

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
**District Attorney's Office**  
*Inter-Office Communication*

DATE : May 1, 2012

TO : Judiciary, Safety and General Services Committee  
Supervisor Mark Borkowski, Chair  
Supervisor Nikiya Q. Harris, Vice-Chair  
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Supervisor John F. Weishan, Jr.  
Supervisor Gerry Broderick  
Supervisor Joe Sanfelippo  
Janelle Jensen, Committee Clerk  
Jennifer Collins, Research Analyst

FROM : John Chisholm  
District Attorney

SUBJECT : Importance of Inmate Jail Call Monitoring

Inmate jail call monitoring is an essential law enforcement tool used daily by the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, Witness Protection and Security Unit (WITSEC) to save lives and provide for the safety of crime victims in Milwaukee County. Any jail call system must incorporate the ability for law enforcement to monitor inmate communications to deter witness intimidation, disrupt on-going conspiracies, uncover criminal confessions and successfully prosecute some of the most violent offenders in Milwaukee County.

Since 2008, the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office has operated a unique witness protection program based upon proactive investigation of crimes involving victim tampering, witness intimidation and any continued criminal activity designed to dissuade victims from seeking justice. **The most important tool used by the WITSEC staff is the jail call monitoring system.** The ability to monitor recorded conversations of jail inmates has proven to be essential in protecting victims and successfully prosecuting murders, rapists, child molesters and serial domestic abusers.

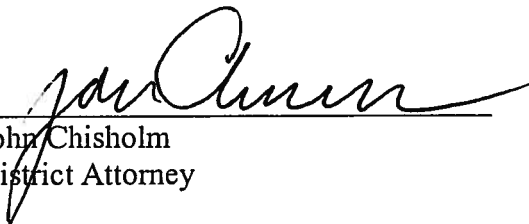
The WITSEC program developed threat criteria to identify cases and offenders where there is a high likelihood of witness intimidation efforts. These cases tend to involve homicides, sexual assaults, child molestation, child abuse, and domestic violence. Offenders charged with these types of offenses often use the jail telephones in efforts to dissuade victims from cooperating, arrange bribes through third parties, solicit other criminals to threaten or abuse victims, and in some cases to seek for murder-for-hire. The WITSEC staff monitoring these telephone calls has successfully and repeatedly

disrupted homicide plots, ongoing intimidation efforts, and efforts to bribe witnesses. In other cases offenders actually confess to their crimes on the telephone, easing prosecution and leading to swift justice for the residents of the county.

Jail call monitoring provides WITSEC staff with the unique ability to hear the thoughts, motivations and intentions of the most violent offenders housed in the jail. This tool is absolutely essential to the success of the WITSEC unit and its mission to enhance the safety of crime victims in Milwaukee County. Without jail call monitoring, criminals in the jail could use the telephones to arrange for witness tampering crimes, unfettered and secure in the knowledge that no one is listening. Any type of unmonitored jail call system would destroy the WITSEC program and would put crime victims in Milwaukee County at risk.

I have included several examples where jail call monitoring was used to uncover witness intimidation crimes including a recent plot to commit murder. Please do not hesitate to contact me for addition comment or to arrange a tour of our WITSEC program.

Respectfully submitted,



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John Chisholm  
District Attorney

Attachments