

Forensic Nursing Advisory Council Meeting Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2026 – 11:00am-1:30pm

Meeting: Virginia Department of Health
109 Governor Street
Richmond, VA 23219

[illegible]

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendation
I. Call to Order and Introductions	Maria Altonen called the meeting to order at 11:16 am. Altonen conducted a roll call of members present. Quorum was met. Five attendees were present virtually: Heather Board (VDH), Hannah Coley, Catherine Ford, Melissa Harper, Tara Keen (VDH)	
II. Review of the Agenda and Approval of Minutes	Altonen reviewed the agenda with the Task Force members. Altonen reviewed a policy on electronic attendance for in-person meetings. Discussion was had around different meeting locations. A motion to approve the policy was made by Ashley and the motion was seconded by Ariel. Altonen gave update that VDH has hired Emma Call to staff the Council with an anticipated start date of 8/10.	
III. Public Comment	2 members of the public were present. No members of the public provided public comment.	
IV. Annual Report and Policy Review,	Questions asked on when the annual report is due for the Virginia Forensic Nursing Advisory Council. Heather noted that the report is usually due in December but does not know of the due date as of right now since not specifically listed in code. Question was asked about different wording between forensic examiner and sexual assault nurse examiners noted in the legislation. Altonen noted that forensic examiners do more than sexual assault, but this specific project is focused on sexual assault. Heather Board noted that there could be a recommendation in the report to make respective language changes during the General Assembly.	
V. Review of Certification Process	Heather Board reviewed the requirements for state certifications. Noted that there are three certifications identified in state code: 1) State Certified Doula, 2) State Certified Community Health Worker, 3) State Certified Violence Prevention Professional. Currently, regulations for State Certified Doula are published, Regulations are Certified	

	Community Health Worker are under review, and regulations for Certified Violence Prevention Professional have not yet been drafted. Heather reviewed the three steps of certification. Also reviewed the code language for the state certified doulas. Workgroup members discussed legislation focusing on types of Doulas to be inclusive of everyone doing forensic nursing. Heather reviewed requirements for CHW certification currently on VDH's website.	
VI. Open Discussion on Training Requirements	Melissa Harper commented that she wanted to go ahead and discuss training requirements before other recommendations come out. Members expressed interest in hearing about what other states are doing. The group wants to develop curriculum content and training requirements. Melissa Harper noted that she wants to clarify terms (only sexual assault, adult and/or child, etc.). Altonen suggested to move forward to pertaining to sexual assault, regardless of age, and beginning to draft recommendations to bring to the GA to update code.	
VII. DCJS Workgroup Updates	Gleibys Gonzalez gave updates on the DCJS workgroup directed to address sustainable funding for sexual assault medical forensic examinations and services (HB1731). The workgroup had four meetings over the summer. The forensic nurse examiner report due date is November 1, 2026. The workgroup has come up with solid recommendations around reimbursement.	
VII. Next Steps	The council will meet again after new staff members joins; council wants to meet monthly. Next meeting suggested at Bon Secours. Altonen will be in touch with next meeting invite.	
VIII. Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned by Altonen at 1:19pm.	