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VINE® to go statewide in California

Sheriffs' Association to use SAVIN grant to help victims track offenders in jail

Louisville, Ky. — The ability to track the custody status of offenders in jail or prison will soon be available to residents throughout California. The California State Sheriffs Association (CSSA) will implement VINE® (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) statewide with \$1.7 million in funding from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance SAVIN (Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification) program.

With VINE, crime victims and other concerned citizens can call a toll-free number or log onto a secure Web portal to receive real-time information about the custody status of offenders held in jail or prison. They can also register to be notified by phone, e-mail, pager, or TTD/TTY device when an offender is released, transferred, or escapes. Live operators assist callers who need help obtaining offender information or registering for notification. The service is free to the public.

Appriss provides VINE to more than 2,200 criminal justice agencies in 43 states and the District of Columbia, including most of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. More than 75 percent of the nation's local jail offenders are now monitored by VINE. To date, approximately 53 million calls have been made to and from VINE, resulting in more than 3.2 million notification events and saving countless lives.

VINE is currently available in 17 California counties, including Los Angeles, Orange, Alameda, and Santa Clara. The SAVIN grant will allow the remaining 42 counties to join the system, which will have a single toll-free number and online interface for users. The grant provides up to 24 months of seed money, after which the state is responsible for the ongoing cost of the program.

The benefits of VINE are many. Most importantly, the service gives crime victims and their families a simple, anonymous way to track when an offender is getting out of jail before the offender shows up at their doorstep. It also ensures that victims' rights are upheld and allows them to be involved in the judicial process and have access to information about their cases.

VINE also has the potential to save taxpayers money by eliminating work for personnel at law enforcement agencies — namely, making manual notifications to victims — and allowing them to focus on their core responsibilities.

“Knowledge is the key to prevention of future crimes,” said CSSA president, Santa Clara County Sheriff Laurie Smith. “This program will allow victims of crime to be fully apprised of their individual situation and to take appropriate steps to insure their own safety.”

About Appriss

Since 1994, Appriss has provided innovative technology solutions that help hundreds of local, state, and Federal government agencies serve and protect their citizens. In addition to VINE, Appriss partners with AT&T Government Solutions Inc. to provide

automated notification services to victims of Federal crimes through the U.S. Department of Justice.

Other innovative products offered by Appriss include JusticeXchange®, the nation's leading solution for connecting criminal justice agencies; VINE Protective Order®, which alerts individuals when a protective order has been served; and MethCheck™, an automated tool that allows law enforcement to monitor the purchase of pseudoephedrine — a key ingredient in the production of methamphetamine.

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