



Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

To: Interested Parties

From: Craig P. Orgeron, CPM, Ph.D. *CMO*

CC: ITS Project Number 48604

Date: October 22, 2024

Re: Sole Source Certification Number 4655 to provide support and maintenance for a Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification system for the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC)

Contact Name: Matthew Livingston

Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8244

Contact E-mail Address: Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov

Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4655 for the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC), please be advised that ITS intends to award Equifax Inc. dba Appriss Insights, LLC as the sole source provider of support and maintenance for a Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification system through December 31, 2027, in an amount not to exceed \$2,206,096.68. Please be advised that ITS will determine if additional support and maintenance are within scope during the certification period and may increase the spending authority accordingly. Should Equifax Inc. dba Appriss Insights, LLC change their name during this certification period, then ITS will determine if a recertification is necessary. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy, and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exist:

Mississippi Code §99-45-1 required DOC to establish a statewide automated victim information and notification system (SAVIN) to notify registered victims of informative status changes on county/state offenders (releases, escapes, transfers, etc.). The Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE), provided by Appriss Insights, LLC, provides the required automated notification services. VINE meets all the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) guidelines and standards and, to date, MDOC nor the vendor are aware of other entities making notifications, in whole or in part, on a statewide basis or in a limited manner.

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

The Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) is an online service through which a registrant can utilize the telephone or the internet to search for information regarding the custody status of an offender, also the registrant can register to receive automated telephone, text message, TTY (hearing impaired), and email notifications upon the offender's custody status change. Services are available in English and Spanish. MDOC also uses the following services:

- **The SMS text messaging feature allows registrants to receive notification via text.**
- **Registration Link scans offenders in the SAVIN system and matches them based on a series of criteria (name, date of birth, social security number, etc.). This matching allows offenders that are transferred to different state facilities to be linked without the need for a common statewide ID number. Registration can then be transferred so that victims are notified as the offender moves through the facilities. Registration Link also included the implementation of DataBridge Watches and Photos.**
- **DataBridge allows user to quickly search for and/or create subscriptions against multiple offenders. Queries and all resulting information are passed between the customer's system and the database and all matches on person watches are emailed to the user.**
- **Photos will extract, transform, and load photographic images of offenders in the VINE system.**

VINE also interfaces with the Offendertrak system, which is in use by the prisons, restitution, and community work centers statewide. In order for MDOC to continue offering these services to the registrants, maintenance, support, and enhancements to VINE must be maintained.

3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services:

VINE is a proprietary product owned exclusively by Appriss Insights, LLC and is not sold through third-party vendors. The vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment A.

Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	10/22/2024
Second Advertisement Date	10/29/2024
Response Deadline From Objectors	11/5/2024 at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 11/6/2024

Project Details

In December 2007, ITS, on behalf of MDOC, entered into a Professional Services Agreement with Appriss, Inc., as the sole source provider of Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) services throughout the 82 counties of Mississippi. At the time, Appriss was the only provider of the VINE services that interfaced with the Offendertrak system in use by the prisons, restitution, and community work centers statewide.

In early 2008, MDOC and Appriss worked jointly to implement a secure web-based portal that allows victims to register online to receive automatic email or telephone notification in the event

of an offender status change and to look up offenders and cases via the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) program. Appriss also includes automated outbound telephone services and inbound telephone support that is monitored 24x7 with live operators.

In October 2009, the ITS Board approved Amendment #1 to the Agreement to implement VINE Protective Order (VPO) to notify victims when a protective order, such as a temporary restraining order, is issued. In January 2011, the ITS Board approved Amendment #2 to the Agreement to expand the SAVIN program by replacing the VINE Protective Order (VPO) with CHOICE, SMS text messaging, and Registration Link. In April 2014, Amendment #3 was executed to extend the initial term to June 30, 2014, for maintenance and support services for the SAVIN system. Beginning in December 2018, ITS began issuing Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source without receiving any objections from interested parties. Several Amendments to the Agreement have been executed to renew the maintenance and support of VINE, and the Agreement now expires December 31, 2024. MDOC has spent to date \$14,200,906.98.

Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the support and maintenance for a Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification system for the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to Equifax Inc. dba Appriss Insights, LLC.

- 1.1 Interested Party Information
 - 1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address
 - 1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable
- 1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification
 - 1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.
 - 1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.
- 1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Tuesday, November 5, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Matthew Livingston at Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. **ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES.** It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Matthew Livingston to verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO
Sole Source Certification No. 4655-48604
Accepted until November 5, 2024 @ 3:00 p.m.,
ATTENTION: Matthew Livingston

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Matthew Livingston at 601-432-8244 or via email at Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov.

Attachment A: Vendor Correspondence

Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview



August 14, 2024

Ms. Audrey McAfee
Mississippi Department of Corrections
301 North Lamar
Jackson, MS 39201

RE: Sole Source Justification for the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITC)
on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC)

Dear Ms. McAfee,

We are pleased to submit this sole source justification for the Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) service.

Since 1994, Appriss Insights, LLC ("Insights") and its predecessor have delivered statewide victim notification solutions across 48 states, including Mississippi. Insights is the only company with experience providing comprehensive victim notification services for Mississippi. Since moving to the new platform in late 2019, Mississippi VINE has had over 492,660 registrations for notifications to victims/survivors of crime, and the system made over 1,372,852 notifications to registrants during that same period.

As the current provider for Mississippi VINE, Insights has been providing timely, automated victim notifications in Mississippi for 17 years and offers unique advantages, such as an extensive partnership history, hands-on training opportunities, and 24/7/365 support.

Insights values its partnership with the Mississippi Department of Corrections and is appreciative of the opportunity to continue to serve the victims and survivors of Mississippi through automated notification services. For questions or additional information about our other services that can benefit victims within Mississippi, please contact Erica Cecil, Client Relationship Manager, at 502-815-5848 or email erica.cecil@equifax.com.

Sincerely,

Jarrold Carnahan

Digitally signed by Jarrod
Carnahan
Date: 2024.08.23 14:03:11 -04'00'

Jarrold Carnahan
Vice President, Government and Victim Services
Equifax, Inc.
Enclosed: Sole Source Justification



SOLE SOURCE JUSTIFICATION: AUTOMATED VICTIM NOTIFICATION SERVICES

Sole Sourcing: Our Experience and History of Successful Partnerships

The Mississippi Department of Corrections partners with Appriss Insights, LLC. ("Insights"), a division of Equifax Workforce Solutions, to provide automated notification services to victims and concerned citizens in Mississippi. Since 1994, the provider of VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) has partnered with hundreds of law enforcement agencies and has been successfully implemented in nearly every state. Using a proprietary arrest data network and statewide implementation strategy, VINE is designed to notify victims of changes in an offender's status (e.g., custody status, facility transfers, escapes, etc.). Dozens of these agencies have found it most prudent to purchase the VINE service through sole-source procurement.

Benefits and Advantages of VINE

VINE is facilitated by Insights' expansive arrest data network that was developed nearly 30 years ago. VINE has benefited millions of registrants since its inception, providing them with the power of knowledge and the ability to better ensure their safety and those close to them. Specific benefits include:

- Providing real-time offender custody information to victims of crime and concerned citizens.
- Accessible by phone, website, and mobile app.
- Notifications are available through In-App, phone, email, and text.
- Sensitivity-trained "Customer First" Center staff accessible 24/7/365, able to provide support in over 200 languages.
- Protective order, probation & parole and court notifications (available in some states).
- Pre-arrest registration services for VINE.

To date, we are not aware of other entities making notifications, in whole or in part, following the aforementioned criteria on a statewide basis, or in a limited manner. Importantly, VINE meets all the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) guidelines and standards.

Competitive Landscape

Insights is considered a sole source vendor based on the following:

- Software is a proprietary product owned exclusively by Appriss Insights, LLC.
- Software is not sold through third-party vendors.
- Maintenance and technical support are included with the service through Appriss Insights, LLC.
- VINE branding and logo images are copyright protected and available only through Appriss Insights, LLC.

The automated victim notification technology was introduced in 1994, born out of an avoidable tragedy in the Louisville, KY community. VINE remains today not only the nation's leading provider of automated victim notifications, but also the sole entity that can readily deliver this life-saving service due to cutting-edge technology, expert staff, state-of-the-art facilities, scalability, and the type of insight and compassion that comes from decades of experience and collaboration within the victim services community.

Attachment B

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in *Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1, et seq.*, and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website (www.its.ms.gov).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (*Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13*) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in *Section 25-53-5 (p)*, permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, and
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as *Attachment A*.

By policy as documented in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$75,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.