



For Immediate Release
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CDCR Asks Crime Victims to Register for New Automated Database to Keep them Better Informed about their Offenders

SACRAMENTO – In its effort to keep crime victims informed, the Office of Victim and Survivor Rights with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is asking crime victims to register for a new automated system that will soon provide real-time information about the custody status of their offenders. The new system was made possible by a federal grant.

“This is a significant step forward in helping victims, and making sure their questions and concerns are addressed,” CDCR Secretary Matthew Cate said. “The VINE system will allow victims to be notified with accurate information so that they can protect themselves and participate in the criminal justice process.”

The new statewide automated Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) system will provide a 24-hour service and will give registered victims an instant notice by phone or email about their offender’s whereabouts.

“We are hoping to have the VINE system up and running by next year, but we are putting the call out to the victims of this state so they can register before it’s launched,” said Assistant Secretary Sandi Menefee from the Office of Victim and Survivor Rights and Service.

The state was awarded federal grant funds from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) within the United States Department of Justice. The state was awarded \$500,000 in federal grant money with a \$500,000 in-kind match provided in the form of redirected CDCR staff resources to manage the system. The grant award will be in effect for two years.

The automated system will also inform victims and next-of-kin of when their offender is scheduled for a parole board hearing if they are serving a life term.

Currently, the state does not have a unified statewide victim notification system.

CDCR is using a paper-based system for victim notification and the process varies among the 33 institutions.

California Penal Code and the addition of Marsy’s Law requires CDCR to notify witnesses, victims and next of kin if a violent offender is released, escapes, dies, or is up for parole.

The Office of Victim and Survivor Rights and Service database documents that more than 20,000 victim notifications are made annually to victims of offenders in CDCR custody.

“The VINE system will be a more cost effective way to keep tabs on the thousands of offenders our office deals with on a daily basis,” said Menefee. “Crime victims have been through enough already, this system will make it easier for them to get the information they need.”

CDCR and the California State Sheriff’s Association (CSSA) manage victim notification systems independent of each other. This federal grant allows for an interface for both systems to come together – a seamless transition of an offender going from county jail to state prison.

CDCR operates and manages California's 33 institutions, oversees a variety of community correctional facilities, and supervises parolees during their re-entry into society. As part of its responsibilities, CDCR also adheres to the following legislative mandates in support of its vision to protect the public from crime and victimization.

If you are a victim of an offender that is serving time in the California state prison system, please call Office of Victim and Survivor Rights and Services at (877) 256-6877 to register for the upcoming VINE service.