



## NEWS RELEASE

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### COUNTY TO TAKE OVER FULL OPERATION OF MATS

Bernalillo County's Metropolitan Assessment and Treatment Services Center (MATS) is a "hub" for public inebriate detox, 28-day recovery and transitional housing programs located at 5901 Zuni Road SE. On Saturday, July 1, 2006, Bernalillo County will assume full responsibility for the day to day operation of these programs.

Up until now, the facility, which began with a 28-bed, three to five day short term detoxification program, has been owned by the County and operated by a paid contractor. The change over is expected to create "better service with a streamlined administration" with the possibility of future help from local hospitals, according to Bernalillo County Commissioner Deanna Archuleta.

**"Bernalillo County is excited by the opportunity to further its efforts to improve the lives of low income county residents suffering from drug and alcohol addiction by directly operating the county's only public detoxification and treatment program,"** Commissioner Archuleta says. **"MATS continues to address the growing needs of a sector of our community that is often overlooked."**

MATS opened in January, 2001, and expanded its 28-bed operation to more than 40-beds in November, 2005. The MATS detox program is funded by an annual \$1.7 million grant from the New Mexico Department of Finance Administration. Future plans include a 48-bed transitional housing project that will offer a four to six month long program with continued substance abuse treatment, case management, help finding work, and other services. The County is currently negotiating with area hospitals funding to add a medical component to MATS that will reduce the number of public inebriates being taken to local

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emergency rooms. In addition, the Board of Commissioners recently approved a lease agreement with the Department of Health to relocate the acute care Turquoise Lodge program to MATS.

John Dantis, Deputy County Manager for Public Safety, says Saturday's change over will mean the addition of 25 new employees, including one program manager, five substance abuse counselors, 14 substance abuse technicians, two administrative assistants, and three custodians. MATS has also purchased a van, will transition three vehicles back from its previous contractor, and negotiate new contracts for operational needs.

MATS offers services to men and women at least 18 years old who have been referred by a public safety agency such as local law enforcement, fire department or a social, medical, or alcoholism and/or drug service organizations. Referrals can also be made by a friend, relative, or individuals can check themselves in. The facility has provided service to over 2,000 adults annually since its inception in 2001.

Clients must be ambulatory and have no apparent injuries. For more information, contact MATS at 505-468-1555.

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