



Sustainability Survey Report

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National SAVIN Training and Technical Assistance Project Team

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	2
Survey Methodology	2
Summary of Results	2
Conclusion	5
<i>Appendix A: Survey Questions and Responses</i>	6

Introduction

One of the important roles of the National SAVIN Training and Technical Assistance Project, supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the Office of Justice Programs of the U.S. Department of Justice, is to help states consider measures to sustain their SAVIN programs and ensure ongoing funding. Sustainability is a key concern across the country, as articulated by SAVIN administrators during outreach telephone calls conducted by the SAVIN Project Team. The Project Team developed a brief survey to identify what funding sources have been and are currently being utilized, the level of concern about sustainability and ideas for future funding.

Survey Methodology

Utilizing the Project's SAVIN Contacts database, the seven question survey was sent to 93 individuals. These included SAVIN administrators, Project Advisory Board members, "Other State Contacts" (practitioners and key stakeholders working within state SAVIN programs) and Project Team members. The survey was developed using Survey Monkey, and emailed to the 93 individuals on two separate occasions in April and May 2012. It was completed by 32 respondents. A summary of survey results is highlighted below, and *Appendix A* features the cumulative verbatim answers from survey respondents.

Summary of Results

Question One: Please check all sources of funding that you currently utilize (or have in the past utilized) to fund your SAVIN program.

The vast majority of respondents (80 percent) indicated they currently utilize BJA grant funding to support their programs. One-third of respondents (33 percent) have a line item in their state budget and nearly one-quarter (24 percent) are utilizing Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding.

Others sources being utilized to a lesser extent include:

- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding (7 percent)
- Byrne federal grants (7 percent)
- State victim compensation funds (7 percent)
- Byrne state allocations (3 percent)
- American Recovery Act funding (3 percent)

Although listed as an option on the survey, Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) funding was not cited as a source of SAVIN funding (although since the survey was conducted, at least one state passed legislation to fund SAVIN with JRI savings).

Respondents noted that in addition to the resources listed on the survey, they also utilize surcharges on inmates' phone calls, money collected from traffic fines, assessment of inmate wages, and surcharges assessed from civil cases.

Question Two: Do you use any of the following costs assessed to offenders to fund your SAVIN program (i.e., offenders' fines/fees; portion of victim restitution payments; percentage of inmate phone call costs; and percentage of inmate trust accounts)?

Of the 12 respondents who answered this question, eight use offenders' fines or fees, and three use surcharges on inmate phone calls. No one indicated the use of victim restitution payments.

Participants' comments indicate that state-specific funding, administrative fees and "other state funding" earmarked for victim/witness assistance are all being utilized to support SAVIN programs, as well as assessments from inmates' wages and trust accounts.

Question Three: How concerned are you about sustaining your SAVIN Program?

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they are experiencing some level of concern about the sustainability of their SAVIN program (see *Figure 1*).

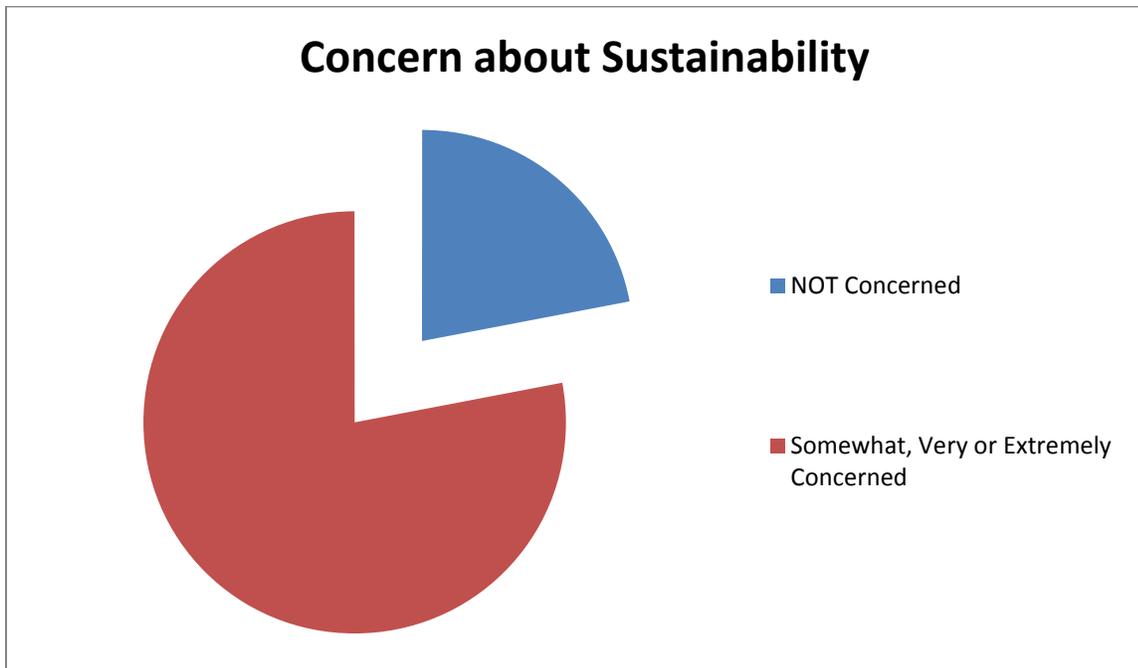


Figure 1

41 percent of respondents indicated that they are "somewhat concerned" about sustaining their SAVIN program. 19 percent are "very concerned" and another 19 percent are "extremely

concerned.” The structure of the survey does not provide specific information about the 28 percent of the respondents who are not currently experiencing concerns about program sustainability.

However, anecdotal information derived from the Project Team’s outreach calls to states found that states which have a line item for SAVIN in their state budget are experiencing the least amount of concern.

Question Four: What are the two-to-three most significant challenges to sustaining your SAVIN Program?

When asked to list two or three significant challenges to sustaining their program, financial stability was the most common response. Programs that have a line item in their state budgets are concerned that the economy will negatively impact their continued funding.

Another concern shared by several respondents goes beyond sustaining SAVIN programs to having the ability and resources to make enhancements that more effectively serve the needs of crime victims and survivors.

Question Five: Please describe your plan/strategy to sustain your SAVIN program.

A number of the 30 responses to Question Five relate to expanded promotion and public awareness of SAVIN services and their benefits and value to victims and other stakeholders; and efforts to increase SAVIN growth and usage. Additional sustainability strategy themes include:

- Agencies participating in SAVIN assume a percentage of program costs
- Pass legislation or amend existing laws to ensure ongoing funding
- Continue to pursue efforts to lower program costs
- Educate legislators about the importance and value of SAVIN

Question Six: Aside from additional resources (which are very limited in these challenging economic times), what assistance do you need in order to help you and your colleagues to sustain your SAVIN program?

24 respondents identified a wide range of additional resources needed to sustain SAVIN programs, with increased public outreach, publicity and marketing efforts at the state and national levels identified by many respondents. Other “additional resources” include:

- Learn from other SAVIN states and jurisdictions about their sustainability efforts and plans
- Identify federal and state resources available to support SAVIN

- Increase victim/survivor and public awareness
- Seek cost reductions from service providers
- Increased cross-training among agencies that sponsor SAVIN

Question Seven: Please provide any additional comments about your efforts to sustain SAVIN programs and funding, including any challenges your state may currently face.

12 responses were received to Question Seven, with the need for improved collaboration and relationships emerging as a common theme. Other responses identified the detrimental impact of state budget cuts on SAVIN sustainability; the need for efforts to integrate SAVIN with allied justice information systems and other measures to reduce costs; the importance of implementing a SAVIN public awareness campaign; and educating local and state officials about the value of SAVIN to encourage their support for the program.

Conclusion

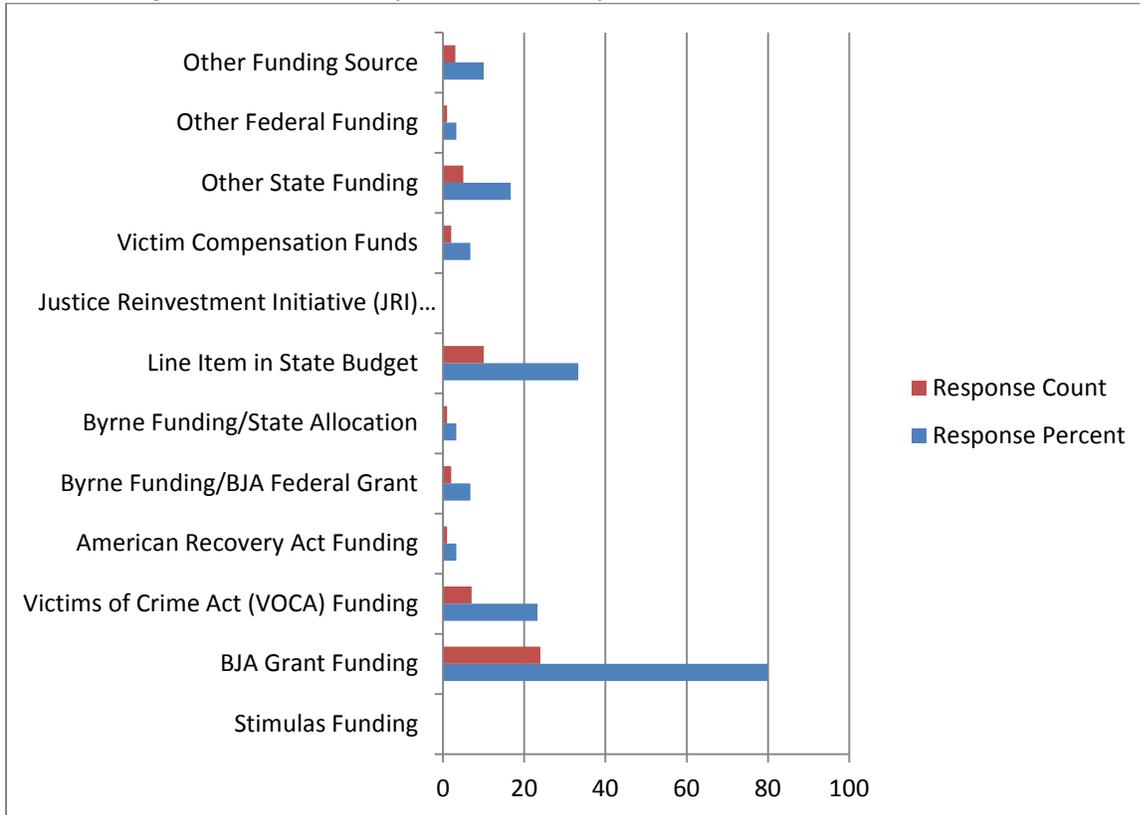
State budget cutbacks and the reduction of federal funding sources for SAVIN programs pose significant challenges to states as they seek long-term sustainability plans for SAVIN. While one-third of responding states have succeeded in funding SAVIN through a line item in their state budget, others struggle to find creative sustainability solutions.

Improved collaboration among SAVIN stakeholders, greater education of policy makers, increased victim/survivor and public awareness about the value of SAVIN, and efforts to reduce the cost of SAVIN operations are all important strategies undertaken by states to sustain their programs. The many sustainability ideas and options described in this *Sustainability Survey Report* should be helpful to states in developing long-term sustainability plans, and to the National Project Team in helping states address the many challenges to SAVIN sustainability.

Survey Questions and Responses

- Please check all sources of funding you currently utilize (or have in the past utilized) to fund your SAVIN program. We'd also like to hear any additional comments you may have (space for comments is provided at the end of this survey).**

32 of 32 individuals responded to this question



Verbatim/Unedited Responses

Additional Comments:

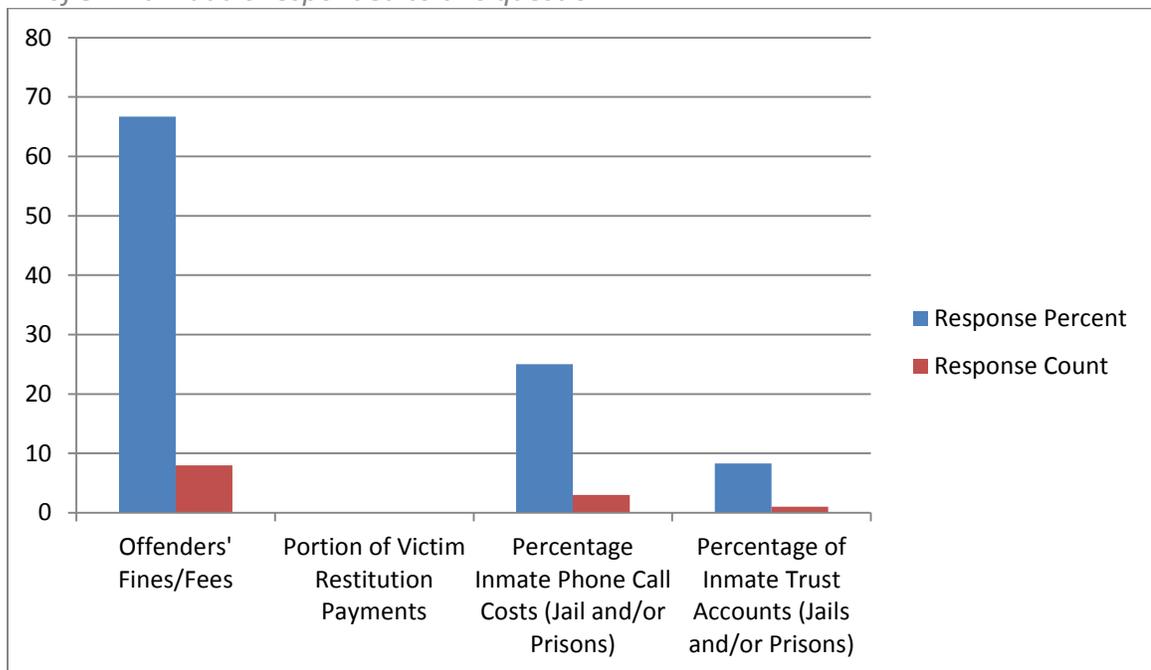
- State funding – Rights and Services Act (RASA) funding. This funding is used to fund procedural services to victims of crime. Federal Funding – Justice Assistance Grant (JAG).
- VOCA funds were used to get notification system established fines collected from offenders convicted in state courts pay maintenance fees SAVIN enhancement grant.
- Special appropriations in state budget
- Inmate telephone surcharge
- We have applied for a Byrne/JAG funding/state allocation and currently three detention centers are paying with their inmate telephone system contracts.
- We receive a portion of a state justice information sharing surcharge (\$22.00 that is assessed on certain civil cases). This fully funds statewide VINE and VINE Protective

Order. Start-up costs were through BJA funding. Our DOC notification system is funded through S&S dollars in the DOC Office of Victim Services budget.

- We charge the inmates a surcharge on their phone calls and that helps pay for VINE.
- Other state funding – dedicated funding (although not state budget line item) for victim/witness types of activities. This fund can be used for efforts associated with victim notification, sex offender registration, and prosecutor office training. VOCA funding has only been used to assist with promotional material production.
- BJA grant was the original implementation grant.
- At risk during hard economic times
- Monies collected from traffic fines also go to fund MOVANS.
- SC SAVIN is funded with assessment on inmate wages of those inmates working in Prison industries and a small percentage from inmates working on work release programs in the community.

2. Do you use any of the following costs assessed to offenders to fund your SAVIN program?

12 of 32 individuals responded to this question



Verbatim/Unedited Responses

Other (please specify):

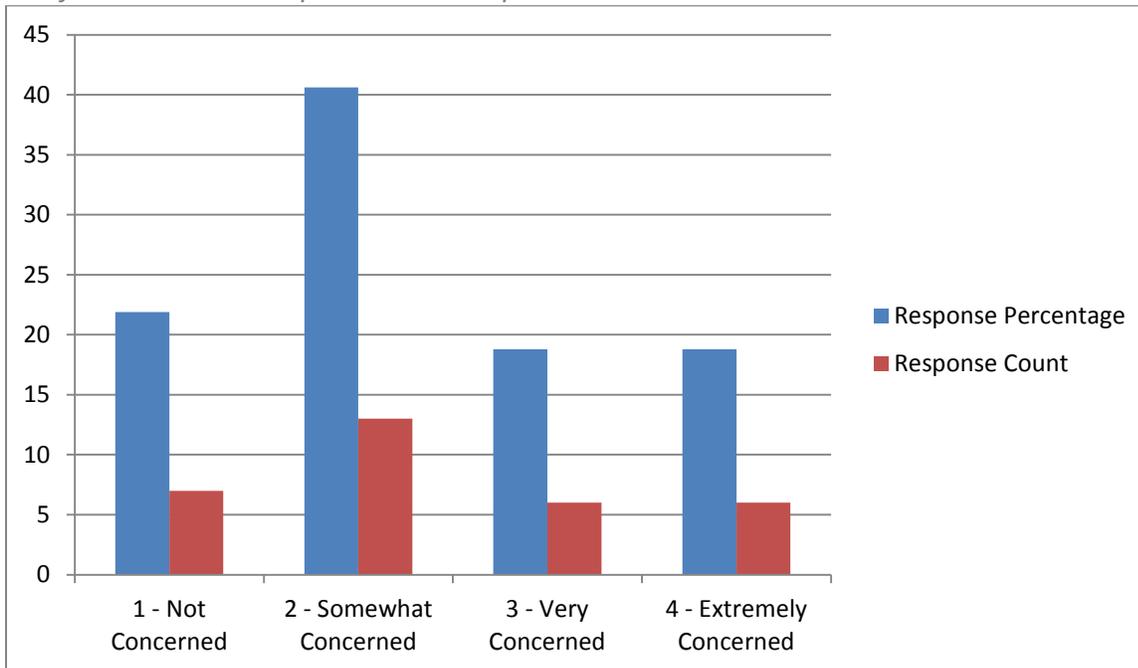
- RASA funds
- The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) deducts and retains 50 percent of wages and trust account deposits of offenders and an additional 10 percent administrative fee is deposited into Special Deposit Fund for future

reimbursement of the department’s administrative support costs for victim restitution program.

- None
- The answer above is link to the “other state funding” item in question one.
- No
- Assessment of inmate wages of those inmates working in prison industries or work release programs.

3. On a scale of 1 to 4, how concerned are you about sustaining your SAVIN program?

32 of 32 individuals responded to this question



4. What are the two-to-three most significant challenges to sustaining your SAVIN program?

Verbatim/Unedited Responses

32 of 32 individuals responded to this question

- Ascertain a viable funding source that does not take away from the current funding that needs to go towards Victim Service Programs and their services to victims. Victim Service Programs have been experiencing major funding cuts the past few years and we cannot use that funding towards sustaining SAVIN. Another source of income needs to be generated to pay for SAVIN.
- Newly elected sheriffs do not always want to continue what their predecessors started, so may stop participating. Sheriffs and court clerks do not put interfacing costs into their RFPs when they change booking or case management systems.

- In California, CDCR has implemented SAVIN program in collaboration with California State Sheriffs Association (CSSA). Both CDCR and CSSA receive BJA funding for the implementation of its VINE system. CSSA currently funds 41 of the 58 counties. The challenge for CSSA is ongoing funding for the 41 counties and garnering the interest of the remaining 17 counties to join California's State SAVIN program. Current challenges are: funding, re-establishing a statewide SGC to include all stakeholders, training at the local level regarding need to ensure victims are informed about their rights to notification and how to register with VINE regardless of the offender's status (state prison or county jail).
- Funding (two respondents)
- No possible way that we would be able to receive any state funds or general fund dollars to support NV VINE program. Need legislation in 2013 to "house" the NV VINE program at the AG's office. Small rural counties are not able to fund and really do not see the value when they only have three arrests average per week. Department of Corrections most likely does not have ability to fund a portion of service contract with the SAVIN service provider.
- Maintain utilization and awareness/outreach. SAVIN can be an 'invisible' program so efforts must always continue. We go to all law enforcement and victim advocacy conferences, clerk of court, judges, District Attorneys, etc.
- 1) Availability of Federal funding that doesn't have an "expiration date" that requires state/agency/organization pick up full costs after a limited number of years i.e. three years. 2) Even if current level of funding is maintained, there are enhancements that are responsive to victim requests for "better services" that can't be put into effect without expanded funding opportunities.
- Keep funding in the state budget, losing grant funds for additional features.
- I am not concerned with sustaining the funding. I am concerned with not being able to do the enhancements to the program that will benefit victims.
- The monthly service provider fee is very high and with what we bring in each month from the inmate surcharge, we are only able to pay for my project manager salary, any costs associated with VINE training, and then send the service provider approximately 10-12 percent of what their monthly maintenance fee is. I do not see ever being able to send them their full fee each month unless we are able to find a statewide funding avenue. They attempted to pass legislation years ago to fund this SAVIN program and were unsuccessful. We are going to attempt to try and pass some type of legislation again next year. Some of the agencies will not use the surcharge, therefore they cannot go on VINE because they do not have a means to pay for it. If we can pass statewide legislation, we could probably get ALL the counties using the SAVIN program.
- See 7... 1) Fees from offenders will not be enough to sustain the program, 2) No additional money for upgrades to service such as texting, and maintenance for vendors.
- At this point, we really don't have any significant challenges to sustaining our SAVIN program. This has all been attributed to recreating our system using low cost technology solution with little ongoing operating costs.

- Keeping the funding as a line item, in our state budget. As states continue to cut budgets our concern is this program stands the change of being cut.
- State funding has been reduced each of the last three years.
- Increasing costs from vendors and the reluctance of the legislature to increase funding to victim services, including SAVIN the program.
- Keeping up with legislative and technology changes as they are needed....very costly and time consuming to stay on top of.
- THE STATE BUDGET
- 1) Due to current state of Nevada's budget, obtaining funding through our legislature may be difficult, 2) While grant funding could be utilized for funding, it appears that federal funding sources are reducing their awards significantly.
- Continued economic downturns. Continuous turnover of legislators, so the need to ensure new legislators understand its value. The Protective Order program is seen as separate, so it has already been cut. We are working to reinstate. Right now we have a bridge grant.
- Continued cooperation between state and local agencies, and buy-in from local agencies.
- Continued legislative support demonstrated results; ongoing commitment from local communities and service providers; increased and expanded utilization and demonstrated impact on community safety.
- State budgetary issues. SAVIN funds not being available going forward.
- Availability of state funds, support from the local victim services community getting the word out.
- 1) Maintaining an appropriate level of funding to continue the high visibility presence necessary to effectively coordinate, maintain, and develop the SAVIN program within New York State. 2) Maintaining a high enough priority in NYS's IT portfolio to keep the system current and make the necessary ongoing improvements. 3) Maintaining appropriate staffing within both the criminal justice agencies and the coordinating agency to continue to assure timely, accurate, and complete entry of critical data necessary to maintain an effective system of victim notification. 4) Develop an appropriate level of funding to make the NY model transportable to other states.
- N/A as of now, our monies come from a pool of funds collected from traffic offenders. We do not foresee this fund being depleted.
- Not wanting to compete with victim witness support services or with nonprofits that provide direct services to victims for funding...fear we'll be seen in a bad light. Not hearing about applicable grant opportunities in time to put together proposals.
- As operating budgets diminish, maintaining funding levels to continue program operation.
- The economy because inmates on work release programs fund SAVIN and inmates in Prison industries fund our program. The economy directly impacts the funds. Finding competent employees – program manager position remains vacant because not successful finding a qualified person.
- Cost versus usage small population state.

5. Please describe your plan/strategy to sustain your SAVIN program.

Verbatim/Unedited Responses

30 of 32 individuals responded to this question

- Looking at every program and ideas to maintain SAVIN.
- We currently have been able to only require County Prisons to pay 50 percent of the SAVIN costs due to having BJA funds. County prisons may have to take on paying for the entire SAVIN costs in the future and they may not have the resources to do so.
- Seeking amendment of the statute authorizing the fine for the program to make it easier to calculate so judges don't fail to impose.
- Continue collaboration and partnership between CDCR and CSSA, explore permanent funding source for statewide SAVIN program, and request technical assistance and training from National SAVIN Project Team to provide leadership and support necessary to continue efforts toward enhancing the implementation of a truly statewide automated victim notification system.
- We just had the state legislature increase the amount of the litigation fee. We are also beginning a statewide educational push to educate our court clerks in better collections of fees.
- Grants, grants and more grants.
- Promote utilization so that the state recognizes the value of the program. Work with victim advocacy organizations statewide to foster program support on a grass roots level. Assist victim organizations with their own fundraising to support direct victim services so that we will not be competing for dollars.
- Continue to increase awareness and utilization of the service so there would be a public outcry if the service were to be cut or were to end. 2. Provide regular statistics to funding sources and legislative authorities to demonstrate the increased utilization
- Currently in a line item, protected by state statute.
- None.
- We tentatively plan to charge a fee per use for the State's criminal justice information sharing system, upon which the SAVIN program will be based. Fees will not be charged for any SAVIN services, but for other services that use the same technology infrastructure.
- Try and pass legislation of some kind so that we can have all the counties on this program and we do not have worry about the fluctuating of the phone surcharge from inmates.
- We have a dedicated "other state funding" source and a very low cost technology solution. The other state funding source should be able to support our SAVIN efforts going forward. Although we have a very low cost solution, we will continue working to lower costs further as we continue to expand the notification opportunities we make available to victims.
- Continue to request state funds.

- By continuing to provide services to crime victims, their families, and other interested parties. By adding the Louisiana Protective Order Registry to our system. Keeping the public informed and aware of what the services provided by the system.
- No structured plan aside from educating legislature about importance of service and keeping costs down.
- Our Attorney General's commitment to program allows our state to continue funding multi-agencies through VOCA funding. This has survived several administration changes through the years and we're hopeful it would continue...although, not guaranteed.
- SEEK CURRENT FUNDING EITHER THROUGH THE STATE OR BJA.
- We plan to request funding for our SAVIN program through the legislative process in 2013. We are looking to law enforcement, victim advocates, professionals in the field and victims to offer testimony during this process as to the importance of this program.
- SAVIN is linked to other programs in this state and in the budget, which help protect it. Seeing continued growth and usage of the program and the others also speaks to their increasing value.
- The SAVIN program will be sustained through general fund funding.
- Continuous information sharing/results with local officials, sheriffs, legislators and victim service professionals. Case studies that can demonstrate the impact on individuals and community safety as a result of the VINE service being available.
- Find more affordable ways to provide the same services.
- We are now part of our agency's budget and expect to stay there. Our program is not that expensive to maintain so I do not think it is in jeopardy.
- We built our system around an existing and very effective alert/notification infrastructure (nyalert.gov) which is operated by the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. We were able to leverage much of their technology and expertise in building this system as well as the technology and expertise of the NYSP and eJusticeNY portal. While the grant paid for much of the development cost, NYS has recognized the importance of this program and has been very generous in terms of letting us piggyback on their system and in many ways absorbing much of the operational overhead of running such a large scale system. However, in these challenging economic times, I am certain that everyone will be looking for each program area to pay their fair share, so our year funding is a serious concern and we are trying to develop an innovative strategy to maintain continuous ongoing program funding.
- For now, state funding.
- Keeping the leadership of this organization apprised of the benefits and gains made through the SAVIN system. Provide information to legislators.
- Continue what we are doing -- funding program with assessment to inmates wages.
- Marketing the program for usage.

6. Aside from additional resources (which are very limited in these challenging economic times), what assistance do you need in order to help you and your colleagues to sustain your SAVIN program?

Verbatim/Unedited Responses

24 of 32 individuals responded to this question

- Ideas on how to identify other possible financial resources and what other states/counties have done to sustain.
- An educational video/PowerPoint is in process of being developed for growing the awareness of SAVIN.
- Ideas.
- (Getting the) service provider to reduce their service costs.
- Assistance in funding or supporting outreach efforts (billboards, ads, etc.) which are often not seen as needed by state government.
- Ability to be in the community, communicating regularly with victims and victim service providers to insure they are aware of the service, are comfortable using the service, trust the timeliness of notification, trust the data in the notification and know who I am to contact me directly should they have any questions or concerns about the service or information contained on the service.
- Training among agencies connected to VINE such as county jails.
- None
- I feel the program is going very well in this state and I have been so well received in the last year I have been here. The main hurdle we have is sustaining this program financially. The problem with the phone surcharge, is that the amount we get each month fluctuates depending on the number of inmates a jail has in a particular month and the number of phone calls each inmate decides to make each month. We need a more stable income so that we can pay for the SAVIN Program.
- Suggestions on where to find funding to sustain the SAVIN program.
- Information from federal and state sources on innovative strategies related to the operation of SAVIN programs.
- Staff time to focus on technological changes needed...
- BJA FUNDING.
- At this time, funding is the main concern for our program. Outreach efforts and education of the public are also important, so ideas that are cost-effective would be beneficial.
- More publicity at a national level.
- Technical assistance marketing resources.
- Expanded local commitment and "ownership" of the service; willingness to promote community based education and information sharing on an ongoing basis. Outreach to law enforcement and service providers as a constant reminder of the critical role they play in ensuring their communities are aware of the services.
- Additional financial resources.

- I need the local victim services community to stop trying to sabotage it. Without it there will be no victim notification.
- Creative ideas on how to develop alternative funding strategies that could be successfully used in New York State.
- Updates/newsletter on funding opportunities.
- Help needed advertising for and finding a qualified person to manage the program which directly impacts maintaining funding. With satisfied local customers, funding is easier.
- Marketing.

7. Please provide any additional comments about your efforts to sustain SAVIN programs and funding, including any challenges your state may currently face.

Verbatim/Unedited Responses

12 of 32 individuals responded to this question

- California is currently in the midst of the largest realignment of AB 109. Due to the shift of responsibility from the state to counties, AB 109 mandates that individuals sentenced to non-serious, non-violent or non-sex offenses will serve their sentences in county jails instead of state prison. With this significant shift within the criminal justice system, there is a clearer need for greater collaboration across justice systems, geographic jurisdictions and agencies responsible for implementing victims' rights in California.
- It has to start with relationships and value of the service. You can't just ask for money and expect to get it. You have to be credible and continue to reach out for funding. It can be frustrating but never give up. When I first started talking about ongoing funding, people in power actually laughed at me. (but who's laughing now!).
- None currently.
- I think I stated all of our challenges already.
- In the 2012 legislative session, Idaho passed House Bill 595 which imposes a \$10 fee to every misdemeanor and felony conviction. The fee amount was determined by the number of convictions estimated based on prior years as well as the anticipated failure to pay rate. The fee will go into effect July 1, 2012. The Idaho Sheriffs' Association (ISA) which manages the SAVIN program believes monies collected will fund service provider's Custody and Court VINE service as well as a full time Program Manager, Administration fees and general operating costs as outlined in BJA grant 2010-VN-CX-0010. Currently the services are funded by BJA grants both directly and state administered. Funds from those grants should be expended within the year. At this time it is unknown if the fees collected will be enough to fund the program. If more money is collected...to sustain the program, those monies will be deposited into the state's Crime Victim Compensation Program in the spirit of serving victims.
- Because of the economic times states budgets are being cut. The concern is that this program might not survive if our funding is cut by the state.
- None at this time.

- Linking SAVIN to Justice Xchange has already protected both programs as the support base now includes victim advocacy programs, law enforcement, and Dept. of Corrections. We are working to expand the scope and value of the Protective Order notification program to get it re-funded.
- The statewide implantation has been "in process" for slightly over three years and will benefit from a new public awareness campaign to re-energize efforts throughout the entire State. The opportunity to enhance the VINE service with the addition of VINE Protective Order will also provide an avenue to reconnect with counties, law enforcement, service providers and consumers of the services and expand utilization.
- I believe the system we are building in NYS could be a national model. As we develop it further and get a little more experience with the system, it may be transportable, or partially transportable to other states significantly reducing redundant development costs across the country.
- The political aspect of maintaining funding. Keeping local and state officials engaged and satisfied with the product is a challenge. Keeping others, who may want the same source of funding for their victim service projects and services, away from our funding base. We have already seen one successful approach where we lost \$250,000 annually.

EDITORIAL NOTE: *The name(s) of specific SAVIN service providers in individual survey responses were redacted and replaced with the term "service provider."*