



**State of Vermont**  
**Department of**  
**Corrections**  
280 State Drive  
Waterbury, VT 05671-1000

**TO:** Tim Lueders-Dumont, Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs  
**CC:** Kristin Calver, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Corrections  
Al Cormier, Chief of Operations, Department of Corrections  
Meredith Pelkey, Victim Services Unit Director, Department of Corrections  
**FROM:** Jon Murad, Commissioner, Department of Corrections  
**DATE:** September 8, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Recent Changes to VINE Notifications for Victims

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## Introduction

Following feedback from victims/survivors of crime, the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) discontinued the use of two Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) notifications:

- Facility-to-facility transfer notifications
- Out-to-court notifications

## Rationale

DOC removed these notifications based on direct feedback from victims/survivors served by the Department, a review of statutes, practices of partner agencies, and an evaluation of the operational system.

This change does not eliminate notifications for post-adjudicated releases. Notifying victims/survivors when an offender is released remains VINE's most important function. It empowers and warns victims/survivors. Notifying victims/survivors about incidental, intra-departmental movements like facility transfers or temporary out-to-court transports can have the opposite effect. These notifications often led to unnecessary confusion, distress, or retraumatization.

For interested parties who want to know an in-custody individual's location, that information remains accessible through the Offender Locator tool.

DOC remains committed to providing timely and accurate information to victims and survivors as we continue to assess and improve our notification practices.



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## **New Initiatives by the Victim Services Unit**

DOC's Victim Service Unit continues to expand efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for healing and empowerment, such as reinstituting the Victim-Offender Dialogue Program and Apology Letter Bank:

- **Victim-Offender Dialogue (VOD) Program:** This program provides a structured, voluntary process that allows victims to engage in facilitated dialogue with the person who harmed them. The goal is to support healing, accountability, and restorative outcomes, when and if the victim chooses to participate.
- **Apology Letter Bank:** This initiative allows individuals who are incarcerated to write letters of apology, which are then reviewed, held, and managed by trained staff. These letters are not automatically sent to victims but can be accessed at a victim's request if and when the victim is are ready.

Both programs are trauma-informed and entirely voluntary for victims/survivors, reflecting DOC's commitment to survivor autonomy, choice, and healing-centered engagement.

## **Conclusion**

DOC looks forward to our continued collaboration on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clarify roles, responsibilities, and appropriate two-way information sharing between the State's Attorneys Victim Advocates and DOC. DOC appreciates the ongoing partnership with agencies serving victims/survivors of crime and our shared commitment to serving those who have been harmed.