



**Minister Cullen urges people with post-Christmas debt to avail of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service**

The **Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Martin Cullen TD** today (4 January 2008) urged people who find themselves in financial difficulty after Christmas to contact their local Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) for advice and assistance. MABS advice can be accessed by calling into one of 65 MABS office locations around the country for a face-to-face service; through accessing the website **www.mabs.ie** or through a lo-call national telephone Helpline number.

The recently-established MABS telephone Helpline, (lo-call **1890 283438**) which is a confidential support service, operates Monday to Friday from 9:am to 8:pm and aims to provide easy access to MABS advice for those experiencing debt problems. Since the Helpline's introduction on 4 October last, up to 1,750 calls were received by 18 December 2007. In relation to the face-to-face countrywide service, 12,433 new clients approached MABS in 2007.

Visiting staff at the Dublin South East **MABS Office** in Lombard Street, Dublin 2 today, **Minister Martin Cullen TD** said: "Christmas is one of the most expensive times of the year and when the bills start to come through the letterbox in January, people are faced with the reality of how much they have spent or borrowed to get through Christmas. Help is available; it is non-judgmental, practical and confidential and comes at the cost of a 1890 phone call. I would encourage anyone who is experiencing difficulties with their finances to contact MABS for assistance."



## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

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Almost €18 million has been provided by the Department of Social and Family Affairs to fund MABS in 2008.

### **Editor's note:**

The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) provides support to people who are over-indebted and need help and advice in coping with debt problems. Professional and confidential advice is available. MABS money advisors help clients to assess their financial situation, make a budget plan for the future and deal with creditors.

The Money Advice and Budgeting Service can be accessed in three ways:

- Through 53 MABS companies operating in 65 locations around the country which provide a face-to face service;
- the MABS website [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie) which offers an online money management facility and
- the MABS national Helpline 1890 283438 (or 1890 BUDGET) which aims to provide ease of access to MABS support for those experiencing debt problems.

**The contact information for local MABS offices around the country is also available on [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)**

**ENDS**

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