

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE/CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 10, 2019

A meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Court Appointed Special Advocate and Children's Justice Act programs was held on Friday, May 10, 2019 at the Richmond Police Training Academy, Richmond, Virginia.

Members Present

Molly Dellinger-Wray
Pat Popp, Chair
Julia Fuller-Wilson, Vice Chair
Allison Gilbreath
Malcom King
Alicia Lenahan

Members Not Present

Humberto Cardounel, Jr.
Robin Foster
Sandy Karison
Robin Morgan
Frederick Rockwell, III

Staff Present

Jenna Foster
Laurel Marks
Melissa O'Neill
Terry Willie-Surratt

Guests

Nicole Shipp (VDSS)

I. Call to Order: Pat Popp, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. Attendees introduced themselves.

II. Approval of Minutes: The committee received a copy of the draft minutes of the January 25, 2019 meeting. Upon a motion by the Chair, Pat Popp, the committee unanimously approved the minutes of January 25, 2019.

III. By-laws Update: The committee received a copy of the proposed changes to the by-laws prior to the meeting for review. A brief discussion was held regarding the proposed changes. The committee will vote on the changes at the August meeting.

IV. CASA Program Update: The committee was previously provided a written update regarding the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program. Included in the update was the recently approved State Leadership Team Strategic Plan. Committee members were provided with a brief overview of the State Leadership Team planning process and outcomes achieved to date. A highlighted achievement is the launch of the Virginia CASA website. This website is the first step in meeting the identified need for increasing volunteers statewide. The committee provided positive feedback regarding the State Leadership Team Strategic Plan and offered support toward the implementation strategies.

The committee was also provided with an update on the National CASA Association progress in resolving the conflicts related to the Core Model. Finally, DCJS has hired a full time CASA Grant Monitor and Quality Assurance Coordinator. Ms. Terry Willie-Surratt began work in February 2019.

VI. CJA Program Update: The committee was previously provided a written update regarding the Children's Justice Act Program. Jenna Foster provided an update on the status of the contract for development of guidance for law enforcement in child death investigations. DCJS increased the amount of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds that it awards to the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) for Child Advocacy Centers (CACs). These funds are intended to enable CACs to build capacity. DCJS will continue to support ChildFirst training. CJA will also support the Telehealth project and is working with VCU on implementation. The committee received a report on the recent CJA Grantees Meeting held April 23-24, 2019 in Washington, D.C. Committee Chair, Pat Popp and CJA Coordinator, Jenna Foster were in attendance.

The Committee was provided a copy of the current Three Year Plan with updates on the status of projects for review and comment. These updates will be part of the annual application for CJA funding that is due May 31, 2019.

VII. Citizen Review Panel: Nicole Shipp, VDSS Child Protective Services (CPS) Policy Specialist, provided an overview of the 2019 General Assembly bills affecting the VDSS. The most significant legislation focuses on Sex Trafficking and will require the Department respond to all CPS complaints alleging sex trafficking of minors, including those that were considered invalid prior to the legislative change because they did not meet the definition of a caretaker at that time. There will be a new prevention response outside of the current Differential Response System, called a Sex Trafficking Assessment. DSS will provide short-term crisis assessment focused on safety and referrals to services. These may result in Family First Prevention cases when the child and family need ongoing services. The worker will be able to place the child in a temporary hold for up to 72 hours to allow DSS to locate the parents and assess their

protective capacity and to come and pick up the child victim, as an alternative to law enforcement arresting victims to keep them safe while trying to reach a parent and get them away from the trafficker. VDSS is developing guidance, but it will not be highly prescriptive and will allow local agencies autonomy to create a response that best suits the needs of their community. Committee members were invited to participate on a new workgroup to plan for implementation of the new legislation. Several members agreed to participate.

Ms. Shipp reported on the development of a decision making tree tool on domestic violence similar to the one developed for Substance Exposed Infants. The tool is in the final stages of development. The purpose is to help create consistency of practice across the state when determining the validity of domestic violence referrals.

The Virginia Department of Social Services is using the Three Branch approach (Legislative, Executive and Judicial) to guide implementation of the Family First Prevention and Services Act (FFPSA) legislation. Implementation has been postponed due to the delay in the clearing house for evidenced based practices. The target date for implementation is July, 2020. VDSS will report back on the involvement of schools in the implementation of FFPSA.

The committee requested an update on the status of the Diversion Study. Ms. Shipp reported the study is complete and results should be available by the next meeting.

VDSS will be requesting the committee to prepare recommendations for system improvement per the CAPTA requirements. This will be an agenda item for the August meeting.

VIII. New Business:

Julia Fuller-Wilson shared information about the *DCJS 3rd Annual Intersections of Crime Conference* to be held July 15 - 17, 2019 in Hampton, Virginia. Committee members are invited to attend and there is no registration fee. A specific child abuse track will be available.

Allison Gilbreath shared Voices for Children will be preparing an election toolkit to include a questionnaire on foster care. A “kids rally” will be held on August 15, 2019 to highlight the needs of Virginia’s youth.

IX. Adjourn: There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 11:38 AM.

Next meeting dates:

- August 9, 2019