



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

Department of Human Services Call Center Contract Brings Jobs Home to Michigan, Saves Taxpayers Money

DATELINE

LANSING – Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced today that the Michigan Department of Human Services is now using Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. (ACS) electronic benefit transfer services disburse benefits to its clients. The \$48 million electronic benefit transfer contract was awarded to ACS and it includes a partnership that has created 26 jobs in Oscoda, with the potential to create additional jobs within one year.

“Our efforts to ensure that we are spending every dollar efficiently and, whenever possible, here in Michigan resulted in this contract going to a Michigan company,” Granholm said. “We are not only saving money, but creating new jobs as well.”

Crusecom Technology Consultants, based in Oscoda, is subcontracting with ACS to provide call center support for an estimated 75,000 calls per month regarding DHS’s assistance programs. Prior to this change, calls were routed to call centers in Florida, Mexico and India. In addition to creating new jobs in Michigan, this new contract will save taxpayers \$25.3 million over five years.

“This is great news for Michigan,” Granholm said. “I am thrilled that jobs have been created for a community in need. I hope other entrepreneurs and business owners in Michigan see this as an example of the great opportunities that exist for them right here at home.”

In 2004, Granholm signed two executive directives that gave preference to Michigan-based job providers in the state government contracting process and, for the first time, required the Department of Management and Budget to consider whether or not a bidder is engaged in exporting jobs or using an offshore tax shelter when determining if a bidder’s proposal provides the best overall value to the state. Since the inception of the *Buy Michigan First* program, almost 86 percent of state contract dollars have been spent with Michigan firms.

More than 1.1 million people in Michigan depend upon cash, food and emergency benefits each month to help feed their children and make ends meet. The change in contractors will be transparent to both clients and retailers, with the ACS system using the same Michigan Bridge Card that is currently in use by DHS clients.

“These benefits are a critical support to many Michigan vulnerable senior citizens, families and children,” Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, said. “Michigan’s businesses profit from these benefits as well, especially during slow economic times. Last year, over \$896 million was spent on food at Michigan retailers by way of the Food Assistance program. Food benefits help keep businesses open in areas were they might not otherwise make it.”

For more information about state and federal assistance benefits, visit the Department of Human Services Web site at www.michigan.gov/dhs.

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