

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

News Release

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Date: December 7, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No: 05-22

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Alaskans urged: get ready now for 2006 PFD

JUNEAU – The application period for the 2006 Permanent Fund Dividend does not begin until January 2, however, Alaskans can get ready now by setting up an account to electronically sign next year's application through the state's myAlaska program, PFD Division officials announced today.

"Alaskans who already have a myAlaska account do not need to set up an account because their myAlaska account can be used year after year," said PFD Division Director Sharon Barton. "The division is promoting and urging Alaskans who do not have an account to take advantage of our "myAlaska" registration drive in December."

Division staff will be available in the Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau information offices to assist those who want help setting up an electronic signature account. The information offices will be equipped with computers for public use.

To set up an account, a person must have a valid Alaska driver's license or identification card and been approved for a dividend in 2005. Alaskans outside of Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau can call the division's toll-free number for assistance: 1-800-733-8813.

Alaskans can also go online to www.pfd.state.ak.us to set up a myAlaska account and learn more about the electronic signature program. Those who do not set up a myAlaska account can still apply online but are required to send a paper signature page to the division. Adults who have a myAlaska account can apply online and electronically sign their children's dividend applications.

PFD Chief of Operations Paul Dick said the division received more than 211,000 online applications in 2005. About 130,000 of those were electronically signed. "The number of Alaskans who electronically signed their online applications nearly doubled from 2004. We expect to receive 325,000 online applications next year and we would like to see all of those applications electronically signed," he added.

Barton said the division has changed its payment schedule for 2006 to encourage more Alaskans to apply online and early because 2006 will feature two direct deposits in October. Alaskans who apply online in January and qualify for direct deposit will receive their dividend on October 4. Others who qualify for direct deposit will receive their dividend on October 19. Persons who choose to be paid by check will receive their checks in mid-November.

"Our records from last year indicate that internet access and direct deposit are available today in almost every community in Alaska," Barton said. "The online application process and direct deposit are more cost efficient and secure than paper applications and mailed checks."

She added, "We are hoping that the payment incentives will encourage Alaskans to make the change. Our staff will be available to assist Alaskans all around the state to apply online for their PFD next year."

The 2006 application period runs from January 2 through March 31. The online application will be available at 12:01 am on January 2. The 2006 dividend amount will be announced next September.

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