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NEW MEPLINE FACILITATES ACCESS TO CHILD SUPPORT FILES

WHITEHORSE – The Department of Justice announced today the implementation of a new automated telephone service – MEpline – for the Maintenance Enforcement Program that will facilitate access to important client files.

Clients of the child-support payment program, both payees and payers, can access their confidential files 24 hours a day through the MEpline telephone service - with a secure personal identification number – to obtain routine file information.

“This is a big leap forward in service delivery,” Justice Minister John Edzerza said. “Previously clients had to go through enforcement officers to gain routine information such as whether a child support payment was made. Now they can get that information on their own through MEpline - 24 hours a day, seven days a week - at their convenience.”

The new service will allow enforcement officers to dedicate more time to investigating and enforcing delinquent child support files. Most payers enrolled in the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) make child support payments on time, but about 30 per cent of the files are delinquent and require investigation.

“The Maintenance Enforcement Program can now target particularly tough cases and take a more aggressive approach with delinquent payers so money makes it to the children,” director of Maintenance Enforcement Shauna Curtin said.

The automated telephone system is already established in most Canadian provincial jurisdictions. The Alberta government implemented their system in 1999 and have evidence indicating that client uptake of the service confirms its value.

“MEP clients have accessed our MEP Info line 7.8 million times to check for payments, review file status, update their address and provide information they feel may be useful for the enforcement of their account,” Wanda Ducherer, senior manager of the Alberta government’s Maintenance Enforcement Program said.

The Yukon MEpline will be evaluated in six to nine months. The service is part of improving the Yukon child support payment program. A client satisfaction survey is currently being conducted while an easy-to-understand court procedure booklet, on family law matters, has been published.

For more information about the MEP visit www.yukonmep.ca/

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