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Secretary Gassman Announces Early Statewide Rollout of Wisconsin Support Collections Debit Card

New Program Placed on Fast Track Due to Popularity

MADISON – Due to the popularity of the debit cards in the pilot counties, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman announced today that the implementation of the new Wisconsin Support Collections Debit Card is rolling out statewide this week.

The program had been slated to go statewide in January, but was placed on the fast track due to its popularity after pilot projects in Jefferson, St. Croix, and Milwaukee Counties this fall. To date, more than 70 percent of the cards issued to parents have been successfully activated. And parents in non-pilot counties have been calling to ask when they will get their cards.

“We are very pleased to offer this convenient new service to all parents statewide starting this week,” Secretary Gassman said. “This program will enable the state to quickly and conveniently distribute child support and alimony payments to parents so they can provide for and support their families. Thanks to this new program, parents will no longer have to wait for checks to arrive in the mail or pay often high check cashing fees.”

Under the program, parents with child support cases in all counties, and support cases handled by the Lac du Flambeau and Menominee Tribal Child Support Agencies, will be issued a Visa debit card with their next payment if they have not already signed up for direct deposit for their support payments.

Child support debit cards have the VISA logo and can be used like debit cards issued by banks. Debit cards can be used at all merchants and other service providers that honor VISA. Debit cards can also be used at ATM machines, though some fees might apply to that service.

Secretary Gassman said she expects the debit card to be especially attractive to the child support customers who do not have bank accounts. Each time a support payment is made, the amount will post automatically to the debit card. The new program will provide families easy access to their support payments, while avoiding expensive check cashing fees.

The Department’s website at dwd.wisconsin.gov/bcs/card.htm contains answers to frequently asked questions. Parents can also call the toll free number on the back of their Visa debit card for any questions they may have. Local child support agencies also have debit card brochures and other information for parents who do not have Internet access.