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Program alerts Montgomery County, Clarksville residents about inmates' statuses

Montgomery County Sheriff's Office part of pilot program

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Victims of crimes can implement their right to be informed through a new easily accessible service.

In Tennessee victims and their relatives have the right to know when the accused offender is released from jail or pretrial detention.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is part of an initiative to make that process easier for victims. Information is now a click or call away.

The Sheriff's Office was part of the recently launched VINE/SAVIN Program, or the Victim Information Notification Everyday/Statewide Automated Victim Information Notification service. The Web site is a service that gives crime victims or concerned citizens access to custody information of inmates.

A person can sign up to have a phone call or e-mail message sent to them when the inmate's status changes.

"What they've done on SAVIN is created a nationwide database, and anybody from anywhere interested in knowing the custody status of an inmate can sign up on the Internet or phone, and once that person is released, they will continue to get a phone call every 30 minutes until they enter their pin number," said Peggy Macias, unit coordinator for the Special Victims Unit at the Sheriff's Office.

"It's beneficial because there are people who would be interested in knowing," she said. "Knowledge is power."

Macias said patrol deputies have been giving out handouts about the services.

VINE is a nationwide service and Macias said anyone can be notified across state lines about an inmate's release.

"A lot of people might feel really secure when someone's incarcerated, but once they are no longer incarcerated they may start stressing or panicking," Macias said. "They can be more alert."

The program in Tennessee is being implemented throughout the state and not all offender information is available.

Even if someone is held for 12 hours, one could be notified of that person's release.

"I wish more people would utilize it and take advantage of services available to them that they might not be aware of for their peace of mind," Macias said. "It's all about peace of mind."

Additional Facts

FOR MORE

To Access the VINE/SAVIN program

Web: www.vinelink.com/vinelink/initMap.do

Call: 888-868-4631

Hearing-impaired call: 866-847-1298

Inmate look-up Montgomery County Jail roster, www.mcsotn.org and click on public inquiry; or Tennessee Department of Corrections, www.tennesseeanytime.org/foil/foil_index.jsp
