

SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

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*The Laurel Center,
Winchester*

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Markella Maschas, *VDSS*
Kristina Vadas, *DCJS*
Laura Beth Weaver,
VSDVAA

DCJS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TEAM

Amber Stanwix

**Sexual and Domestic Violence Program
Professional Standards Committee Meeting
May 27, 2026 • 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting Pursuant to *Code of Virginia* § 2.2-3708.3**

- **Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)**
 - *Faith Power, Committee Chairperson*
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes (5 minutes)**
- **Election of Committee Chair and Vice Chair (10 minutes)**
- **Review of Potential Seal Design (10 minutes)**
- **Discussion Regarding Survey Data (45 minutes)**
- **Professional Standards Update (10 minutes)**
 - *Amber Stanwix, Professional Standards Operations Coordinator*
- **Discussion Regarding Revision Process (10 minutes)**
- **Other (5 minutes)**
- **Public Comment (5 minutes)**
- **Selection of Next Meeting Date(s) (5 minutes)**
- **Closing Remarks (5 minutes)**
 - *Committee Chairperson*

Accreditation is most meaningful when it strengthens day-to-day work, not when it adds parallel systems that exist solely for compliance.

Overall Themes

Theme	Reaccreditation	Accreditation	Total
Concerns Regarding Training	9	4	13
Time Burden of the Process	2	6	8
Requirements for 24/7 Services	6	1	7
Volume of Required Documents	4	1	5

Overall Suggestions and Comments

Add

- Standard relating to staff/leadership wellness (2 surveys mentioned this)
 - The work can't get done if employees are burnt out, so minimum requirements for lower-cost staff benefits (e.g., PTO) might be nice to see
- Standard relating to client satisfaction
- Query agency partners on performance
- Integration of survivor feedback and lived experience into program improvement
- Standard #6 – Add/enhance data safety standards
 - More specificity on what data needs to be retained
- Standard #8 - Guidance or examples on how cultural humility should be measured and documented in sexual and/or domestic violence service delivery would make it more practical to implement and assess

Remove

- Standard #1 – remove requirement for a policy affirming that staff, board of directors, and volunteers should reflect the diversity of the community served → concern this could violate anti-discrimination laws
- Standard #3 – remove requirement for a sustainability plan with projected revenues and expenditures for the 36 months of operation → because grants are issued on a yearly basis, this is not feasible (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Standard #15 – remove requirement to identify the diverse needs of the community through at least two methods → this should be done through community engagement

Question

- Standard #7 - How can organizations require the protection of home computers without offering resources such as anti-virus software?

Other

- Remove the fee
- Provide funds for any necessary upgrades
- Accreditation should be every 5 years

- Prevention Standard – 3 surveys recommended adding a prevention standard, while 2 surveys approved of its removal
 - There could be a specific standard focused on youth that encourages agencies to develop and maintain relationships with schools and youth-serving organizations to promote awareness of sexual violence, domestic violence, and stalking.
 - A similar emphasis could be added for older adults, encouraging partnerships with organizations that serve aging populations to ensure outreach, education, and tailored services for this group.

- Consider prioritizing standards -> the must haves vs things that can be worked on over time
- Shift from a policy-heavy compliance model to a more practice-focused and outcomes-driven framework
- There should be a range of "good enough through absolute best" practices.

- More clarity regarding what is considered a policy that must be approved at the board level and what procedures can be approved internally.
- Reduce requirements for narrowly tailored, hypothetical policies
- Remove policies that address a rare or unlikely scenario or are already covered through other requirements, such as state grant contracts
- Several standards require stand-alone policies or procedures that are:
 - Highly prescriptive,
 - Unlikely to be used in day-to-day operations, and
 - Already addressed through other required policies or oversight mechanisms

Suggestions and Comments Specific to Training

Concerns

- Being able to keep up with in-person requirements
- Revolving staff (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Volunteer training requirements (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Too detailed/extensive
- Remove items that are specific to certain staff members
- Certain topics should be prioritized to be done immediately
 - What is mission critical for the first week of work, etc.?
- Give organizations the ability/flexibility to tailor training to specific roles
- More staff-specific training that is required within 30 days that can be accessed online
- Guidance on how to document training

Suggestions to Add

- Process for ROIs and subpoenas
- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Impact of Trauma on the Brain
- Reflective Supervision
- Digital/Data Safety for PII
- How to talk to constituents about confidentiality
 - a basic description reviewed by an attorney would be beneficial
- Add training that integrates housing stability, financial empowerment, and systems navigation, reflecting the increasingly complex needs of survivors.

Suggestions to Remove

- Theories/Models of Service Provision
 - Individual and Systems Advocacy, Survivor-directed services, Adverse Childhood Experiences, CDC model, Trauma-informed, based on SAMSHA model
- Public Assistance Benefits (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Fair Housing in DV
- Addition/Recovery
- Remove Items that are Specific to Certain Staff Roles
 - For example, STIs, ACEs, Engagement

Suggestions and Comments Regarding the Accreditation Process

- Duplicative of grants (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Dropbox for documents (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Change the requirement for having everything printed off and in a binder for the site visit

- More details in materials sent to organizations (guidelines, etc.)
- Better communication

- Unknown time commitment at beginning of process
- Fixed dates for submission of materials
- Allow programs to schedule a program management process timeline

- Provision of resources for training requirements such as cultural humility, intersection of oppressions for board members

Already in Professional Standards or Previously Addressed by Professional Standards Team

- Desire for templates (3 surveys mentioned this)
- Clarifying that collaboration may be used to meet the Standards
- Whether policies must be applicable to an entire organization or just to the SDV program
- Training exceptions for those who have prior experience or training
- Desire for clearer guidance on what documentation is needed to demonstrate compliance with training requirements
- Having additional requirements nonprofits need to make compared to government agencies (2 surveys mentioned this)
- Fingerprints for background checks (2 surveys mentioned this)
- The need for MOUs to be signed within one year of the accreditation application
- The amount of training per topic is not prescribed by the Standards
- Suggested training topics
 - Boundaries
 - Human trafficking
 - Mandatory trauma informed training
 - Stalking