

Introduction

The Department of Justice (DOJ) and other federal agencies are committed to ensuring that victims of federal crime are treated fairly as their case moves through the criminal justice system. In order to provide victims with information on case events, DOJ has developed the Victim Notification System (VNS). This brochure provides information about VNS.

VNS is funded by the DOJ Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Crime Victims Fund. The Fund was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984. The Fund is financed by fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders, not from tax dollars.

This free automated system provides important information to victims. In many cases, you will receive letters/emails generated through VNS containing information about the events pertaining to your case and/or any defendants in the case.

Information provided by VNS is available in English or Spanish on the Internet and through a toll-free telephone number (Call Center). In cases with a large number of victims, you may receive only one letter and then be directed to the Internet, Call Center and/or requested to provide a verified email address for further information.

All VNS notifications contain a Victim Identification Number (VIN) and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that will allow you to access VNS via the internet and the Call Center.

VNS Notification Methods

VNS Internet

You can register with VNS, which will then provide you access to all VNS information and allow you to verify or add an email address. To access the VNS Internet go to:

<https://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov>

- (1) Enter your VIN.
- (2) Enter your PIN.
- (3) **Complete the remaining information as requested on the Web site, including creating a new VNS password.** This password will replace your PIN when accessing the VNS website in the future.

Verifying your Email Address

Email can be verified during the registration process.

- When you add your email address it is considered verified, and your email can be used instead of the VIN when logging into VNS.
- You can also verify an email address by selecting “Click Here To Receive Email Notifications” link from the home page. Verifying your email address alone, without registering with VNS will not provide access to the VNS website.

Available Information

Once you are registered in VNS you can see the text for each notification and the additional information listed below:

- **Summary Information** - Information regarding investigative status, criminal charges filed, custody status, the outcome of the charges, and the sentence imposed by the court. If the defendant is in the custody of Bureau of Prisons, the custody location and scheduled release date is provided.
- **Case Activity/Details** - Displays information about the events which are occurring in the case(s), including investigative status, notices of public court proceedings, notices regarding incarceration and/or parole hearings.
- **Downloads/Links** - A list of all case specific documents and hyperlinks that pertain to the case(s).
- **My Information** - Provides the ability to update your contact information.
- **Stop Receiving Notifications** - Terminates participation in the notification program.

If you do not wish to receive notification, you may contact: (1) the VNS Call Center (1-866-365-4968, provide your VNS VIN & PIN, select Opt Out option); (2) access the VNS website and select the “Start/Stop Notifications” link, or; (3) the agency contact person indicated on your notification.

VNS Notification Methods

VNS Letter/Email Notifications

The first notification generated by VNS will be sent by letter (if VNS has a postal mailing address for you) and by email (if VNS has your email address). Email will likely be the timeliest method of notification provided by VNS. If you “verify” an email address VNS will likely send future notifications only by email. If you have a verified email address, periodically VNS will send you an email requesting you to re-verify this information.

The verified email notices contain the same information as letter notifications provided by VNS. Verification of your email address allows VNS to rely on this method of notification and will eliminate future letter notifications. If you prefer to receive notifications from VNS via letter only, log in to VNS and remove all existing email addresses in the system.

If VNS contains your email address and you do not verify that address you will continue to receive email notices from VNS about your case(s). However, those unverified email notices will no longer contain the specific details of the case. To obtain additional information, you will be directed to log in at the VNS web site: <https://www.notify.usdoj.gov>

Additionally, notices to email addresses which are not verified will no longer contain your VNS VIN and PIN.

VNS Call Center

You may access information via the VNS Call Center by calling: 1-866-DOJ-4YOU (1-866-365-4968). You will be required to enter your VIN and PIN.

By following the prompts, VNS will also provide investigative status, custody information and notice of upcoming court events and a listing of any criminal charges filed. There are additional prompts to opt out of VNS.

Please note that in some rare instances involving custody of an inmate with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, VNS may contact you by an automated phone call which will require use of your PIN to **stop** receiving further calls.

Additional Support

If you have additional questions, need to opt out of VNS, or need other assistance you can also contact the agency representative listed on your last VNS notification.

It is your responsibility to keep your information in VNS current. This will insure that you continue to receive notifications. If your address, email or phone number changes, you should update your contact information through the VNS Internet or by contacting the VNS Call Center.

United States Department of Justice Victim Notification System



Internet/Automated Call Center (24 hour access)

<https://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov>
1-866-DOJ-4YOU / (1-866-365-4968)

VNS Help Desk Hours (Eastern Time)

Monday - Friday 6:00 a.m. - 3:00 a.m.
Saturday 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.
Sunday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.