

# Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence

## Virtual Meeting

*(In accordance with approved policy)*

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

## Minutes

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**Committee Members Present:** Marybeth Adkins, Maria Altonen, Elvira De la Cruz, Marva Dunn, Senator Barbara Favola, Nancy Fowler, Pyowook Han, Kate Hanger, Delegate Charniele Herring, Claudia Lopez-Muniz, Kike Oliver, Kylisha Boyd for Adrian Perry, Kristina Hagen for Delegate Irene Shin, Kristina Vadas, Sanu Dieng-Cooper for Kristi VanAudenhove

**Committee Members Absent:** Krista Martinez, Michelle Ellis Young

**Members of the Public:** Rachel DeGraba, Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia; Eileen Longenecker, Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia; Ebony McGill, OAG; Ixchel Morrison, OAG

**DCJS Staff:** Gleibys Gonzalez, Andi Martin, Anya Shaffer, Amber Stanwix, Andrea Sutton

### Welcome and Introductions

Claudia Lopez-Muñiz, Committee Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. A quorum was present. Introductions were made. The committee was informed of a recently appointed member, Michelle Ellis Young of the YWCA South Hampton Roads, who was unable to attend the meeting.

### Approval of September 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Nancy Fowler made a motion to approve the September 18, 2024 minutes. Marva Dunn seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

### Election of Chair

Nominations were made to elect a new Chairperson. Marva Dunn nominated Claudia Lopez-Muñiz. No other nominations were received. Marva made a motion to elect Claudia as Chairperson. Nancy Fowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Nominations were made to elect a new Vice-Chairperson. Nancy Fowler nominated Marybeth Adkins. No other nominations were received. Nancy made a motion to elect Marybeth as Vice-Chairperson. Claudia Lopez-Muñiz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## State Agency Funding Updates

- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)

Kristina Vadas from DCJS reported the following:

- Virginia's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) award totals \$19,866,137, down from \$34,605,387 in FFY 2023. DCJS anticipates a similar award in FFY 2025.
- DCJS subgrantees are in middle of state fiscal year (SFY) awards for the following: Victims Services Grant Program for competitive applicants (VSGP); Victims Services Grant Program for Sexual and Domestic Violence Services non-competitive (VSGP-SDVS); Victim Witness Grant Program (VWGP); Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Victim Fund (VSDVVF); and American Rescue Plan Act for Sexual and Domestic Violence Services (ARPA-SDVS).
- Virginia Services, Training, Officers, Prosecution (VSTOP) awards are continuing into their second year in calendar year (CY) 2025.
- New CY 2025 Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) grant awards will begin 1/1/25; 30 awards totaling \$970,586.

A committee member asked if and how state funds allocated in the SFY 2025 state budget helped lessen the impact of VOCA decreases. Kristina Vadas confirmed that additional state funds plus the final year of ARPA funds resulted in level awards in the VSGP-SDVS for SFY 2025.

A committee member asked about the amount of state special funds that are allocated in the state budget from the Virginia Crime Victim-Witness Fund (Fund) for the Victim Witness Grant Program, and how that amount differs from what is actually available to spend from that fund. Kristina Vadas confirmed that although the listed state budget amount is \$5,692,738 from the Fund, only approximately \$1.5 million is available to use from the Fund due to several years of low deposits, which resulted in low fund balances.

- Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Maria Altonen from VDH reported the following:

- VDH's Rape Prevention Education (RPE) grant is coming to the end of its first year on 1/31/2025. This grant is on a five-year cycle. Year two begins on 2/1/2025.
- VDH is currently awaiting their Notice of Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for approval for their year-two workplan and budget. Once they receive that approval, they will begin getting contracts in place for their subrecipients for year two.
- CDC released a new study on intimate partner violence during pregnancy. One in 20 women surveyed experienced intimate partner violence during pregnancy, according to a [new article](#) in CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR). CDC examined Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) data from almost 50,000 respondents in nine U.S. jurisdictions from 2016-2022 to better understand experiences of intimate partner

violence during pregnancy and associations with prenatal care initiation, health conditions during pregnancy, substance use during pregnancy, and infant birth outcomes.

- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development  
Kike Oliver from VDHCD informed the committee that VDHCD had no report.
- Virginia Department of Social Services  
Nancy Fowler from VDSS reported the following:
  - Several applications were received to establish new domestic violence services in the southside region; the grant review committee convened last week and negotiations are underway.
  - Some remaining ARPA funds are unobligated. Due to a lack of capacity at VDSS, we are engaging in conversations about alternative methods of distributing some additional funds that will need to be expended by 9/2025.
  - DVPS grants have one additional renewal available and will be effective July 2025.
  - UPOP grants are in their final months. A new RFA will be posted in the late winter, for new contracts beginning in July 2025.
  - SDV Prevention grants are in their second year, with two renewals remaining.
  - SDV ARPA grants will end June 2025.
  - Vaccine Testing ARPA grants will end September 2025.

#### **Past Business**

- Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards
  - Kristina Vadas reported that she shared the committee's comments about the Professional Standards processes, that were shared at the September meeting, with the Professional Standards Committee Chairperson, Judy Castelee. DCJS is working with the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office to fill vacant appointee positions. The Professional Standards Committee is discussing how they can encourage applications and generally enhance the program in 2025.
- Virginia State Crime Commission Language Access Study Request
  - No update.

#### **New Business**

- Revisions to *Policy on Participation of Virginia Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence Members in Meetings by Electronic Means*
  - Kristina Vadas presented on proposed changes to this policy which will align it with current *Code of Virginia* language. Senator Favola made a motion to approve the revised policy. Marybeth Adkins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Legislative Matters in Preparation for 2025 General Assembly Session**
  - Sanu Dieng-Cooper reported that the Action Alliance will continue pursuing the Put Victims First campaign that was started last year. The Action Alliance will also pursue a gun surrender bill concerning the relinquishment of firearms to third parties pursuant to a protective order. The Action Alliance will also support some bills carried by other organizations concerning reproductive rights.
  - Senator Favola reported that she will be seeking a state constitutional amendment concerning reproductive rights. Her hope is this will be on the ballot for voters in 2026.
  - On behalf of Delegate Shin, Kristina Hagen reported that Delegate Shin will be pursuing a bill to address a staffing crisis in forensic nursing. They are also working with forensic nursing representatives on bills that may address certification, training curricula, and protocols for tele-forensics.
  - Kylisha Boyd from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) introduced Ebony McGill, who described changes to the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) sought by the OAG in the upcoming session. These changes include the following: allowing law enforcement and others who work with sexual and domestic violence victims access to use the ACP for their personal addresses, and ensuring that applicants go through a victim assistance organization to apply.

### **Member Announcements**

Elvira De la Cruz reported that recently, Latinos In Virginia Empowerment Center's (LIVE) social media pages received posts by some users expressing hateful and violent language towards the agency and the people they serve. These disturbing posts have resulted in significant distress and fear in the service community and among LIVE's staff. Staff feel they need to take extra steps to protect themselves, and they will be participating in active attack training offered by DCJS. They are also making some changes to their services to ensure staff safety. Committee members expressed support to Elvira, agency staff, and the people they serve.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Proposed 2025 Meeting Dates**

Claudia Lopez-Muñiz brought to the attention of the committee the proposed dates and times of committee meetings in 2025 and asked if there were concerns about the dates. No concerns were mentioned. Kristina Vadas made a motion to approve the dates and times. Kate Hanger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The approved 2025 meeting dates are as follows:

March 5, 2025, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (in-person)

June 4, 2025, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (virtual)

September 10, 2025, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (in-person)

December 3, 2025, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (virtual)

**Closing**

Claudia Lopez-Muñiz adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.