

# PR Newswire

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## **Appriss Launches VINE Protective Order™; Innovative Service Notifies Petitioners When Civil Protective Orders are Served**

LOUISVILLE, KY, May 9 /PRNewswire/ – Appriss<sup>®</sup>, Inc., is working with communities across the nation to increase safety for victims of domestic violence by making orders of protection more effective. VINE Protective Order™, an innovative service from Appriss, automatically notifies petitioners when protective orders are served on respondents.

The time immediately after a protective order is served can be particularly dangerous for victims. Petitioners have had no sure way to know when an order is served, other than by making repeated calls to the courts or sheriffs' offices.

“Far too often, the respondent reacts violently when served, putting the victim in grave danger. Knowing when the order is served allows the petitioner to seek safety or call police to arrest the respondent if he violates the terms of the order,” said Jerry J. Bowles, a Jefferson County, Kentucky Family Court judge who advocated for the service.

VINE Protective Order allows users to call a toll-free telephone number any time of day or night to register for notification and to find out whether a protective order has been served, when court hearings will be held, and when the order is about to expire.

The service is up and running in DuPage County, Illinois as well as Saline County, Arkansas. Within the next six months, VINE Protective Order will be launched statewide in Kentucky, in three counties each in Texas and North Carolina and an additional county in Arkansas.

Mike Davis, president and co-founder of Appriss, said communities are quickly adopting VINE Protective Order because it offers an added level of protection for victims and helps government agency personnel to perform their jobs more efficiently. “We designed the system with victim safety, anonymity, and empowerment as our top priorities, and we believe VINE Protective Order addresses those needs,” Davis said.

“We’re also finding that it strengthens law enforcement’s ability to protect victims while at the same time streamlining the process of serving and enforcing protective orders.”

Individuals who petition the court for protective orders can call the toll-free VINE Protective order Line to determine the status of a protective order and register for notification. Operators are

available 24 hours a day to help petitioners register, to answer questions, and to provide information about local victim advocacy services.

As soon as the system receives confirmation that the protective order has been served, VINE Protective Order immediately begins placing notification calls to the registered petitioner. In the event of a busy signal or no answer, the system will continue to call for 24 hours or until the petitioner answers the call. The petitioner will be required to enter a personal access code to verify that the call was received.

VINE Protective Order build on the success of VINE<sup>®</sup>, the National Victim Notification Network, which Appriss created in 1994. VINE allows crime victims and other concerned citizens to obtain timely and reliable information about criminal cases and the custody status of offenders 24 hours a day – over the telephone, through the Internet, or by e-mail.

To ensure victims' safety and privacy, information about protective order cases will be accessible only to the petitioner and designated personnel. Court staff, victim advocates, and law enforcement officers will have access to the toll-free information line, as well as an in-bound telephone line and website where they can modify or update the status of an order.

“VINE Protective Order will provide victims with critical information that they can use to make more effective safety plans,” said Amy Milligan, director of advocacy services at Family Shelter Service in DuPage County, Illinois. “It’s an important tool that will help maximize the effectiveness of the remedies an order of protection provides.”

DuPage County Sheriff John Zaruba added, “I hope every victim of domestic abuse realizes that while taking out an order of protection is the first step in protecting themselves, they also need to take the second step and register with VINE Protective Order to make sure they know when the order is served.”

### ***About Appriss***

Appriss provides innovative technology solutions that help governments serve and protect their citizens. Its flagship product, VINE<sup>®</sup> is available in more than 1,500 communities in 40 states. Partnering with a team led by AT&T Government Solutions Inc., Appriss provides automated notification services to victims of Federal crimes through the U.S. Department of Justice.

Other innovative products and services include JusticeXchange(TM), the leading solution for connecting criminal justice agencies nationwide, and AlertXpress(TM), a high-speed notification solution for criminal justice agencies.

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