



COUNTY OF YOLO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 13, 2007

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Dead Beat Dad Sentenced to 90-Day Work Project

(Woodland, CA) – The Yolo County Department of Child Support Services today announced Sacramento resident Michael David Wright, age 45, was placed on probation on February 9, 2007 for child neglect in failing to pay child support, and was sentenced to a 90-day work project. Wright is scheduled to report to the project during the first week of March. According to the complaint filed in September 2006, Wright owes over \$36,000 in back child support and was facing up to two years in prison for failing to support a child under the age of 14. This is the first sentence in a joint effort between the Department of Child Support Services, the District Attorney and the Probation Department to refer child support offenders to “work off their sentences” rather than spending time in jail.

“We really don’t get much benefit for our custodial parents when neglectful parents go to jail,” said Mark Jones, Director of the Yolo County Department of Child Support Services. “If they work in the Probation Department’s work project they can gain skills that may facilitate getting a job and ultimately being able to financially support their children.”

According to Anne Miller, child support attorney and special prosecutor assigned to these cases, many attempts are made to bring child support violators into compliance before criminal charges are filed.

“When all else fails, we will file charges against them, but, our goal is to get support for the children,” said Miller. “The work project isn’t just picking up trash. Offenders could be assigned to paint a school or a county building. One of our defendants helped to build a park from the ground up. As the county benefits from these work projects it seems hard to find a down side to this alternative sentencing.”

“Our work program has over 30 public facility work sites where our crews provide a variety of grounds and landscaping services,” said Don Meyer, Yolo County Chief Probation Officer. “The community and the offender benefit from the work provided to these public facilities.”

The Yolo County Department of Child Support Services, located at 100 West Court Street in Woodland, serves more than 18,000 children, most of whom live in Yolo County. The department provides free services to custodial and non-custodial parents to assist in establishing paternity, obtaining or modifying child support or medical support orders, locating absent parents, and collecting child support payments, including back support. For more information call (530) 661-2880 or visit the department’s web site at <http://www.yolocounty.org/DCSS>.

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