Common Questions

Below are some common questions about VNS. If at any time you have questions about VNS that are not answered here, please feel free to contact the agency involved with your case.

1. What if I forget my VIN/PIN?

Each VNS letter and verified email notification will restate your VIN & PIN. If you do not have this correspondence, please contact the agency involved with your case.

2. How do I access the VNS Internet site to Register or Verify My Email Address?

Enter ***https://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov*** in your Web browser.

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 register as a new user with VNS, under the heading "First Time User?" select Click Here To Register with VNS. (1) Enter your VIN. (2) Enter your PIN. (3) **Complete the remaining information as requested on the Web site to include creating a new VNS password.** This password will replace your PIN when accessing the VNS website in the future. (4) You can also verify an existing email address or add a new email address at this time or during any subsequent login. Once you have added your email address it is considered verified and can be used instead of the VIN when logging into VNS. If you do not want to receive email notifications, do not enter your email address (or remove any email address contained in the system).

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.

For assistance with Internet access to VNS, please contact the VNS Internet Help Desk at the toll free number 1-866-625-1631.

3. How often is information on the Internet updated?

The VNS website is updated daily, Monday through Friday.

4. Does the Victim Notification System ensure my safety?

No. Do not depend on VNS to ensure your safety. If you feel that you are being threatened, immediately notify law enforcement.

5. What should I do if my contact information changes?

If your address, email or phone number changes, you should update your contact information using one of the following methods: (1) VNS on the Internet* ***(https://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov)***; (2) Call Center* (1-866-365-4968)(*You will need your VNS VIN & PIN for access to the Call Center.) If you have registered at the VNS website, you will need either your VIN or registered email address and your VNS password, or; (3) the agency contact person indicated on your notification letter.

6. Must I receive notification?

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 Stop Receiving Notifications link, or; (3) the agency contact person indicated on your notification letter.

Summary – Internet/Call Center

Information - Activity	Internet	Call Center
Register/Verify Email	✓	
Investigative Status (Under Investigation or Prosecution Declined)	✓	✓
Filing of Criminal Charges, Outcome of Charges and Sentencing data	✓	✓
Public Court Hearings	✓	✓
Custody Status, BOP Location, Projected Release Date	✓	✓
Other relevant documents	✓	
Links to other Internet Web resources	✓	
Update address, email, telephone number	✓	✓
Stop Receiving Notifications	✓	✓

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The Department of Justice Victim Notification System

https://www.Notify.USDOJ.Gov

1-866-DOJ-4YOU / (1-866-365-4968)

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.

Introduction

The Department of Justice and the United States Postal Inspection Service 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, the Department of Justice has developed the Victim Notification System (VNS). This brochure provides information about VNS.

VNS is a cooperative effort among a number of federal agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the United States Attorneys' Offices, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and the United States District Courts. This free automated system provides important information to victims. In many cases, you will receive letters generated through VNS containing information about the events pertaining to your case and/or any defendants in the case.

Email will likely be the timeliest method of notification provided by VNS. If VNS has your email address and you verify that address, future notifications may no longer be provided by letter. Information on how to register with VNS, verify or add your email to VNS, are contained in this brochure.

VNS INFORMATION CARD

_____

Victim Identification Number (VIN)

_____

Personal Identification Number (PIN)

_____

VNS Website Password

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 many 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.

Registration Information:

All VNS letter 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. You may write your VIN and PIN on the attached tear-off card to keep with you.

- Your VIN and PIN are both required any time you contact the Call Center or when accessing VNS on the Internet.

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). If you "verify" an email address, as explained in Common Question #2 below, VNS will likely only send notifications by email. If you have a verified email address, periodically VNS will send you an email requesting you to re-verify this information.

The 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, please logon to VNS and remove all existing email addresses in the system.

If VNS contains your email address and you do not register or 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 and you will be directed to login at the VNS website (https://www.notify.usdoj.gov) to obtain that information. Additionally, email addresses which are not verified will no longer contain your VNS registrant ID and PIN.

Victim Notification System

VNS Internet Access:

You may access information about the case via the Internet at: **https://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov**. You will be required to enter your VIN and PIN during the first login session.

- The Internet site will include the text for each agency approved notification, including:

★ ***Summary Information*** **-** information regarding investigative status, criminal charges filed, the outcome of the charges, and the sentence imposed by the Court; if the defendant is in the custody of BOP, the BOP custody location, projected date of release from custody and other release information.

★ ***Case Activity/Details*** **-** Displays information about the events which are occurring in the case, 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 investigative case, USAO case or defendant/inmates.

★ ***My Information*** **-** You are also provided the ability to update your contact information.

★ ***Stop Receiving Notifications*** **-** allows you to stop receiving notifications from VNS regarding the case and defendant/inmates.

VNS Call Center:

You may call 1-866-DOJ-4YOU (1-866-365-4968) for current information. You will be required to enter your VIN and PIN. By following the prompts, VNS will provide investigative status, custody information and notice of upcoming court events and a listing of the any criminal charges filed. 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.