benefit calculations statewide.

The Executive Directors of the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing and the Department of Human Services have decided that the transition to CBMS will begin on September 1, 2004. In implementing any comprehensive system as sophisticated as CBMS, we anticipate challenges during the transition period. This Executive Order is issued out of concern for Colorado citizens who are in need of assistance from DHS and HCPF, in a coordinated effort to ensure that eligible clients are not adversely affected by the process of transitioning between automated systems.

2. Directive

- A. I hereby direct the Executive Directors of DHS and HCPF to employ backup systems and contingency plans to ensure that eligible applicants will not be denied benefits during the transition to CBMS.
- B. I hereby direct the Executive Directors of DHS and HCPF to employ backup systems and contingency plans to protect the benefits of clients who maintain eligibility during the transition to CBMS.
- C. I hereby direct that an additional \$2 million in federal funds from the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 be made available to counties through the Executive Directors of DHS and HCPF to assist the counties during this transitional period.

3. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in force until further modification or rescission by the Governor.

GIVEN under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado, this _____
day of August, 2004.

Bill Owens
Governor