

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 24, 2020 1pm-4pm

Virtually via Zoom

(Virtual meeting required due to pandemic state-of-emergency)

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

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

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

Candy Phillips, Executive Director, First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence

Stacy Sheppard, Director of Housing & Human Services, Total Action for Progress

Kristina Vadas, Manager of Victims Services, DCJS

Kristi VanAudenhove, Executive Director, VSDVAA

Members Absent:

Robin Gauthier, Executive Director, Samaritan House

Maria Simonetti, Executive Director, Collins Center

Laura Beth Weaver, Executive Director, WRCNRV

Members Present Remotely per 2.2-3708.1:

N/A

DCJS Staff Present:

Dione Bassett, Victims Services Grant Program Specialist, DCJS

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

Members of the Public Present:

Meghan Gaulding, Virginia State Crime Commission

Welcome & Remarks

The meeting started at 1:03 p.m. Cathy Easter, Chair, welcomed all members. Tierra Smith facilitated the recording of meeting minutes along with Kristina Vadas, Victims Services Manager, and Dione Bassett of DCJS. Ms. Vadas explained that the virtual meeting was required due to the Governor's current state-of-emergency due to the pandemic.

Ms. Easter welcomed a new appointed member, Stacey Sheppard. Members also asked about the other two vacancies. Kristi VanAudenhoove reported that they still need to select a new member, as the one that had been selected left her position. Ms. Vadas reported that the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence (ACSDV) had appointed Sheree Hedrick from Hanover Safe Place to serve on the Professional Standards Committee (PSC).

Ms. Easter commented on the professional diversity of the group, given information she had received during the ACSDV meeting held earlier in the day. Ms. Easter asked if all PSC committee members had to be "Executive Directors" or if the term "Director" encompassed any Director role within an organization. Ms. Vadas responded to this inquiry and advised that the term "Director" included any applicable Director role within an agency, not just the Executive Director position.

Members briefly discussed the pandemic and impact on services.

Due to the delay in quorum being established, the order of agenda items was altered. A quorum was present at 1:20 p.m.

Online Application

Ms. Vadas indicated that DCJS had recently experienced a malware attack which resulted in the DCJS website and other related platforms being down. This impacted the online web-based professional standards application developed by the DCJS Computer Services team. Ms. Smith shared that Computer Services staff indicated that if the website is not restored in a timely manner, then the web-based application would need to be rebuilt in another web-based platform.

Prior to the meeting, Ms. Smith and Ms. Vadas disseminated the application test site and log-in information to committee members who indicated an interest in testing. In addition, Ms. Smith included this information in the meeting reminder email. None of the members in attendance had the opportunity to test the application prior to the meeting or to the DCJS website going down. Ms. Vadas shared that Dione Bassett, Ms. Smith, and other DCJS Victims Services Team members had already tested and provided feedback and edits previously.

Review of Documents

Coversheet

No changes were requested to this document. Debbie Evans asked what was the consensus regarding dual agency applications. This information was previously discussed in meetings. Ms. Evans volunteered to draft language for this and send to DCJS staff.

Application - List of Required Attachments

Attendees asked whether or not Attachments #5 and #16 were required. Ms. Vadas confirmed that these items were "if applicable" items and were not required of all applicants.

Meeting Schedule

Ms. Easter requested to discuss the upcoming meeting dates for the remainder of the year. It was discussed that virtual meetings were sufficient during the current pandemic. It was requested that in scheduling the meetings, that DCJS staff consider other previously-scheduled meetings. Ms. Vadas also proposed that the next meeting be held in the latter part of July 2020 to allow for the DCJS website issues to be addressed. Ms. Smith indicated that she would send out a Doodle Poll to the committee members to determine the best meeting dates.

Approval of February 2020 Minutes

Once quorum was established, Ms. Easter requested review of the February 2020 meeting minutes. The committee reviewed the minutes as presented. There were no corrections made to the minutes. Linda Ellis-Williams made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Debbie Evans and approved. Ms. Smith facilitated a roll call vote of all present members. The minutes were approved. Kandy Hayes abstained.

DCJS Hiring

The committee asked for an update on the hiring of the Professional Standards Coordinator and part-time consultant position. Ms. Vadas reported that the Commonwealth of Virginia is still under a hiring freeze, and therefore, DCJS positions must be approved and given an exception by the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety. The timeline for approval is uncertain. She confirmed that both positions have been requested for approval.

Review of Draft Professional Standards Application Process

In the absence of Laura Beth Weaver, Ms. Vadas presented the draft Professional Standards Application Process document that Ms. Weaver provided. The committee reviewed each section and engaged in discussion. Suggested changes are below. DCJS staff will make these changes and send the document to members for review prior to the next meeting.

- Section III. Timeline
 - Add information about the timeframe for overall standards process
- Section IV. Application Process
 - Section “b” revised to reflect online application and revised timeline
 - Section “c” insert link to DCJS PSC webpages and verify webpage title/content
 - Section “e” definitions reviewed and edits suggested
- Add PSC webpage link to the document
- Insert a section titles “Action Plan”
- Revise appeals language to reflect that the document will be sent via email.

Overall during the discussion, members revisited discussions regarding “full” and “provisional” accreditation. The committee further discussed whether or not applicants should submit their plans of action with their applications or if this would be requested later by DCJS staff. One member asked about the application review and scoring processes. She recommended having a scale for assessing applications or a threshold for determining accreditation, which could add to the validity of the process. Another member commented that this process has not been finalized, but would need to be discussed and that this scoring process should be made available to applicants upfront. A member commented that in the initial assessment process, applicants were afforded the opportunity to assess their ability to meet the standards prior to applying. It was also commented that the new coordinator and consultant staff will provide an unbiased review process,

which will allow for an independent assessment of each organization. These staff will also manage and track the status of applicants' plans of action.

Closing Remarks

Attendees all shared positive aspects of their lives during the pandemic.

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Summary

Action Items

- Kristina Vadas to follow up with DCJS Computer Services to discuss the status of the online application.
- DCJS staff will revise the Professional Standards Application Process document provided by Laura Beth Weaver. This will be sent to members prior to the next meeting.
- Tierra Smith will send introductory email to new member.
- Members will send Tierra Smith dates that do not accommodate their schedules for consideration in scheduling upcoming meetings.
- Tierra Smith to send out Doodle Poll for scheduling of upcoming meetings.
- Action Alliance to select a new committee nominee to fill vacancy.
- Tierra Smith and Kristina Vadas to review application process practices in other states to provide language to the committee.

Decisions/Votes:

- The committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from the last meeting held on February 25, 2020.
- The committee decided to revisit discussion on how a dual agency would need to apply in future meeting.
- The committee decided to postpone a vote on the online application until members have tested it.
- The committee decided to re-visit application review process/scoring in future meeting.

Next Meeting: TBD