

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 20, 2020 1pm-4pm
Zoom Meeting (COVID-19)

Members Present:

Jennifer Bourne, Director, Clinch Valley Community Action Inc.
Cathy Easter, Executive Director, Safe Harbor
Debbie Evans, Division Chief of the Sexual Assault Center & Domestic Violence Program, City of Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services
Robin Gauthier, Executive Director, Samaritan House
Kandy Hayes, Domestic Violence Program Director, Southside Center for Prevention Inc.
Sheree Hedrick, Executive Director, Hanover Safe Place
Candy Phillips, Executive Director, First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence
Stacey Sheppard, Director of Housing & Human Services, Total Action for Progress
Maria Simonetti, Executive Director, The Collins Center & Child Advocacy Center
Kristina Vadas, Manager of Victims Services, DCJS
Kristi VanAudenrove, Executive Director, VSDVAA
Laura Beth Weaver, Executive Director, Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley

Members Present Remotely per 2.2-3708.1

Members Absent:

Linda Ellis-Williams, Director of Programs, YWCA of Central Virginia

Others Present:

Dione Bassett, Victims Services Grant Program Specialist, DCJS
Tierra Smith, Victims Services Grant and V-STOP Coordination Program Specialist, DCJS

Welcome & Remarks

The meeting started at 1:00pm with quorum established. Cathy Easter welcomed all members and Tierra Smith facilitated the recording of meeting minutes. Ms. Easter also shared that the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence appointed member, Sheree Hedrick, had joined. Kristi VanAudenrove shared that the Action Alliance is continuing their search for a new member. Ms. Easter also asked that professional diversity of the group be considered when selecting new members.

Professional Standards Committee (PSC) members introduced themselves.

Approval of June 2020 Meeting Minutes

Cathy Easter requested the review of the June 2020 meeting minutes supplied by Tierra Smith for approval. The members reviewed the minutes as presented. There were no corrections

made to the minutes. Debbie Evans made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Candy Phillips and approved. Tierra Smith completed a roll call vote of all present members. All members voted for the approval with the exception of those who were absent during the June 2020 meeting. These members abstained.

Online Application

Prior to the meeting, Tierra Smith disseminated the application test site and log-in information to PSC members with a request to engage in testing.

Ms. Smith shared that it is anticipated that the online system will allow for online payments, as well as generate a PDF and an e-mail confirmation once the application is completed.

Ms. Vadas asked for feedback on the online application. The following feedback and suggestions were provided by PSC members:

- Provide a reference for 2,500 characters length.
- Ability to print the application following completion, and suggested that there should be a statement in the initial instructions indicating that applicants would be able to print their applications upon completion.
- Discussion was had on whether or not dual programs such as the Sexual Assault Center & Domestic Violence Program, City of Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services, would have to submit two applications for accreditation. Ms. Vadas indicated that per the online FAQ document, it suggests that organizations would have to apply separately, but this FAQ could be revised. Discussed that as programs complete their applications they should be able to determine whether or not they need two applications based on their particular agency structure.
- Applicants should be able to “check all that apply” to initial organization questions.
- Change to Question #6 - the members voted to change this to read: *Standard #3: How often do supervisors meet with staff, and what is the process for supervisors to provide ongoing support and guidance to staff?*
- Add an additional page/screen after the last attachment, that would read:
Plans of Action
Applicants are encouraged to submit plans of action and timelines for any unmet standards at the time of application. Agencies that do not meet 100% of the professional standards may be *Provisionally Accredited*. See the Professional Standards Application Process document for additional information.
To include plans of action and timelines for unmet standards with your application, please upload them into the fields below.
- Other minor wording and typographical errors were identified.

There were no additional changes proposed. Sheree Hedrick made a motion to approve the revisions made to the online application, and Stacey Sheppard seconded this motion. All members voted for the approval.

Application Process Overview

Kristina Vadas presented revisions to the Application Process document previously provided by Laura Beth Weaver. Ms. Vadas, along with Dione Bassett of DCJS, shared information gathered during their review of the accreditation processes within other sectors. They shared that the

DCJS Law Enforcement Accreditation standards proved to be most helpful in defining how the PSC will assess their application process.

The following feedback was provided by the members:

- A statement be added indicating that the application fee is “*non-refundable*”
- Discussion about due dates; adjust language for emergency circumstances
- Discussion about scoring options; decision to not use weights/percentages; suggestion to use “Met” or “Not Met” criteria
- Add a statement to assure applicants that organizations that are represented on the PSC will not have their applications reviewed by those representatives who serve on the PSC
- Add that Action Plans could be uploaded at the time of application submission
- Define “multiple” as two opportunities to apply
- Discussion on making the dates of accreditation periods clear for those who are accredited; suggestion that the notice of accreditation includes an “Accreditation Status Period” indicated along with a date for when the agency would need to re-apply; suggestion to provide a certificate to accredited organizations
- Other minor wording and typographical errors were identified

The members also discussed ethics in the review process. It was proposed that all committee members sign an Ethics Statement. Members agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Kristina Vadas to complete the requested revisions to the Application Process document and provide them to the members for review and approval.

Discussion of Timeline

Kristina Vadas electronically displayed the most recent timeline that was approved for the accreditation process. The current COVID-19 Pandemic has created additional delays in this process. Tierra Smith confirmed that due to not having an approved application, no correspondence has been sent to the prospective applicants. A member proposed that the approved online application open in November 2020. Another member suggested that applicants have 90 days to complete the application instead of 60 days.

E-mail from Kate McCord

Kristina Vadas shared with the PSC that DCJS received an inquiry from Kate McCord of the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance requesting PSC members serve on a panel in September 2020 regarding accreditation. The PSC discussed this and determined that September is too soon to present information on accreditation. Ms. Vadas will respond to Ms. McCord.

DCJS Hiring

The PSC asked for an update on the hiring of the Professional Standards Coordinator and part-time consultant position. Kristina Vadas shared that the Commonwealth of Virginia is still under a hiring freeze and therefore positions must be approved by the Secretary of Public Safety. There is currently no estimated timeframe on this process. She confirmed that both positions have been requested for approval. Committee members asked whether or not the Victims Services Team at DCJS has the capacity to address technical assistance needs presented if the

application process is opened up soon. The PSC asked that Ms. Vadas assess whether or not her team would be able to provide the support that applicants need given the current vacancies.

Closing Remarks

Attendees shared positive remarks regarding their lives during the pandemic. The meeting adjourned at 4:01pm.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Summary

Action Items:

- Kristina Vadas to revise the Online Application based on feedback provided by the committee
- Kristina Vadas will revise the Application Process document provided by Laura Beth Weaver based on feedback provided by the committee
- Tierra Smith to send correspondence to applicants regarding the status of the application process
- All committee members to review the Application Process document and prepare feedback to share during the next meeting
- Action Alliance to select a new committee nominee to fill vacancy
- Kristina Vadas to assess the capacity of DCJS staff to manage accreditation tasks during hiring freeze

Decisions/Votes:

- The committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from the last meeting held on June 24, 2020
- The committee voted to approve revisions made to the online application based on feedback received from members
- The committee made additional revisions to the Application Process Document supplied by Laura Beth Weaver
- Committee decided to re-visit application review process/scoring in future meeting
- Committee decided to discuss drafting an "Ethics Statement" at the next meeting
- Committee agreed to postpone Timeline Discussion for next meeting

Next Meeting: September 16, 2020 1pm-4pm via Zoom platform. Meeting information to be sent via e-mail.