

State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER, CREATES CHILDREN'S CABINET

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson signed an executive order today, officially creating the Children's Cabinet. The coalition of top-level officials in the Richardson Administration will ensure that state services are available for New Mexico's kids.

“No one can argue the need to help kids when they are most vulnerable – when they are young. Working parents, and especially single mothers, need help paying for child care,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “Parents need access to pre-school and full-day kindergarten for their kids. And all of our children need quality health care.

“This is why today I'm signing an executive order to create the Children's Cabinet, fulfilling a promise I made during the campaign.”

The Children's Cabinet will be an interagency working group headed by Lt. Governor Diane D. Denish. It will aim to streamline services to children and to ensure that no child falls through the cracks.

“For too long, our children have taken a back seat in the state of New Mexico,” said Lt. Governor Diane D. Denish. “The Children's Cabinet establishes that children are our Number One priority - they are our future, they will build our state's prosperity, and we had better be prepared to roll up our sleeves and work toward making their lives better.”

Lt. Governor Diane Denish will be the chairperson of the Children's Cabinet, which will consist of the Agency Heads of the following departments: Children, Youth and Families, Human Services, Education, Labor, Health, Finance and Administration, Economic Development, Corrections and Public Safety.

“Now, under the direction of the Lt. Governor, every cabinet department and agency charged with providing services to our children will meet regularly to track child welfare indicators, assess and overcome bureaucratic roadblocks, and focus on improving the lives of our children across the state,” Governor Bill Richardson said.

The Cabinet will meet at least six times a year. The Cabinet will also meet at least twice a year with children's advocates, professionals, educators, health care providers, and youth representatives. The Cabinet's goals include:

- All children in New Mexico achieve literacy by the end of the third grade; and
- Strive to increase the availability of health insurance to our children; and
- Strive to ensure that all of our children receive proper immunizations; and
- Strive to increase the availability of childcare to parents working their way off welfare; and
- Remove administrative barriers to obtaining public assistance; and
- Track the State of New Mexico's indicators concerning children and their health, education, safety, and economic growth.