

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 981

S.P. 408

In Senate, March 11, 2025

An Act to Provide Electronic Notification to Victims of Crimes

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Senator: HARRINGTON of York.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 15 MRSA §2136, sub-§6-A** is enacted to read:

3 **6-A. Electronic notice.** "Electronic notice" means a notice delivered by an e-mail,
4 text message or application-based system.

5 **Sec. 2. 15 MRSA §2138, sub-§13,** as enacted by PL 2001, c. 469, §1, is amended
6 to read:

7 **13. Victim notification.** When practicable, the attorney for the State shall make a
8 good faith effort to give written notice or electronic notice of a motion under this section
9 to the victim of the person described in subsection 1 or to the victim's family if the victim
10 is deceased. ~~The A written~~ notice must be by first-class mail to the victim's last known
11 address. Upon the victim's request, the attorney for the State shall give the victim written
12 notice or electronic notice of the time and place of any hearing on the motion and shall
13 inform the victim of the court's grant or denial of a new trial to the person.

14 **Sec. 3. 15 MRSA §6101, sub-§1,** as amended by PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. C, §§53 and
15 54, is further amended to read:

16 **1. Notice to victims.** Whenever practicable, the attorney for the State shall make a
17 good faith effort to inform, by written notice or electronic notice, as defined in section
18 2136, subsection 6-A, the victims and families of victims of crimes of domestic violence
19 and sexual assault and crimes in which the victim or the victim's family suffered serious
20 physical trauma or serious financial loss of:

21 A. The victim advocate and the victims' compensation fund pursuant to Title 5, chapter
22 316-A;

23 B. The victim's right to be advised of the existence of a negotiated plea agreement
24 before that agreement is submitted to the court pursuant to Title 17-A, section 2103;

25 C. The time and place of the trial, if one is to be held;

26 D. The victim's right to make a statement or submit a written statement at the time of
27 sentencing pursuant to Title 17-A, section 2104 upon conviction of the defendant; and

28 E. The final disposition of the charges against that defendant.

29 **Sec. 4. 17-A MRSA §2101, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

30 **1-A. Electronic notice.** "Electronic notice" means a notice delivered by an e-mail,
31 text message or application-based system.

32 **Sec. 5. 17-A MRSA §2106, sub-§2,** as enacted by PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. A, §2, is
33 amended to read:

34 **2. Notification of victim.** The Department of Corrections or the state mental health
35 institute or the county jail to which the defendant is committed shall keep the victim's
36 written request for a notification under subsection 1 in the file of the defendant and shall
37 notify the victim by written notice in the mail or electronic notice to a telephone number or
38 e-mail address of any impending release as soon as the release date is set or, if the defendant
39 has escaped, by the quickest means reasonably practicable. This notification must be
40 mailed to the address provided in the request or any subsequent address provided by the
41 victim.

1 **Sec. 6. 17-A MRSA §2107, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. A, §2, is
2 amended to read:

3 **3. Method of notification.** Notification under subsection 2 must be made by a
4 telephone call or electronic notice either directly to the victim or as provided in subsection
5 5. In the event that the jail has not succeeded in contacting the victim after the jail has
6 exercised due diligence in attempting to contact the victim, notification of the defendant's
7 release must be made to the law enforcement agency that investigated the report of
8 domestic violence, sexual assault under chapter 11 or stalking. That law enforcement
9 agency shall make a reasonable attempt to notify the victim of the defendant's release on
10 preconviction bail.

11 **Sec. 7. Automated crime victims notification system.** The County Corrections
12 Professional Standards Council, as established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5,
13 section 12004-G, subsection 6-D, shall establish an automated crime victims notification
14 system. The system must be used to provide notices of an offender's change in incarceration
15 status or custody and notices regarding criminal justice proceedings considered to be in the
16 best interest of crime victims in this State and public safety. The council shall contract with
17 a commercial real-time automated crime victims notification system intended to develop,
18 support, house and maintain the automated crime victims notification system for use by the
19 Department of Public Safety, the Maine Sheriffs' Association and the Department of
20 Corrections. The contract must require that the contracted entity provide the following:

- 21 1. Operating a support center open on a 24-hours-per-day, 7-days-per-week basis;
- 22 2. E-mail, text message and application-based capabilities;
- 23 3. English and Spanish real-time operations; and
- 24 4. Directory or contact information for community-based support services, including
25 but not limited to housing services, mental and physical health resources, domestic violence
26 resources and financial assistance.

27 **Sec. 8. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
28 allocations are made.

29 **CORRECTIONS, DEPARTMENT OF**
30 **Administration - Corrections 0141**

31 Initiative: Provides one-time funding to the County Corrections Professional Standards
32 Council for the development, support and maintenance of the automated crime victims
33 notification system.

34 GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
35 All Other	\$575,000	\$0
36		
37 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$575,000	\$0

38 **SUMMARY**

39 Current law requires written notice to be made to victims of crimes in the event that a
40 defendant is released on preconviction bail or released or escaped from custody. This bill
41 allows for that notice to be electronic. The bill requires the County Corrections Professional

1 Standards Council to implement an automated crime victims notification system. The
2 automated system provides a victim with timely notices of an offender's change in
3 incarceration status or custody and notices regarding criminal justice proceedings
4 considered to be in the best interest of crime victims in this State and in the interests of
5 public safety. Finally, the bill provides an appropriation of \$575,000 from the General Fund
6 in fiscal year 2025-26 for the purposes of development, support and maintenance of the
7 automated crime victims notification system.