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**Mary Byron Foundation launches automated
protective order notification service in Kentucky**
VINE Protective Order™ to notify petitioners when civil protective orders are served

Louisville, Ky. — The Mary Byron Foundation, a public, national grant-making charity based in Louisville, has chosen the Commonwealth of Kentucky as the site of the first state-wide pilot project to automatically notify petitioners when civil domestic violence protective orders are served on respondents.

This innovative new service, VINE Protective Order™, allows petitioners to call a toll-free telephone number any time of day or night to register for notification and to find out whether a protective order has been served, when court hearings will be held, when amendments are filed, and when the full domestic violence order is about to expire.

Kentucky is part of a three-state pilot project funded by a \$1 million grant from the Office on Violence Against Women in the U.S. Department of Justice. The Mary Byron Foundation, the recipient of the grant, oversees the VINE Protective Order project with assistance from court, law enforcement, and victim service agencies throughout Kentucky and the other pilot states.

“Civil protective orders have been a part of our justice system for nearly 30 years. However, there has been little innovation in the way they have been handled up to

this point,” said Marcia Roth, executive director of the Mary Byron Foundation. “VINE Protective Order is a breakthrough on behalf of victims and public safety. In designing this system, our principal objective was to enhance safety, confidentiality, and empowerment for the petitioner.”

In Kentucky about 29,000 emergency protective orders and about 15,000 domestic violence orders are issued by in Kentucky courts in the last year. As in most communities throughout the U.S., temporary emergency protective orders are issued by the local civil court and served by the sheriff’s office. They are intended to protect a domestic violence victim (the petitioner) from someone (the respondent) who has been abusive or threatened violence. An order may be served within a few hours, or it may take days or even weeks to complete service, depending on how quickly the respondent is located. Until now, petitioners have had no sure way to know when an order is served, other than by making repeated calls to various agencies.

“The time immediately after a protective order is served can be particularly dangerous for crime victims. Far too often, the respondent reacts violently after being served, putting the victim in grave danger. Knowing when the order is served allows the petitioner to seek safety or call police to arrest the respondent if the terms of the order are violated,” says Jerry J. Bowles, a Jefferson County Family Court Judge and a member of the Mary Byron Foundation’s National Advisory Board. “VINE Protective Order promotes victim safety and facilitates the administration of justice as intended by the courts.”

Individuals who petition the court for protective orders can call the toll-free Kentucky VINE Protective Order Line at 1-866-803-5858 to determine the status of a

protective order and register for notification. Operators are available 24 hours a day to help petitioners register, to answer questions, and to provide information about local victim advocacy services. A petitioner with an already served protective order may register to be notified close to the time of the order's expiration, as a reminder to have the order extended if needed for their continued safety.

As soon as the system receives confirmation that the protective order has been served, VINE Protective Order immediately begins placing notification calls to the registered petitioner. In the event of a busy signal or no answer, the system will continue to call for 24 hours or until the petitioner answers the call. The petitioner will be required to enter a personal access code, established during registration, to verify that the call was received.

VINE Protective Order builds on the success of VINE® (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), which has been offered throughout Kentucky since 1996. VINE allows crime victims and other concerned citizens to obtain timely and reliable information about criminal cases and the custody status of offenders 24 hours a day — over the telephone, through the Internet, or by e-mail. Appriss Inc., the company that created and continues to offer VINE, has been selected by the Mary Byron Foundation to implement and operate VINE Protective Order.

To ensure victims' safety and privacy, information about protective order cases will be accessible only to the petitioner and designated personnel. Court staff, victim advocates, and law enforcement officers will have access to the toll-free information line.

Additional pilot sites include three counties in both Arkansas and North Carolina. The Foundation is studying how protective orders are issued, reviewed by the courts, and

served on respondents at each site. This research will allow the Foundation to make recommendations on how to streamline the process for court and law enforcement staff.

“VINE Protective Order centralizes information for petitioners and justice professionals,” said Travis A. Fritsch, the Mary Byron Foundation's protective order notification project manager. “Along with basic victim and public safety benefit, we have seen that this service can help court and law enforcement agencies to increase offender accountability, reduce the risk of further harm to all parties involved, and improve the process by which protective orders are served and enforced.”

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About the Mary Byron Foundation

The Mary Byron Foundation, a public grant-making charity based in Louisville, Kentucky, funds programs throughout the United States that are working to stop domestic violence.

The Foundation seeks innovative efforts that extend beyond crisis management to attack the root causes of this nationwide epidemic and prevent the violence from infecting the next generation.

Contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations make it possible for the Mary Byron Foundation to serve as a clearinghouse of proven, replicable solutions.

The Mary Byron Foundation is named in memory of a Louisville woman whose murder led to the creation of VINE®, the nation's leading system of automated crime victim notification. Appriss®, Inc., the company that continues to provide this life-saving service, provided seed money to help establish the Mary Byron Foundation in 2000.

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More about the Mary Byron Foundation Protective Order Notification Project

What is VINE Protective Order?

It is a toll-free telephone service that allows petitioners for civil protective orders to call any time of day or night to register for notification and to find out whether a protective order has been served, when court hearings will be held, when amendments are filed, and when the order is about to expire. The service is available in both English and Spanish.

How much does VINE Protective Order cost?

The system is free to users and to the communities that have been chosen for the pilot project. A \$990,000 grant from the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women, awarded to the Mary Byron Foundation-- a Louisville, Kentucky-based organization that supports agencies working to stop domestic violence -- will pay for the system.

Who manages VINE Protective Order?

The Mary Byron Foundation will oversee the VINE Protective Order project. Appriss Inc., the chosen vendor, will implement and operate VINE Protective Order, and handle the technical aspects of the system.

Why is VINE Protective Order so important?

An individual who petitions for a protective order has already been victimized by violence or threatened with violence. The respondent may lash out in anger at the petitioner for making the violence of their relationship public, further victimizing the petitioner. Knowing when the order is served allows the petitioner to seek safety or call police to arrest the respondent if he violates the terms of the order.

Can a petitioner register against a respondent 24 hours a day, seven days a week?

Until protocols are established with the Administrative Office of the Courts, petitioners outside of Jefferson County who are issued a protective order during non-business hours will be required to contacting the serving agency to determine whether the order has been served, and the court clerk's office to obtain the order number.

How will the success of the project be measured?

Usage statistics will be collected from each community participating in the VINE Protective Order project. In addition, the Mary Byron Foundation will conduct a survey of petitioners, law enforcement officers, victim advocates, and court personnel on their perceptions of the system. The results will be reported to the Office on Violence Against Women and made public at the end of the project.

How prevalent is domestic violence in Kentucky?

- According to the National Institute of Justice, one in four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime

- Closer to home, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey of over 4,000 adult women conducted through the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center documented that approximately 1 in 3 to 1 in 2 adult women ages 18-93 reported experiencing domestic violence.
- The costs of domestic violence annually exceed \$5.8 billion, including \$4.1 billion in direct health care costs, \$900 million in lost job productivity, and \$900 million in lifetime earnings.
- Studies have also found that in 70 percent of households where domestic violence occurs, child maltreatment and abuse also occur.