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Nebraska Reports Progress on Public Benefits Backlog

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraska officials say they're close to catching up on a backlog of public benefit applications that has prompted a federal lawsuit and an investigation by lawmakers.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services spokesman Russ Reno says the agency expects to have all of the delayed paperwork finished by late October or early November.

Two advocacy groups sued the state in early August on behalf of a single mother in Lincoln who waited more than a month for the state to renew her public food benefits. The groups are asking a judge to certify the lawsuit as a class-action claim.

Lawmakers have also formed a special committee to investigate ACCESS Nebraska, a service that allows people to apply for and renew their public benefits. Committee members will meet September 18th.

Associated Press