

GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY
Government Technology

Launch of Statewide Victim Notification System in Washington

By News Release
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The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) kicked off Domestic Violence Awareness Month today by announcing the implementation of a [Statewide Victim Information and Notification Service](#). The service allows crime victims to obtain timely and reliable information about an offender's custody status 24 hours a day over the telephone, through the Internet, or by e-mail. Users can inquire about the current status and register to be notified immediately upon an offender's release, escape, or transfer.

"This marks the 20th annual commemoration of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We believe it is long past time to eliminate a horrible crime that traumatizes families, endangers children, and threatens communities," said Donald G. Pierce, WASPC executive director. "This is a time for law enforcement, victim services and community leaders to work together to raise public awareness of this growing epidemic."

Pierce added that while domestic violence survivors will experience a significant benefit from this service, it is available to any victim, regardless of the crime. He also credited Senators Pam Roach and Margarita Prentice with pursuing and securing the necessary legislation and state funding for the project. Finally, he thanked the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance for providing additional federal funding. "Without the federal funding, this project would not have been possible," Pierce said. With the passage of the legislation ([Senate Bill 6502](#)), Washington became the 21st state to implement a statewide victim notification system.

"There were more than 53,000 reports of domestic violence in Washington last year; victims reported 13,754 violations of domestic violence protection orders. Keeping victims safe and holding perpetrators accountable requires multiple systems-based strategies," said Nan Stoops, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence executive director. "Survivors should not have to live in fear once their abusers are behind bars. The automated victim notification service can help survivors plan for their safety by giving them the information they need to protect themselves."

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