

Greetings to all Victim Representatives,

From: Pat Tuthill, Ex-officio Victim Representative – [tuthillfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:tuthillfoundation@gmail.com)

Subject: ICOTS VINEWatch – A national automated victim notification system for Interstate Compact

Announcing the implementation of the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS) VINEWatch, a national automated victim notification system for compact offenders, which links all fifty states and three territories together. The implementation of the notification system ushers in a new era of accessibility and information for victims when offenders move across state borders. Victims who opt-in for notification will receive notification of significant compact events involving the offender, including information about the offender's movement and violations of compact supervision. All interstate compact offenders will be available for registration, regardless of the offender's supervision type (probation or parole). Please encourage your state and Commissioner to provide this opportunity to victims and their families.

There is no cost to implement ICOTS VINEWatch and each state can implement the system in cooperation with their respective notification authority to determine who needs access to the system in their state. The integration of Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS) with VINEWatch provides real-time email and telephone notification to victims. In other words, information entered into ICOTS immediately sends the notification to the registered victim. Specifically, victims can choose to receive notification on any/all of the following:

1. Request to transfer;
2. Request approval or denial;
3. Withdrawal of request to transfer;
4. Departure from the sending state;
5. Arrival in the receiving state;
6. Violations of conditions of supervision when an offender violates a condition of supervision that would be a revocable offense for the offender in the receiving state;
7. Change of offender's primary address;
8. Return to the sending state notice could be lifesaving for victims of domestic abuse and stalking if the perpetrator returns to the sending state where the victim may reside;
9. Case closure notices are extremely important for the victim to be informed the offender will no longer be under supervision.

Only email and telephone notifications are available at this time due to funding limitations.

Victims currently registered with VINE are not automatically set to receive notification for offenders who fall under compact supervision. Implementing states need to notify those currently registered victims of the new notifications so they may have the opportunity to opt-in.

An ICOTS VINEWatch Quick Reference Guide is available for compact offices and notification authorities. The attached reference guide allows states to add their contact information for victims to reach the appropriate staff for assistance.

One can see the benefits to victims are nationwide. Victims and their families will be notified timely of all significant events and afforded the opportunity, when the offender is in their community, to initiate a safety plan if necessary and to contact law enforcement or the probation officer with their safety concerns. The notifications provide the victim the contact numbers of both the sending and receiving states to discuss their fears and concerns or receive helpful information.

Applause goes to National Commission Executive Director Harry Hageman, Assistant Director Sam Razor and Commission Chair, Milt Gilliam for their support and resources to make this a reality.

I urge you to encourage your commissioner and state council members to participate in the ICOTS VINEWatch. Not to offer this opportunity to victims to be notified of all notification events is a disservice and could jeopardize their safety.

If your state was unable to attend one of the training sessions in December, or would like more information regarding how to use ICOTS VINEWatch for interstate compact specific notifications, please visit the [ICAOS WebEx site](#) to register for an additional training session hosted by the ICAOS National Office on **January 8 at 2:00pm ET**.

My best wishes for a healthy and happy new year!

**Pat Tuthill**