



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
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Texas SAVNS Statewide Automated Victim Notification Service

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1-877-TX-4-VINE (1-877-894-8463)

What is Texas SAVNS?

Texas SAVNS provides the following to crime victims and other concerned citizens over the telephone:

- 24-hour access to offender custody or case information
- The ability to verify an offender's custody status
- Automatic notification to registered users of a change in offender custody or case status

Note: Texas SAVNS is currently being implemented in the state and not all counties are operational

When was the first SAVNS system developed?

The first SAVNS program was unveiled in Jefferson County (Louisville) Ky., in December, 1994. Today, SAVNS serves 47 states and the U.S. Department of Justice (FBI, U.S. Attorney's Offices, Federal Bureau of Prisons).

When was Texas SAVNS developed?

Following a two-year pilot study of Texas SAVNS in five Texas counties, the State of Texas recognized the importance of a victim's right to be notified regarding the status of their offender. Thus, the Texas SAVNS statewide program was established by the Texas legislature in 2000 through House Bill 1572, which appropriated funds to the Office of the Attorney General to implement a Statewide Automated Victim Notification Program. The Office of the Attorney General certified Appriss as the sole statewide vendor in November of 2002 and began the process of contracting with interested counties in February 2003.

This legislation directed the Office of the Attorney General to implement a single phone number for victims to receive standard information and notification on offender status and related court events. The program is called **Texas SAVNS**, and the phone number is: 1-877-TX-4-VINE (1-877-894-8463).

The purpose of the program is to maximize the potential for crime victims to be notified when the status for their offender is changed and when court events related to the offender are scheduled or modified. Today, many Texas counties have taken the steps necessary to implement this program.

How does Texas SAVNS work?

Texas SAVNS electronically links a national SAVNS Communications Center to the custody information housed in local jails. The process works like this:

- Custody and court information is gathered by the SAVNS Communications Center in KY
- SAVNS compares the offender and case information to the list of registered users
- When it finds a match, SAVNS immediately places a call to the registered user notifying them of the change in custody or case status

Texas SAVNS can also provide court information if connected to the prosecutor or district attorney's on-site case management system.

How do users register?

Most users register by calling the Texas SAVNS toll-free telephone number or by accessing the online link to register. Requirements for registration are explained during the call-in, and are very simple. Some knowledge specific to the offender or case is usually required to call Texas SAVNS. Some agencies may have special requirements regarding registration.

Does Texas SAVNS monitor all offenders?

Texas SAVNS monitors the custody or case status of offenders housed in (or handled by) participating county jails. Consider the following:

- There may be delays from the time of arrest before an offender is “officially” booked into the system. If Texas SAVNS cannot confirm custody, callers should assume the offender is NOT in custody.
- Individuals released on bail or his/her recognizance may NOT be considered in custody.
- Texas SAVNS does **NOT** monitor offenders held at a municipal jail, police precincts or other police facilities.

Who can use the Texas SAVNS service?

- Crime victims
- Family members and friends of crime victims
- Victim advocates and victim service providers
- Law enforcement and criminal justice staff
- ANYONE concerned about the custody status of an offender

How will the public learn about Texas SAVNS?

Appriss, provider of the Texas SAVNS Service, provides training workshops for the various law enforcement and victim service providers in the community. In addition, your County Coordinator for Texas SAVNS can provide the following material to first responders, law enforcement officers, and victim service providers that explain the service:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Cards or tear pads

To get information on training and to access promotional materials, the contact information for your local Texas SAVNS Coordinator can be found on the OAG website www.oag.state.tx.us.

What should I tell victims about Texas SAVNS?

- All telephone calls and registrations are free, anonymous and confidential
- Texas SAVNS is a service available to assist victims in determining the custody status of an offender
- Do not depend solely on the Texas SAVNS service for protection

What if an offender is released outside of regular business hours?

Texas SAVNS service is active 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Notification calls from Texas SAVNS may come in the middle of the night if a change in custody status occurs during that time.

What if the offender is transferred out of the custody of a participating institution, but is still incarcerated?

Texas SAVNS will notify registered users of the transfer. The service can also inform the victim on how to obtain additional information on the offender.