

# Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee

## Approved Meeting Minutes

Shelter for Help in Emergency's Community Outreach Center  
Charlottesville, VA  
September 11, 2019

---

### Members Present:

Cathy Easter, Executive Director, Safe Harbor  
Linda Ellis-Williams, Director of Programs, YWCA of Central Virginia  
Debbie Evans, Division Chief of the Sexual Assault Center & Domestic Violence Program, City of Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services  
Kandy Hayes, Domestic Violence Program Director, Southside Center for Prevention Inc.  
Caroline Jones, President/CEO, Doorways  
Mary Carter Lominack, Executive Director, Shelter for Help in Emergency  
Candy Phillips, Executive Director, First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence  
Maria Simonetti, Executive Director, The Collins Center & Child Advocacy Center  
Kristina Vadas, Manager of Victims Services, DCJS  
Rebecca Weybright, Executive Director, SARA Charlottesville

### *Members Present Remotely per 2.2-3708.1*

Laura Beth Weaver, Assistant Director, Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley

### Absent Members:

Jennifer Bourne, Director, Clinch Valley Community Action Inc.  
Kristi VanAudenrove, Executive Director, VSDVAA

### Others Present:

Courtney Meyer, Professional Standards Coordinator, DCJS

### Welcome & Remarks

The meeting started at 10:15am with a quorum present. Caroline Jones welcomed everyone and asked members to introduce themselves.

### Group Progress & Process Discussion

Ms. Jones led a discussion about group processes, and in particular, a recent pattern of word-smithing and re-opening items after they have already been voted on. Ms. Jones reminded the members that Courtney Meyer and other DCJS staff are a resource for editing and that they can do grammar/spelling checks so that the committee can focus on content and context. Ms. Jones expressed how this pattern has hindered the committee in moving forward and shared how there are frustrations with the process both in and outside of the committee. Many committee members agreed with Ms. Jones regarding the pattern that has been hindering their

process. The committee agreed on developing group guidelines to move forward and having them posted at each meeting as a reminder. The committee decided that the group guidelines would include the following:

1. Limit in between work and do work at the meeting.
2. If a member volunteers to work on something in between meetings and then realizes it is not feasible, then that member needs to contact the DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator so that the work can be re-assigned to another member to complete.
3. Restructure the minutes to include a summary section: action items, discussion items, and decisions.
4. Maintain a running list of key decisions outside of the minutes and items for annual review list (e.g. professional standards) to easily reference.
5. Stay out of the weeds and hold each other accountable. Anyone can say, "Sounds like we're going into the weeds," and if someone disagrees it becomes a discussion.
6. When a member is not present at a meeting where decisions are made, the member has to yield to those decisions. The decision will not automatically be re-opened. If the member knows s/he is not going to be at the meeting and has a strong opinion about an agenda item, then that member needs to schedule a call and discuss with the Chair, Co-Chair, or DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator in advance of the meeting. If the member does not realize until the next meeting s/he attends, then a discussion and vote about re-considering an item will occur at the following meeting to provide ample time to prepare for the discussion.
7. Review the minutes prior to a meeting.

### **Review August Minutes**

Ms. Jones presented the August 28, 2019 minutes for approval. There were no corrections made to the minutes. Maria Simonetti made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Debbie Evans and approved. Cartie Lominack abstained due to joining the meeting later.

### **Crime Commission Survey**

Ms. Jones presented the Crime Commission Survey, with page 11 included, for review. The committee re-visited what they had discussed in August. The committee confirmed the following additions to Question #21, "Has your agency reviewed the **draft** SDVA professional standards **released for public comment in September 2018?**" The committee confirmed the following change to Question #22, "**Did your agency** provide feedback on the SDVA professional standards during the public comment phase in September 2018?" The committee reviewed page 11 which was missing at the August meeting. The committee decided to remove Question #23 because it was redundant to Question #22. The committee did not make any changes to Question #24. The committee decided to add the following open comment question, "**How will these standards be utilized by your agency?**" For Question #25, the committee removed the line for Ethics because the professional standards does not have a separate Ethics section. The committee did not make any changes to Questions #26-28. For Question #29, the committee removed the line that read, "Accreditation should be based on the SDVA professional standards" because it did not make sense. The committee removed Question #30 because it was redundant to the new open comment question they added on page 11. For Question #31, the committee made the following change, "Additional comments or concerns **with regard** to accreditation." The committee asked that the DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator, Courtney Meyer, forward their edits onto the Crime Commission.

## Standards

Ms. Jones presented the professional standards draft from August 28, 2019 for review. Ms. Meyer asked for clarification regarding edits to the non-discrimination language to reflect the Civil Rights Act. The committee explained that they would like the non-discrimination language to have like items categorized together to be consistent. The committee discussed standard #16 in regards to having it reflect the state prevention plan. Since Kristi VanAudenhove was not present, the committee decided to postpone making changes to standard #16 until they received the state prevention plan information from Ms. VanAudenhove. The committee discussed voting on the standards in order to pass the standards onto DCJS to do final grammar/spelling check and submit to their graphic design center to format and finalize. Ms. Meyer and Kristina Vadas shared that it would be about a two-week turnaround time for the DCJS graphic designer, Marsha Dietz, to return the standards to Ms. Meyer. Then, Ms. Meyer would be able to share the draft with the committee. Ms. Vadas mentioned that once Ms. Dietz begins formatting the standards in her graphic design program that it is very difficult to make any major changes to the document because it will disrupt the formatted design. The committee decided to have Ms. Meyer let Ms. Dietz know that there will be more changes made to Standard #16 so that she can account for those incoming changes when formatting the standards. Ms. Jones asked for a motion to approve the professional standards. Debbie Evans made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Candy Phillips and approved.

## Organizational Self-Assessment and Cover Sheet

Ms. Jones presented the organizational assessment for review. The committee added “self” in front of “assessment” for the title of the document to read, “Professional Standards Organizational Self-Assessment.” The committee removed the points system from the assessment because it will no longer be scored. Ms. Meyer will update the standards and measures in the assessment to reflect the current, approved standards. The committee decided that the assessment would not be a part of the application or site visit. The committee asked Ms. Meyer to print out the organizational self-assessment for the next meeting in which they will vote on the organizational self-assessment. Ms. Jones presented the organizational self-assessment’s cover sheet for review. The committee discussed how the form was not a cover sheet and more of a summary. The committee revised the name of the form to, “Professional Standards Organizational Self-Assessment Summary.” The committee decided the instructions portion should be warmer, such as, “Thank you for completing the professional standards organizational self-assessment...” Ms. Simonetti offered language to use at the beginning of the instructions to both the assessment itself and the assessment’s summary form:

For the assessment itself, the language suggested was, *“The checklist below is intended to identify any gaps in policies, processes or evidence that must be addressed before an application is submitted.”*

For the assessment’s summary form, the language suggested was, *“This self-assessment tool is intended to provide guidance on your agency’s readiness to submit an application.”*

The committee liked the language for both the assessment itself and the assessment’s summary form and decided to add the language in with a minor change to the language for the assessment itself, **“identify strengths and gaps..”**

The committee discussed how long agencies should have to complete the organizational self-assessment. The committee decided with the standards and organizational self-assessment having a release date of November 1, 2019 that the organizational self-assessment would be due December 16, 2019. On the organizational self-assessment summary form, the committee removed “7-10 business days” and added “January 15, 2020” to give Ms. Meyer adequate time to provide next step instructions to agencies. The committee discussed the importance of having an automated e-mail sent to agencies that says, “Your professional standards organizational self-assessment summary has been received,” after they submit their summary. Ms. Vadas and Meyer offered to create a new e-mail address for professional standards’ submission items that would be separate from Ms. Meyer’s e-mail address. The committee agreed to having a separate e-mail address. The committee moved the following question, “Based on the organizational self-assessment, is your program ready to apply for accreditation?” above the TA Needs question and removed the drop down box and placed response options, Ready/Not Ready, underneath with boxes to mark. The committee removed, “TA Needs Identified on the Organizational Assessment,” and replaced with **“To help us prepare and plan for supporting agency’s needs, please share in what general areas your agency would need TA assistance (e.g. training, sample policies).”** In the TA Needs table, the committee removed the standard and measure columns to just have one column for TA Needs. The committee added the following question underneath the TA Needs table, **“Would you like to apply for accreditation?”**, with response options, Yes/No, underneath with boxes to mark. The committee removed the signature of Executive Director/Program Director and replaced it with, **“Printed Name and Title of Submission Person.”** Ms. Meyer will make the committee’s revisions to both the organizational self-assessment and the assessment’s summary form and present both to the committee at the October meeting to be voted on.

### **October and November Meeting Dates**

Ms. Meyer presented the results of the October and November meeting dates Doodle poll to the committee. The committee first discussed dates for October. The committee decided on Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup>. Cartie Lominack let the committee know that the Shelter for Help in Emergency’s meeting room would be unavailable that day. Rebecca Weybright offered to find an alternate location. Ms. Meyer also offered to work with DCJS’s procurement staff on finding an alternate location. The committee moved onto discuss dates for November. The committee decided on Monday November 4<sup>th</sup> and Ms. Lominack will to verify the Shelter for Help in Emergency’s meeting room’s availability. Ms. Jones shared with the committee that she does not foresee the committee meeting in December.

### **Small Groups: Glossary and Roll-Out Messaging and Marketing**

The committee broke into small groups, one group focused on finalizing the glossary and the other group worked on roll-out messaging and marketing. After an hour, the committee came back together and the small group for the glossary shared their work. A discussion began regarding the definition for Emergency Shelter and ensuring the definition is consistent with Standard #11. The committee agreed to amend their earlier vote on the standards. Debbie Evans motioned to amend the standards. The motion was seconded by Maria Simonetti and approved. The committee discussed how Standard #11 does not include language regarding agencies providing a warm hand-off to another agency when their shelter is full. The committee agreed upon having Ms. Jones and Meyer enter language for providing a warm hand-off before the October meeting. With the addition of the warm hand-off language to Standard #11, Ms. Jones asked for a motion to approve the standards. Maria Simonetti

motioned to approve the standards with the addition of the warm hand-off language to Standard #11. The motion was seconded by Debbie Evans and approved.

The roll-out messaging and marketing group shared their work. The committee reviewed content for the “coming soon” e-mail that will be sent to all agencies in October. The committee decided under the, “What are the Professional Standards?” section to add the following sentence, “This included careful review of input received during the Comment Period for these draft standards in September 2018.” The committee decided that the e-mail needs to go out in early October before the next meeting and the e-mail would be signed by the committee. The roll-out messaging and marketing group will work on finalizing the content of the e-mail and send to Ms. Meyer who will send to the committee for review.

### **Closing Remarks**

Linda Ellis-Williams asked that there be a Doodle poll sent out asking what is the best day of the week and best week of the month for everyone to pick consistent days for meetings in the future. The committee agreed and Ms. Meyer will send out the Doodle poll. Ms. Jones discussed that at the October meeting the focus will be on updating the timeline, accreditation application, and site visit structure.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.

### **Public Comment**

There was one member of the public present on the phone who did not have any comments.

### **Summary**

#### **Action Items.**

- Courtney Meyer will forward suggested survey changes to the Crime Commission.
- Kristi VanAudenhove will provide information from the draft state prevention plan for Standard #16.
- Courtney Meyer will provide draft of the standards to DCJS graphics designer, Marsha Dietz.
- Courtney Meyer and Kristina Vadas will request that a new email address for the standards be established at DCJS.
- Courtney Meyer will revise the organizational self-assessment and summary for the October meeting.
- Becky Weybright and Courtney Meyer will look for a meeting space for the October meeting.
- Caroline Jones and Courtney Meyer will add revised language to Standard #11.
- Roll-out messaging group (Ellis-Williams, Jones, Simonetti, Weybright) will send the “coming soon” email language to Courtney Meyer; Ms. Meyer will then send out to the committee for review.
- Courtney Meyer will send out a Doodle poll asking what is the best day of the week and best week of the month for everyone.

**Decisions/Votes:**

- Professional Standards were approved with the addition of the warm hand-off language to Standard #11.
- The professional standards organizational self-assessment will not be a part of the application or site visit.
- The committee agreed to a set of guidelines for meetings moving forward.
- The “coming soon” e-mail about the standards release date will go out to agencies in early October.
- The professional standards and organizational self-assessment will be released on November 1, 2019.
- The organizational self-assessment summary will be due December 16, 2019.
- Ms. Meyer will have until January 15, 2020 to provide next step instructions to agencies who submitted their organizational self-assessment summary.
- October meeting will be Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup>, location TBD.
- November meeting will be Monday November 4<sup>th</sup>, location to be confirmed.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday October 16th, 2019  
TBD**