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**Contact:** Rick Jones  
Appriss Inc.  
rjones@appriss.com  
502.815.3855

## **Minnesota unveils new CHOICE website**

*New site takes victim information/notification to new levels*

Minnesota's crime victims can now access a new website for information on their offenders. The Minnesota CHOICE website ([www.MNCHOICE.com](http://www.MNCHOICE.com)) which launched this week, is a secure application that expands a crime victim's opportunity to manage information regarding a criminal case.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections and Public Safety launched CHOICE last November to give victims and their families better opportunities to stay informed.

"The goal of MNCHOICE is to make it easy for victims to get information," said Lydia Newlin, program director for the DOC's Victim Assistance & Restorative Justice Program. "The new website allows victims to quickly find out about an offender's status whether they are in or out of custody."

Minnesota CHOICE provides numerous notification options including email, letter, SMS, TTY or through an online Message Center. Victims can submit and store re-entry statements on line as well as access resources and seek referrals. They can also receive letters of apology from offenders or participate in a victim-offender dialogue or VOCARE (Victims, Offenders & Community- A Restorative Experience) Group.

Jon Cummings lost his 23-year-old son when he was struck and killed by a drunk driver. The offender spent five years in prison for the crime.

"Information is power and it gives you a sense of control. I can't emphasize how important that is," said Cummings. "Now my family has a peace of mind we haven't had in years."

DOC officials have been testing the site for months and wanted to officially launch it during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

MNCHOICE is powered by Appriss, the Louisville, Kentucky-based technology company that provides VINE® (Victim Information & Notification Everyday.)

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