

## Office of the Governor

### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **New Jersey to Appeal Welfare Reform Ruling to State Supreme Court**

Gov. Christie Whitman today announced that New Jersey intends to appeal to the state Supreme Court the recent appellate decision striking down a welfare reform provision that reduced cash payments to recipients who lived in New Jersey fewer than 12 months.

The Appellate Division of the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the provision enacted by the Department of Human Services was unlawful.

"Before the state invests time and resources to assisting a person into the workforce, we should have the ability to ensure that the person intends to become a productive citizen and intends to contribute to the society in New Jersey," the Governor said.

Gov. Whitman also pointed out that the federal welfare reform law allows states to write residency provisions into their laws.

Under Work First New Jersey, the state's welfare reform initiative, those who have lived in the state less than 12 months receive full food stamp benefits, and free medical coverage, but the cash assistance is reduced to the amount the family would have received in the state from which they came.