

**Tom Green County  
September 2012**

**SAVNS/VINE Maintenance Plan**

**PURPOSE**

This Procedure guides the operation and maintenance of the Tom Green County SAVNS/VINE system and is to be incorporated in official grant documents affecting the SAVNS/VINE System.

**BACKGROUND**

“SAVNS” is an acronym for Statewide Automated Victim Notification Service and is a statewide service that is funded through a legislative appropriation to the Office of the Attorney General. “VINE” is an acronym for Victim Information and Notification Everyday. SAVNS/VINE is a telephone service that allows victims to learn about the custody status and court proceedings involving an offender after booking into a county jail. Victims obtain free telephone and email notifications by registering through a toll-free number or the internet. The service is open to the **general public** and requires only that an individual provide an inmate’s full name or jail-assigned identification number to receive notifications. The toll-free SAVNS/VINE registration number is 877-TX4-VINE (877-894-8463). The web address to register via the internet is [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com). VINELink can also be accessed through the Sheriff’s Office website at <http://co.tom-green.tx.us>. Information regarding the SAVNS/VINE service is also available via links on the Sheriff’s Office website.

Tom Green County’s participation in SAVNS/VINE is made possible through a grant from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), which funds the program statewide. The county contracts separately with the Office of the Attorney General and the program developer, Appriss, Inc. of Louisville, Ky., to implement maintain the program.

The Tom Green County Commissioner’s Court authorized participation in the SAVNS/VINE on February 24, 2004. Following installation of jail and court management and records management software that included a SAVNS/VINE component, SAVNS/VINE became operational June 30, 2004.

**MAINTENANCE PLAN (Jail Only)**

SAVNS/VINE implementation in Tom Green County required the acquisition of inmate data via Odyssey Jail Management Software. SAVNS/VINE is a subset of the Odyssey Jail Management Software used by the Tom Green County Sheriff’s Office. The vendor (Appriss) has installed a SAVNS/VINE PC that connects to the Appriss Call Center frequently even if there is no data to send, to ensure that the communications path is available around the clock, 7 days a week.

The SAVNS/VINE PC is located in the Tom Green County Court Street Annex Building at 124 W Beauregard in San Angelo, Texas.

There are procedures in place to insure that any disruption of service is identified on a timely basis to minimize the impact to service. Susan Counts, or designee, will notify the

SAVNS/VINE Coordinator and/or the Appriss Operations Service Center, when there is to be any scheduled network downtime. Downtime includes backups, network upgrades, etc. that might impact the performance of the SAVNS/VINE system. Appriss may be notified of issues directly by the Information Technology personnel after hours or weekends, but always by email to the SAVNS/VINE Coordinator for the follow up. This procedure is the same for any problems discovered by Information Technology personnel concerning the Appriss equipment; such as, hardware failure.

Offender custody data used by SAVNS/VINE service is entered by the Sheriff's office Corrections personnel. All arrested offenders accepted by the Tom Green County Jail go through a booking process prior to their detainment or to their release. The Sheriff's Office Corrections personnel calculate the expected time of release and enter it on the individuals' record. The offender has to be released completely from the System before physically leaving the jail.

The Jail Booking phone is attached to an emergency power system. If a power failure occurred a backup battery system would automatically come on and stay on until the emergency generator activated, at which time the battery system would shut down. The Battery System will last up to four (4) hours, but the emergency generator should come on in two minutes.

## **SYSTEM ACCESS**

SAVNS/VINE services are available to any person who calls the toll-free number and can supply an inmate name or I>D> number. Users can also register via the internet through VINELink at [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com). An added feature of the SAVNS/VINE system is VINEWatch, a secure website designed to give criminal justice personnel and victim advocates the ability to register people for notification of changes in offender custody status and court events. This site is accessed through assigned User IDs and passwords. The program enables users to generate reports and track usage of the SAVNS/VINE service. Users also may add registrations, including anonymous registrations, for notification of inmate custody status.

The new VINEWatch web site requires an approved user name and password. A limited number of users are allowed through Tom Green County's contracts with the Attorney General's Office and Appriss. The OAG SAVNS/VINE Program Manager will retain written records of those who have requested and obtained access, and will be the contact for all VINEWatch inquiries.

## **SYSTEM TESTING & PROGRAMMATIC REPORTING**

The Texas Attorney General's Office requires testing of the SAVNS/VINE system to ensure functionality and accuracy. As a grantee, Tom Green County is obligated to perform these system tests and to promptly report problems to Appriss, and to the appropriate County Department.

These tests will be conducted and documented by the SAVNS/VINE Coordinator and in her/his absence, by a designated representative of the Sheriff's Office.

The SAVNS/VINE Coordinator will report any problems, or discrepancies, noted as a result of testing the SAVNS/VINE service to the Texas Customer Account Representative or to the Appriss Operations Center. The SAVNS/VINE Coordinator maintains a SAVNS/VINE

Activity that includes the recording of all problems noted with the system, to whom the problem was referred, and when the problem was resolved. The same process is followed for any problems reported to the SAVNS/VINE Coordinator by users of the SAVNS/VINE Service, VINELink or VINEWatch.

The SAVNS/VINE Coordinator in turn will report any problems reported by Appriss that may be county related to the appropriate department.

### **SYSTEM MAINTENANCE**

The Information Technology Department is responsible for reporting any SAVNS/VINE system hardware or software problems that are observed by Operators or the Server Group. This observation is accomplished by visual inspection of the SAVNS/VINE PC and or via messages from the network operating system software.

Information Technology staff will promptly notify the SAVNS/VINE coordinator of equipment problems, scheduled shut-downs, etc. The SAVNS/VINE coordinator in turn will notify the Information Technology contact of the system problems either discovered by the coordinator or called in by others.

The SAVNS/VINE coordinator and/or Information Technology Department will notify Appriss when operations or maintenance issues cannot be resolved at the County level. The SAVNS/VINE coordinator will document Appriss' efforts to resolve such problems.

### **SUPPRESSION OF INFORMATION**

The Tom Green County Sheriff's office may from time to time suppress notification messages on the whereabouts or release of certain inmates. Suppression will be accomplished by the SAVNS/VINE Coordinator through the Emergency Override Line (EOL) after receipt of a signed request from the Sheriff or Chief Deputy explaining the need for suppression. A record of such requests will be maintained by the SAVNS/Vine coordinator.

### **CONTRACTS, PAYMENT & REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

The Designated SAVNS Grant Contact receives the contract paperwork from the OAG and a contract from Appriss. Once a contract is received, it is placed on the County commissioner's Court schedule for approval. When the contract is approved, the distribution is as follows: (a) **State Contract** – one original is returned to the OAG and the County retains the other original (b) **Appriss Contract** – one original to the OAG, one to Appriss and one to the County Clerk.

The invoice from Appriss is received by the County Auditor or Treasurer, where it is submitted for permission to pay it. Verification that a Budget has been set up and the appropriate cost center is being used for the payment. The Authorized Official or their designee then signs the invoice for payment. A Purchase Order number is obtained and then submitted to Accounts Payable as a priority so that the check is sent by certified mail to Appriss.

The process that the Auditor's Office proceeds with for reimbursement from the Office of the Attorney General is as follows:

Detailed expenditure reports are requested to verify if there is a payment made to Appriss the certified vendor. A copy of the check issued and the corresponding documents to justify the payments are necessary to request for expenditure reimbursements.

An invoice is submitted to the Office of the Attorney General within 20 days following the end of the month that a reimbursable expenditure was incurred. The County may submit a make-up claim as a final close-out invoice not later than the earliest of forty-five (45) calendar days after termination. The invoice form submitted must be in compliance with the OAG invoicing requirements.

Each invoice presented must include the OAG's contract number. The invoice must identify Tom Green County's Texas Vendor Identification number (VIN), a description of the expense, and a notation that the requested reimbursement is in regards to the SAVNS Grant. The OAG is under no obligation to reimburse County if supporting documentation is not provided in a timely basis.

The Invoice must be submitted to:

Financial Manager – Grants Administration Division  
Office of the Attorney General  
Mail Code: 005  
P. O. Box 12548  
Austin, TX 78711-2548

The county may make a written request to the OAG to be placed on Direct Deposit Status by completing and submitting to the OAG the State Comptroller's Direct Deposit Authorization Form. After the direct deposit request is approved by the OAG and the DD deposit is completed on the Texas Identification Number System by the State Comptroller's Office, payment will be remitted by direct deposit and the OAG will continue providing the County with copies of the reimbursement.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

All parties to the SAVNS/VINE program in Tom Green County may have copies of current contracts, appendices, SAVNS/VINE Maintenance Plan and program personnel contact information. Copies are available from those Departments and SAVNS/VINE coordinator.