

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 10am-4pm
Albemarle County Police Department-Training Room B
1600 5th Street
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Members Present:

Jennifer Bourne, Director, Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc.
Cathy Easter, Executive Director, Safe Harbor
Linda Ellis-Williams, Director of Programs, YWCA of Central Virginia
Robin Gauthier, Executive Director, Samaritan House
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, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
Kristi VanAudenrove, Executive Director, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Laura Beth Weaver, Assistant Director, Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley
Rebecca Weybright, Executive Director, SARA Charlottesville

Members Present Remotely per 2.2-3708.1

Debbie Evans, Division Chief of the Sexual Assault Center & Domestic Violence Program, City of Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services

Members Absent:

Kandy Hayes, Domestic Violence Program Director, Southside Center for Violence Prevention, Inc.

Others Present:

Dione Bassett, Victims Services Grant Program Specialist, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
Tierra Smith, Victims Services Grant and V-STOP Coordination Program Specialist, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

Welcome & Remarks

The meeting started at 10:11 a.m. Chairperson Cathy Easter welcomed all members and Tierra Smith, who was previously introduced, facilitated the recording of meeting minutes along with Kristina Vadas and Dione Bassett of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

All attendees were introduced and physical copies of previously e-mailed materials were disseminated by Ms. Smith. Ms. Easter presented tokens of appreciation to Mary Carter Lominack and Becky Weybright, as this served as their last meeting. Due to the delay in quorum being established, the order of agenda items was altered. A quorum was present at 10:59 a.m.

Organizational Self-Assessment Summary Receipts

Tierra Smith provided an overview of the Organizational Self-Assessments Summaries received. In total, 21 summaries were received. Three organizations indicated they were “Not Ready” and 18 indicated they were “Ready” for the Professional Standards application process. Of the 18 organizations that were “Ready,” two of the submissions were late. Smith shared that acceptance of these late submissions would need to be determined by the committee. Smith also provided an overview of trends in technical assistance needs identified within the assessments. Smith noted that this was not an all-inclusive list; however, trends included:

- Board training and development
- Data management
- Volunteer training and management
- Legal requirements within various policies

Within the overview, Smith also highlighted that the work performed by the former Professional Standards Coordinator, Courtney Meyer, was acknowledged within an assessment summary in which the applicant stated the resources she had gathered proved to be helpful in meeting their technical assistance needs moving forward. The committee then engaged in dialogue around who would be responsible for providing the technical assistance needs identified by the applicants, or in the future when applicants are not ready for accreditation and have needs. Cathy Easter referenced Code of Virginia 9.1-116.3 in which it states: “Upon request of the Committee, the Department and the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition may provide accreditation assistance and training and resource material that will assist the local programs in obtaining or retaining accreditation.” Noting this, the committee decided that the to-be-hired DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator, DCJS Professional Standards Consultant, and staff of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (Alliance) would be consulted for providing technical assistance to organizations that indicate need.

During the discussion about self-assessment summary receipts, Laura Beth Weaver asked if there were a mixture of types of applications received. At the time of the meeting, this information was not available; however, Tierra Smith responded that this information could be provided to the committee.

The committee then discussed whether to accept the two late summaries that were received. Smith shared that one assessment was received a few minutes late and the other was received days late with the applicant indicating they had been on travel. Upon further discussion, it was determined that the committee would accept the two late submissions.

Online Application Timeline

Tierra Smith provided an overview of discussions that were held with the DCJS Computer Services team regarding the development of the online application. Smith shared that the team

estimated that such a project could take about 30 working days to develop from the time that they received an approved application template. It was discussed that the application would be a text-fillable format via an online system. Smith noted that the application would generate as a PDF once it is completed and the committee could obtain PDF copies. In addition, the applicant will receive an e-mail confirmation that their application was received. The committee then discussed the character capacity of each text field. Attendees referenced their previous experiences and decided that 2500 characters (with spaces) was an appropriate limit for each text box within the application. The committee requested that the following be considered:

- The ability to accept online payment, instead of submitting checks
- The ability to start, exit, and return back to an existing application
- 2500 character limit within text boxes
- E-signature which would eliminate the need for the Application Coversheet
- Having a non-fillable application available for public review
- Ability to have the application “on/off” depending on applicant status

Smith advised the committee that these requests would be presented to the DCJS Computer Services team for consideration and that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Laura Beth Weaver made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the application and providing DCJS staff with the authority to make these revisions and proceed with submitting the documents to Computer Services to generate the online application. Maria Simonetti second this motion.

Coversheet & Application

Tierra Smith presented a draft of the revised Professional Standards Application Cover Sheet, as well as the revisions to the Application and List of Required Attachments documents. The committee discussed that the revisions were made as requested; however, there were some additional changes proposed. It was proposed that the committee name also be added to the Professional Standards Application Coversheet. The committee also discussed that there should be notation that the application is subject to change and that this information should be placed on the Professional Standards website.

The committee discussed how to collect demographic information on localities served by applicants. Kristina Vadas referenced the Alliance’s previous accreditation materials and provided the committee with the language from that document. It was decided that applicants would attach the U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts Data to their application.

The committee requested the following revisions to the **Professional Standards Application Cover Sheet**:

- Revise the document title to: “2020 Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee Application Cover Sheet”
- Add: “Please note if the application reflects Fiscal Year or Calendar Year”

Additional dialogue was had that if the web-based application has the capacity to accept payment and E-signature, this form may not be needed.

The committee requested the following revisions to the **Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs Professional Standards Application**:

- Revise the document title to: “2020 Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs Professional Standards Application”
- Revise the document to include the following instructions: “Please indicate if the work referenced is based on the past calendar year or fiscal year” and “Please keep your answers concise and do not exceed 2500 characters”
- Question #10 was revised to “How is your crisis intervention, advocacy, and community engagement data entered? And what is the review process? Is your data entry VAWA compliant?”

The committee requested the following revisions to the **List of Required Attachments**:

- Add that the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts be included
- Remove attachment #13 (Complete Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Compliance Checklist)

Maria Simonetti made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the Application Cover Sheet, Application, and List of Required Attachments. Candy Phillips seconded this motion. Motion was approved.

Site Visit Checklist

Tierra Smith presented the revisions that were requested for the Professional Standards Application Site Visit Checklist and Site Visit Questions. The committee reviewed the documents and provided feedback on additional revisions. The committee engaged in dialogue on how the standards are to be reviewed annually and may change and how this may warrant revisions to the application and site visit documents. The committee also agreed that the site visit documents should be available for review by applicants at the time that the application is released/available.

The committee requested the following revisions to the **Professional Standards Application Site Visit Checklist**:

- Revise title to add the year
- Revise #6 to read: “**Standard #3**- Show recent audit and financial policies. If you do not have an audit, please include your financial policies”.
- Revise #12 to read: “**Standard #4**- Show where the state and federal regulations are posted”.
- Revise #15 to read: “**Standard #9**- Show data report of crisis intervention services provided”.
- Revise #16 to read: “**Standard #10**- Show a current memorandum of understanding (MOU) with relevant community partner(s) (i.e., medical provider, justice system)”.
- Revise #17 to read: “**Standard #10**- Show data report of accompaniment services provided”.
- Revise #19 to read: “**Standard #12**- Show data report of advocacy services provided”.

The committee requested the following revisions to the **Professional Standards Application Site Visit Questions:**

- In #5 revise “#24 to read #22”
- Under Advocacy Add Question #6- **Standards # 9-12**- Discuss how your agency responds to requests for crisis intervention or advocacy services that your agency is unable to meet.

Becky Weybright made a motion to approve the proposed revisions to the Professional Standards Application Site Visit Checklist and Site Visit Questions. Laura Beth Weaver seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Approval of January 2020 Minutes

Once quorum was established, Cathy Easter presented the January 2020 meeting minutes for review and approval. There were no corrections made to the minutes. Candy Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Laura Beth Weaver and approved.

Professional Standards Coordinator and Consultant Position Updates

Kristina Vadas provided attendees with an update on the current hiring process for the Coordinator and Consultant positions. Ms. Vadas provided attendees with a physical copy of the draft job announcement for the Professional Standards Consultant position. Committee members were provided the opportunity to review the content and make comments or recommendations. The committee also asked that they be made aware of when the job announcements for both positions are posted. A committee member asked if the Consultant position could work remotely, and Ms. Vadas stated that this position could be remote. An additional member asked if the Coordinator position had to be based in Richmond, Virginia, and Ms. Vadas responded that is preferred, but could possibly be remote. Additional dialogue was had about the timeline. Ms. Vadas shared that she estimates a candidate will be hired by the end of April 2020.

The committee asked that the following revisions be made to the **Consultant job announcement:**

- Revise BBD #10 to read “Attention to detail, organization, and efficiency”
- Add BBD to read “Extensive travel required”
- Add BBD to read “Ability to adhere to deadlines”

Review of Previous Accreditation Application Process Document

During the January 2020 meeting, Laura Beth Weaver and Becky Weybright volunteered to adapt language about the accreditation process from an Alliance document. Ms. Weaver provided attendees with a physical copy of this document and informed DCJS staff that she would provide an electronic copy to make requested the revisions. It was also discussed that the document would need to include information on the application processing timeline, renewal process, a notice that the application content is subject to change, technical assistance requests, and the benchmarks for determining what constitutes *Accredited, Provisional, Denied*. It was decided that this discussion would occur during the March 2020 meeting. During this time Ms. Vadas also reminded the committee that the renewal process and changes to

documents should also take into consideration the notion that the committee has a goal to move towards quarterly meetings instead of monthly.

During this agenda item, the committee also discussed creating an appeals committee to include 3-5 current and former committee members to provide an unbiased and objective review of submitted appeals.

The committee proposed the following recommendations be made to the **Application Process document** provided by Ms. Weaver:

- Insert *Code of Virginia* information into Section I.
- Insert Application Fee into Section II.
- In Section III. Timeline, Revise 2nd Paragraph to include "...must apply for renewal in the third full year to avoid a gap in accreditation".
- In Section III. Timeline-b. remove "July 1 to June 30 being an Accreditation year".
- In Section IV. Application Process-b. Remove the 1st sentence since the application will be uploaded and payment potentially submitted via online system.
- Review the entire document to replace "DCJS Consultant" with "Professional Standards Consultant"
- In Section IV.-e. Provisional Accreditation paragraph 2 should read "...and emergency accompaniment for victims"
- In Section IV. e- Provisional Accreditation paragraph 3 should read "After the first three-year accreditation cycle, the Professional Standards Committee will also take into account progress on previous Plans of Action for agencies that have been Provisionally Accredited in prior cycles."
- In Section IV. e- Provisional Accreditation paragraph 4 should read "The Committee, DCJS, and the Action Alliance are available to provide feedback and technical assistance to Provisionally Accredited Agencies to assist them in becoming fully Accredited".
- In Section IV. e- Provisional Accreditation paragraph 5 should read "Provisionally Accredited Agencies have six months to submit a Plan of Action for meeting "each" unmet criteria..."
- Insert f. to Section IV. titled **Plans of Action** Paragraph should read "Plans of Action can be submitted with application for any criteria not fully met OR requested at any time by the Committee or the PS Consultant"
- Remove first paragraph under Denied Accreditation.
- Under Denied Accreditation the last paragraph was revised to "Feedback and technical assistance are available to assist the Agency in preparing for future applications."
- Revise f. Change in Status to "g. Change in Status".
- Revise g. Status Determination Appeals to "h. Status Determination Appeals"
- In h. Status Determination Appeals, the 1st paragraph should read "Agencies may initiate an appeal of any Professional Standards Committee decision by submitting a letter of appeal via the PSC mailbox at sdvstandards@dcjs.virginia.gov."
- In h. Status Determination Appeals, the 2nd paragraph should read "...90 days after the designated appeals..."
- In h. Status Determination Appeals, the 2nd paragraph should include language about the appeals alternatives to include 3-5 current and former committee members.

Laura Beth Weaver made a motion to accept the requested revisions and Becky Weybright seconded this motion. Motion was approved.

Closing Remarks

Appreciation and thanks were again offered to Mary Carter Lominack and Rebecca Weybright for their work with the committee. The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Public Comment

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

Summary

Action Items

- Tierra Smith to follow up with DCJS Computer Services regarding items mentioned above.
- Dione Bassett, Tierra Smith, and Kristina Vadas will revise the Accreditation Coversheet, Application, and List of Required Attachments.
- Dione Bassett, Tierra Smith, and Kristina Vadas will revise the Site Visit Checklist and Site Visit Questions.
- Tierra Smith and Kristina Vadas will draft follow up e-mail correspondence to applicants with information on next steps.
- Dione Bassett, Tierra Smith, and Kristina Vadas will revise the Application Process document provided by Laura Beth Weaver.
- Laura Beth Weaver to send Kristina Vadas an electronic copy of the Application Process Document.
- Kristina Vadas to make revisions to the Professional Standards Consultant job announcement as recommended by the committee.
- Kristina Vadas to determine employment application timing options.
- Kristina Vadas to let committee know when positions are advertised.
- Kristina Vadas to review FAQ page revisions.

Decisions/Votes:

- The committee decided to accept two late summary submissions.
- The committee made additional revisions to the Accreditation Application and Attachment List, and approved allowing DCJS staff to make these revisions and proceed with submitting the documents to DCJS Computer Services to generate the online application.
- The committee made additional revisions to the Accreditation Site Visit Checklist Site Visit Questions, and approved allowing DCJS staff to make these revisions and proceed with posting them with the online application.
- The committee decided to postpone discussion on the benchmarks that constitute if an organization is *Accredited, Provisional, or Denied*.
- The committee decided to postpone the agenda item titled *Advisory Committee Role in the Professional Standards Process*.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 10am-4pm, Albemarle County Police Department, Training Room B