

Victim Notification System (VNS)

Introduction

The Department of Justice is 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 page will provide you with information about VNS.

VNS is a cooperative effort between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the United States Attorneys' offices, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

This free, computer-based 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.

The information is also available in English and 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 or Call Center for further information.

VNS Information

Registration:

You will receive a Victim Identification Number (VIN) and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that will allow you to access VNS on the Internet and using your telephone. You may write those numbers on a sheet of paper to keep with you.

If you have chosen to participate in VNS, but have not received these numbers, please contact the U.S. Attorney's office handling your case.

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

VNS Internet Access:

You may access information about the case via the Internet at: <http://www.Notify.USDOJ.Gov>
You will be required to enter your VIN and your PIN.

The Web site, in some instances, may provide additional information that is not available through the Call Center.

(Refer to Common Questions, numbers 4, 5, and 6 below, for more information regarding the Internet.)

The 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 your PIN.

By following the prompts, VNS will provide custody information and notice of upcoming court events.

The Call Center will include options to hear:

Upcoming Events - information on future court hearings

Historical Court Events - information on past court events

Detailed Information on Each Defendant -information regarding criminal charges filed, the outcome of the charges, and the sentence imposed by the Court; if the defendant is in the custody of the BOP, the custody location, projected date of release from custody and other release information.

VNS Notification:

You may also receive information about case events by telephone, email, numeric pager, or fax. Please note that in some rare instances, VNS may contact you by phone which will require use of your PIN.

Common Questions

Below are some common questions about VNS. If at any time you have a question about VNS that is not answered here, please feel free to contact your local U.S. Attorney's office.

1. When can I call the VNS Call Center or access VNS on the Internet?

Eastern Standard Time

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

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

For International Callers:

1-502-213-2767

<http://www.Notify.USDOJ.Gov>

You must keep your contact information current (see Common Questions number 8). If an agency is unable to contact you due to outdated contact information, you will be removed from the notification program.

2. What if I forget my PIN?

Each VNS notification will re-state your VIN and PIN. If you do not have this correspondence,

please contact the Victim-Witness Coordinator at your local U.S. Attorney's office.

3. What if I am not at home or my phone is busy when VNS calls?

In this instance, the Call Center will continue calling you every 30 minutes. If the call is answered, but is not confirmed with your PIN number, VNS will continue to call every 2 hours.

4. How do I access the VNS Internet Site?

- A. Enter <http://www.Notify.USDOJ.Gov> in your web browser.
- B. If you are a new user, click "First time users click here".
 - (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 Login ID.
- C. Your VNS login ID must be used in conjunction with your VIN during any subsequent access of the VNS Web site.

5. What information is available on the VNS Internet Web site?

The information available will include:

- A. Case Activities Detail - information about events in your case.
- B. Downloaded/Links - supplemental information about your case.
- C. My Information - allows you to view and/or update your mailing address, phone number and email address.
- D. Stop Receiving Notifications - allows you to stop receiving further notifications. You can later re-enroll using your VIN and VNS Login ID.

6. How often is information on the Internet updated?

The VNS Web site is updated daily, Monday through Friday.

7. 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.

8. 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* (<http://www.Notify.USDOJ.gov>) (2) VNS Call Center *(1-866-365-4968) (*You will need to provide your VNS VIN & PIN/Web Login ID); (3) the person indicated on your initial notification letter; or the Victim-Witness Coordinator at the U.S. Attorney's Office.

9. Must I receive notification?

If you do not wish to receive notification you may contact (1) VNS Call Center (1-866-365-4968) provide your VNS VIN and PIN, Select Opt Out option); (2) access the VNS Web site and select the Stop Receiving Notifications link; (3) the person indicated on your initial notification letter; or (4) the Victim-Witness Coordinator at the U.S. Attorney's Office.