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Child Support Amnesty Efforts Successful

Cincinnati (Sept. 10, 2008) More than 400 people participated in Hamilton County's recent amnesty efforts on Child Support, resulting in more than \$33,000 being collected on behalf of the county's children.

To mark National Child Support month, Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services offered amnesty throughout the month to more than 14,000 county residents who have had their driver's licenses suspended for failing to pay child support. In the last week of the month, the county offered amnesty to some 3,000 county residents with child support-related warrants from the Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts.

Nearly 150 drivers participated in the program and more than 250 with warrants participated. More than \$33,000 was collected, but, just as importantly, those who participated are now re-engaged in the payment process.

"Some people simply agreed to start paying and got plugged back into the system so we know where they are," said Moira Weir, director of the Department of Job and Family Services. "Obviously, the most important thing for us is making sure these children get the financial support they need, so sending someone to jail or taking away their ability to drive to work is a last resort for us. We want to work with them and encourage them to make their payments."

Hamilton County's Child Support Enforcement Agency handles about 92,000 cases a year. Last year, it collected \$142 million for families that might not otherwise have had the financial support necessary to pay for such items as food, medical care, child care, school clothes and school supplies. Many of the children who do not receive child support turn to public assistance, with taxpayers providing financial support.

In addition to Amnesty offers, Hamilton County Child Support uses a variety of tools to collect child support, including a Most Wanted poster, intercepting tax returns, denying passports, freezing and seizing funds from bank accounts, and suspending licenses.

About Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services

The Department of Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, adult protection, child care, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food stamp disbursement and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands of residents each year. The Department of Job and Family Services is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.