



TOWN OF ELIZABETH POLICE DEPARTMENT

JEFFERY R. ENGEL, CHIEF OF POLICE

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TO: Honorable Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and member of the Board of Trustees
FROM: Jeffery R. Engel, Chief of Police
DATED: September 24, 2024
SUBJECT: Visible Digital Solutions eVAC (electronic Victim Advocacy Cards)

BACKGROUND:

The State of Colorado requires law enforcement agencies to provide information pertaining to the Rights of Victims of Crimes (CRS 24-4.1-302), when investigating specific crimes. These crimes, whether submitted to state or municipal court for prosecution, include but are not limited to: Assault, Menacing, Child Abuse, Bias Motivated Crimes, Domestic Violence. Current Practice of the Elizabeth Police Department is to provide a paper flyer to the victim outlining the Victim's Bill of Rights and the contact information for the Elizabeth Police Department Victim Advocate.

The Elizabeth Police Department has researched alternative methods to provide Victim Bill of Rights information along with resources that a crime victim can access in a "one stop" mode. The Visible Digital Solutions eVAC (Electronic Victim Advocacy Cards) provides a custom-built electronic platform in which Victim Rights and victim resources can be shared by email, text message, link, or QR code.

The implementation of eVAC for the Town of Elizabeth Police Department requires an agreement to be signed between the Visible Digital Solutions and the Elizabeth Police Department.

ANALYSIS:

As cited, the Elizabeth Police Department currently provides paper copies of Victim Rights and resource information. Whether a crime victim or citizen in need of information, when given a paper copy, there is an inherent probability of misplacing or otherwise discarding the information, e.g., losing the document in the paper shuffle, or hiding information to prevent disclosure of accessing resources. Use of an electronic format provides 24/7 access to information and resources, from a smart phone or computer.

Distribution of information is simple and efficient. Information provided in the eVAC card is sent by link, email, text message, or QR code to the recipient's smart phone. Once received, the eVAC card satisfies statutory requirements in providing Victim Bill of Rights information.

The information provided in the eVAC card is custom built to the agency. Working with Visible Digital Solutions and the Elizabeth Police Department Victim Advocacy Unit, the Elizabeth Police Department was



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provided a “mock-up” of the eVAC card. The “mock-up” is consistent with other agencies throughout the State of Colorado and is congruent with agencies comprising the future 23rd Judicial District.

Availability, or lack thereof, has been a consistent theme in Elbert County. Individuals desiring resources must research the various providers, or the victim advocates to find the appropriate resource. Research is minimized using eVAC for the list of resources available in Elbert or adjacent counties is provided.

The information provided for eVAC is easily updated through communication with Visible Digital Solutions. Updates to the Victim’s Bill of Rights or changes to Colorado Revised Statutes are automatically updated by Visible Digital Solutions, through their connections at the legislative branch of the State of Colorado.

Implementation of eVAC requires signing a term of agreement. The terms of agreement have been evaluated by counsel for the Town of Elizabeth and deemed agreeable.

Distribution of eVAC is not limited to the crimes noted by Victim Bill of Rights. Information provided can be provided to a person who is the victim of a crime but is desiring information regarding Victim Advocacy services or other services outlined on the eVAC for the Town of Elizabeth Police Department.

In consultation with the Information Technology Provider, Phoenix Technologies, there is additional software or hardware purchases to be made, nor is there impact to security considerations with the eVAC platform.

Paper copies of the Victim Rights information will remain available and provided upon request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is the recommendation the Town of Elizabeth Police Department enter into an agreement with Visible Digital Solutions to provide service for eVAC. Electronic distribution of victim rights information in an electronic format provides continual and consistent access to information and resources. The distribution of information is simple and efficient. Information on eVAC is automatically updated by Visible Digital Solutions and does not require the updating and re-printing of paper information by departmental staff.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS:

The cost for implementation of eVAC is an initial cost of \$549.00. This includes the eVAC design and set up. The annual cost for eVAC is \$399.00 per year. Funds are available through the community engagement line item. Currently, there is no anticipated increase in the cost of eVAC. If fees are to increase a minimum of 30 days’ notice is provided. In the Terms of the Agreement, a 30-day is needed to inform Visible Digital Solution of termination of service. If the cost of service for eVAC becomes cost prohibitive, notice to Visible Digital Solutions can be provided.



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