

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Glen Allen – Henrico Public Library
10501 Staples Mill Road
Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

Members Present:

Angela Blount, Associate Director, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Judy Castelee, Executive Director, Project Horizon
Cori Davis, Program Director, Bedford Domestic Violence Services
Elvira De la Cruz, Chief Executive Officer, Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center
Shel Douglas, Director, Fauquier County Social Services
Leonard Hall, Jr, Director, Millstone International Logistics
Tamy Mann, Director, Giles County Victim/Witness Assistance Program
Teresa McKensie, Assistant Director, Radford/Floyd Victim/Witness Assistance Program
Heather Sellers, Director, Bedford County Victim/Witness Assistance Program
Shelley Strain, Executive Director, Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Kristina Vadas, Manager of Victims Services, DCJS
Ellen Wheeler, Assistant Director, Project Horizon

Members Absent:

Nancy Fowler, Program Manager, Office of Family Violence, DSS
Jennifer Quitiquit, Director, Chesterfield County Victim/Witness Assistance Program

Professional Standards Team Members Present:

Amber Stanwix, Professional Standards Coordinator, DCJS
Andrea Sutton, Professional Standards Consultant, DCJS

Members of the Public Present:

Nick Alexander, Director of Specialized Services, Project Horizon

Welcome & Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 10:30a.m. All of the Committee members and the member of the public introduced themselves.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the March 29th meeting were reviewed by the Committee members. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Tamy Mann, and Shel Douglas seconded the motion. After a vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

FOIA Reminder

Amber Stanwix provided a brief reminder that Committee members must refrain from discussing Committee business while outside of the meeting in order to maintain compliance with the Freedom of information Act.

Background Information and Review Procedure

Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton, the Professional Standards Team, provided a brief overview of the way they conduct the reviews of agencies. They emphasized that their responsibility is to determine whether the agencies met the Professional Standards during the time period in which the review took place. In addition, they reviewed how the information would be presented to the Committee.

Review of Accreditation Recommendations

Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton began the review of accreditation recommendations by explaining that the order in which the agencies would be presented followed the order in which site visits were conducted.

During the first agency review, a Committee member raised a concern regarding the length of time that had passed since the review by the Professional Standards Team. The member pointed out that, if the agency were to be accredited, that accreditation would last until 2026. Therefore, as the agency had applied in 2021, approximately five years would pass between a review by the Professional Standards Team.

Ms. Stanwix and Ms. Sutton assured the Committee that, although full reviews will not be taking place between applications, the Team does monitor the job listings for all sexual and domestic violence agencies to determine if an agency is having trouble maintaining staff. This could serve to alert the Team if there were any larger issues going on with an agency. In addition, if any concerns are brought to the Team in between application cycles, the Team will reach out to agencies and report back to the Committee.

Project Horizon

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Teresa McKensie made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Leonard Hall, Jr. seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 8-0 to grant full accreditation status to Project Horizon as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency. Judy Castele and Ellen Wheeler left the room for the presentation and the vote, as they are part of the leadership team of Project Horizon.

Alexandria Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Tamy Mann made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Ellen Wheeler seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to the Alexandria Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency.

Phoenix Project

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Shelley Strain made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Cori Davis seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to Phoenix Project as a domestic violence agency.

GochlandCares

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Teresa McKensie made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Heather Sellers seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to GochlandCares as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency.

Avalon Center

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Shelley Strain made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Tamy Mann seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to the Avalon Center as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency.

Lunch

The Committee broke for lunch at 12:00p.m. The meeting resumed at 1:06p.m.

Review of Accreditation Recommendations

Thrive Virginia

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Leonard Hall, Jr. made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Ellen Wheeler seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to Thrive Virginia as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency.

Services to Abused Families, Inc.

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Ellen Wheeler made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Tamy Mann seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 9-0 to grant full accreditation status to Services to Abused Families, Inc. as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency. Shel Douglas abstained from this vote, as this agency provides shelter for Fauquier County Social Services.

The James House Intervention/Prevention Services, Inc.

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Cori Davis made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Tamy Mann seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 9-0 to grant full accreditation status to The James House Intervention/Prevention Services, Inc. as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency. Elvira De la Cruz abstained from this vote, as she formerly worked for this agency.

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Unit - Emporia

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Teresa McKensie made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Shel Douglas seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Unit in Emporia as a dual sexual and domestic violence agency.

Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Ellen Wheeler made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Heather Sellers seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to the Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault as a sexual assault agency.

The Collins Center and Child Advocacy Center

After a presentation by the Professional Standards Team demonstrating that the agency met all the Professional Standards, Ellen Wheeler made a motion to approve the accreditation status recommendation, and Teresa McKensie seconded the motion. The Professional Standards Committee voted 10-0 to grant full accreditation status to The Collins Center and Child Advocacy Center as a sexual assault agency.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Closing Remarks

The meeting adjourned at 2:06p.m.

Action Items

- Should a procedure document be developed to lay out the steps that the Professional Standards Team will take should a follow-up visit be deemed necessary?
- Should members of the Committee who are not leadership staff of sexual and domestic violence programs be able to vote on accreditation status recommendations?
- Should Committee members be allowed to remain in the room when their agency's recommendation regarding accreditation status is being discussed?
- Should there be a process by which the records of the Professional Standards Team are audited? If so, who would be responsible for that?
- Should accreditation under Professional Standards be tied to grant funding in some way? If so, how?

Future Meetings

- July 12, 2023, 10:00a.m. – 4:00p.m., Virtual Meeting
- September 27, 2023, Location TBD