

Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence

Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Final Minutes

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Members Present: Kathy Anderson, Teresa Berry, Heather Board, Andriea Ukrop (for Nichele Carver), Autumn Edmond, Barbara Favola, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Nancy Fowler, Mark Levine, Ashley Marshall, Melissa McMenemy, Toni Zollicoffer

Members Absent: Kristen Howard, Mindy Stell, Kristi VanAudenhove

Guests: Elvira de la Cruz, Marva Dunn, Eileen Longenecker, Courtney O’Hara, Lisa Wooten, Jonathan Yglesias

DCJS Staff: Andi Martin, Kristina Vadas

Welcome, Introductions, and Remarks

Teresa Berry, Committee Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. After roll call, Chair Berry determined there was a quorum.

Approval of December 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Senator Favola motioned to approve the December 16, 2020 minutes. Delegate Levine seconded. There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

Changes to *Code of Virginia* § 9.1-116.2 – House Bill 2317 Signed by Governor

Chair Berry presented to the committee a review of House Bill 2317. This bill increases the diversity on the committee. It was signed by the Governor on March 18, 2021 and it goes into effect July 1, 2021. The bill increases Advisory Committee membership from fifteen to nineteen by adding the Executive Director of the Virginia Victim Assistance Network and by increasing non-legislative citizen members from six to nine. The bill streamlines the responsibilities and duties of the Advisory Committee to: 1) promote appropriate and effective responses, services, and prevention for sexual assault and domestic violence across the Commonwealth; and, 2) promote strong communication, coordination, and strategy at state, regional, and local levels. The bill also reorganizes the Professional Standards Committee to consist of twelve non-legislative citizen members appointed by the Governor and three

nonvoting members. The bill further outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Professional Standards Committee.

Advisory Committee members requested time during the June meeting to review the Committee bylaws. Prior to the meeting, a work group will meet to identify suggestions for bylaws changes. Workgroup members include Teresa Berry, Autumn Edmond, Senator Favola, Tom Fitzpatrick, Ashley Marshall, and Toni Zollicoffer. DCJS will schedule a workgroup meeting in May.

Partner Abuse Intervention and Prevention Workgroup

Toni Zollicoffer provided an update on the Partner Abuse Intervention and Prevention Workgroup meeting that was held on March 15, 2021. Twenty-two people were invited to the Workgroup; fifteen people attended the meeting. The Workgroup identified these four goals:

1. Strengthen and expand the network of community services that are already in place as well as those that are emerging;
2. Promote promising practices;
3. Support evaluation and oversight that improve community accountability; and
4. Ensure resources are available to support holistic and robust responses.

The Workgroup discussed the status of offender accountability across the Commonwealth and steps toward achieving its goals, including a timeline and Workgroup logistics.

Professional Standards Applications

Kristina Vadas provided an update on applications received in the first round of accreditation. Twenty agencies expressed interested in applying in this first round, and fourteen agencies ended up submitting applications. The on-line application format worked well. The application materials submitted will be reviewed and evaluated, and each applicant will receive an on-site visit as well. DCJS will hire two part-time positions for this project. These two staff will make accreditation recommendations to the Professional Standards Committee, who will vote on the accreditation of the applicants. Ms. Vadas estimates this process will take six months. Toward the end of 2021 or early-2022, the second round of accreditation will likely open.

Senator Favola asked for the criteria or important elements that must be considered for accreditation. Ms. Vadas will arrange for an overview presentation on the standards at the next meeting. Additional information about the standards is available on the DCJS website at:

<https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/victims-services/programs/sexual-domestic-violence-program-professional-standards>

State Agency Funding Updates

- **Kristina Vadas, DCJS**, provided an overview of DCJS Victims Services (VS) grants.
 - Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding makes up approximately 90% of VS Team available funding. The Victims Services Grant Program (VSGP) is comprised of VOCA funds

and some State General Funds. It supports a wide variety of victim assistance programs including domestic and sexual violence programs. VOCA also supports grants to local victim/witness programs, three statewide victim assistance programs, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs, and Child Advocacy Centers (CAC).

- Federal Violence Against Woman Act (VAWA) grants make up about 7% of VS Team grant funds. VAWA funding supports these three grant programs: Improving Criminal Justice Responses (ICJR), Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP), and Virginia Services-Training-Officers-Prosecution (VSTOP).
- The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Victim Fund (VSDVVF) Grant Program is supported with State Special Funds and comprises about 3% of VS Team grant funding.

- **Lisa Wooten, Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**, provided an overview of VDH Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) grant funding. RPE grants are federally funded grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). VDH has a 5-year funding allocation of \$870,684 for RPE grants.

- **Andriea Ukrop, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development**, informed the committee that the Housing Trust Fund-Homeless Reduction Grant Awards were recently released.

- **Nancy Fowler, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)**, provided an overview of VDSS grants.
 - The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) provides \$2.6 million per year in Federal funds.
 - Virginia Family Violence Prevention Program (VFVPP) provides \$1.3 million (state & federal mix).
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) provides \$5.3 million (state & federal mix).
 - Grant programs include:
 - Domestic Violence Prevention and Services (DVPS) Grant - 52 local agencies funded
 - Domestic Violence Services in Underserved Populations - 6 local agencies funded
 - Sole Source contract with the Action Alliance for training, technical assistance, and data collection.
 - Sole Source contract (legislatively directed) with the Laurel Center for sexual and domestic violence services in Winchester.
 - VDSS will use some unspent FVPSA funds, giving programs an option of budgeting an additional \$20k into their DVPS FY 22 grants.
 - The Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund was established and in FY 22, \$650,000 is allotted. At this time, details on the use of the funds are still being planned.

At the request of Delegate Levine, agencies will provide additional details about their funding opportunities during the next meeting.

New Business

- **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 & Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021**

Kristina Vadas provided a summary of both proposed acts. Both of these passed in the House of Representatives and await Senate action.

- **Surveying Sexual and Domestic Violence Service Providers**

The survey created by the Virginia Crime Commission, and that was reviewed by the Advisory Committee, was not finalized or conducted. The committee would still like to do a survey. This topic will be discussed at the June meeting.

- **Sexual Assault Awareness Month Activities (April) & National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 18-24, 2021)**

Agencies are encouraged to send notice of SAAM and NCVRW activities to Senator Favola and the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, who have offered to share through social media.

Other Member Announcements

- None

Public Comment

- Elvira de la Cruz, Latinos in Virginia Empowerment (LIVE) Center, provided an update on the statewide hotline for Spanish-speaking victims of sexual and domestic violence. She also informed the committee that LIVE will soon share a Tool Kit in Spanish for assisting victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Marva Dunn commented that she was pleased and grateful for the committee changes resulting from House Bill 2317.
- Jonathan Yglesias spoke to the committee about the status of Rape Prevention and Education funding. He discussed the excellent primary prevention work that Virginia's sexual assault agencies are currently doing, and expressed disappointment in VDH shifting away from supporting these agencies with RPE funding.

Closing

Next meeting: June 16, 2021, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., likely via Zoom

Chair Berry adjourned the meeting at 12:37 p.m.