

Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence

Chesterfield Public Library – Chester Location

Meeting Rooms A & B
11800 Centre Street
Chester, VA 23831

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Maria Altonen, Kathy Anderson, Teresa Berry, Elvira De La Cruz, Sanu Dieng, Senator Barbara Favola, Kate Hanger, Kristen Howard, Claudia Lopez-Muniz, Kike Oliver, Kristina Vadas, Kristi VanAudenhove, Toni Zollicoffer

Members Absent: Marva Dunn, Autumn Edmond, Nancy Fowler, Adrian Perry, Unique Phillips, House of Delegates Representative (vacant position)

Members of the Public: Eileen Longenecker, Andi Martin, Anya Shaffer, Amber Stanwix, Andrea Sutton

Welcome, Introductions, and Remarks

Teresa Berry, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. Committee members introduced themselves. A quorum was present.

Approval of December 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Kathy Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes from December 7, 2022, as submitted. Claudia Lopez-Muniz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2023 General Assembly Session

- Kristi VanAudenhove and Jonathan Yglesias from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (VSDVAA) provided a synopsis of some legislation that was supported or opposed by VSDVAA.
 - Supported State General Funds to fund the costs of the statewide hotline at VSDVAA.
 - Supported a bill to clarify the firearms surrender protocols and align it with other *Code of Virginia* sections. The bill was rejected in the House of Delegates.
 - Supported a bill to include suffocation in the strangulation statute.
 - Opposed a “Best Interest of the Child” bill that required judges to presume 50/50 share in custody even where there is a history of domestic violence. This bill also presumed frequent contacts by both parents. The bill did not pass.
- VSDVAA created a Best Practices Firearms Restrictions and Protective Orders Toolkit. This toolkit includes posters with firearm surrender options. Full toolkit available at: <https://vsdvalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Firearm-Toolkit-Jan-2023-FINAL.pdf>

Areas of Committee Focus for 2023

- *Code of Virginia* states that the Committee's responsibilities are to:
 1. Promote appropriate and effective responses, services, and prevention for sexual assault and domestic violence across the Commonwealth; and
 2. Promote strong communication, coordination, and strategy at state, regional, and local levels.
- Recommendations of Language Access Workgroup
 - VSDVAA is working with the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice to identify how language access currently works for victims in contact with these institutions, in order to determine how improvements or enhancements can be made.
 - One of the four recommendations is a study by the Virginia State Crime Commission which would explore language access issues.
 - **Senator Favola made a motion that the Advisory Committee write a letter, signed by the Committee Chair, to the Crime Commission asking for a broad-based study of language access as articulated on page 2 of the recommendations document from the Language Access Workgroup. The motion was seconded by Elvira De La Cruz. The motion passed unanimously. Kristen Howard abstained.**
- Needs assessment/survey
 - In past meetings, the Committee discussed developing a survey of sexual and domestic violence service providers; however, there are currently several surveys and projects in progress and an additional survey may not be needed at this time.
 - Sexual and domestic violence service providers were recently surveyed by VSDVAA.
 - Victim-serving organizations were recently surveyed by the Virginia Victims Fund (VVF).
 - DCJS's consultant group, Knowledge Advisory Group, intends to survey sexual and domestic violence service providers about funding-related issues within the coming weeks.
 - VSDVAA is working on a final report for their sustainability workgroup/project.
 - VSDVAA is working on a required statewide needs assessment.
 - Instead of developing an additional survey at this time, the Committee would like reports about the above-listed projects at future meetings.

State Agency Funding Updates

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Kristina Vadas

- DCJS entered into a contract with the Knowledge Advisory Group (KAG) to develop a funding strategy for sexual and domestic violence services in Virginia. Committee members requested future reports on the project during the June and September meetings.
- Concerning funding for Victim/Witness Programs: DCJS requested a higher appropriation of State Special Funds from the Virginia Crime Victim-Witness Fund; however, deposits into this Special Fund are declining and additional funds will not be available for State Fiscal Year 2024 grant awards. The Virginia Victim Assistance Network (VVAN) also introduced a state budget amendment request for State General Funds to support the DCJS Victim Witness Grant Program. If this request is included in the final state budget, it could allow Victim Witness Grant Program awards to remain at level-funding for SFY 2024; currently, it is anticipated that grantees will receive a 10% reduction in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) portion of their grant awards.

- The Committee discussed that the Virginia Victims Fund (VVF) has a large amount of unclaimed restitution money that they have been unable to disburse to victims. Members inquired whether these funds can be used to support victim serving agencies. The Committee asked if a representative from VVF could brief them at a future meeting. Kristina Vadas will contact VVF.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Maria Altonen

- VDH is hosting a data equity primer training on March 31, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. This training will include how to integrate health equity into data and data analysis.
- VDH's Firearm Injury Surveillance dashboard can be accessed here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/syndromic-surveillance/firearm-injury-surveillance/>
- VDH is working on a firearm deaths dashboard; more information is forthcoming.

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD), Kike Oliver

- Governor Youngkin announced on March 13, 2023, that over \$12 million in grant funding from the Virginia Housing Trust Fund was recently awarded.
- VDHCD has a new Director, Ara Mendoza.
- VDHCD is completing year one of their Virginia Homeless Solution grant program and starting year two in July.
- VDHCD is awaiting U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding to open their grant for Continuum of Care competition.

Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), Carol Dunlap

- VDSS has the following new upcoming grant programs: Domestic Violence Prevention and Services grant (\$8 million available funding); Domestic Violence Underserved Population Services grant is in year two renewal process (\$550,000 available funding); The Laurel Center special appropriation through the General Assembly; and a renewal grant to the VSDVAA for data collection, technical assistance and services in the region formerly served by the Southside Center for Violence Prevention (SCVP).
- VDSS, DCJS, and VSDVAA have been working together to plan an approach to meeting the needs of the communities from SCVP's former service region.
- VDSS's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant closed today, March 15th. This is a two-year grant starting July 1, 2023. Funding allocations will include \$30,000 for domestic violence organizations, \$80,000 for sexual assault organizations, and \$110,000 for dual sexual and domestic violence organizations.
- VDSS will release an ARPA-related RFP for vaccine testing toward the end of June. There is \$8.3 million available for these grant projects.

Past Business

- Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Funding, Jana McDermott (VDSS)
 - Sexual and domestic violence (SDV) prevention funding was established in 2020 by the General Assembly. It is now administered by VDSS. Funds total \$2,675,00 and support 14 new projects. Seven are existing or expanding prevention programs, and seven are new to prevention funding. VDSS received 28 applications but could only support 14 projects. This grant program runs on an 18-month grant cycle, which ends August 31, 2024.
 - Next year, the General Assembly may include continuation funding in the new biennium budget.

- PowerPoint slides related to these funds are attached to the minutes.
- Committee members requested a future presentation from VDSS on the various projects that receive this funding.

- Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee, Kristina Vadas (DCJS)
 - DCJS staff, Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton, lead this project and are present today.
 - Newly-appointed members of the Professional Standards Committee (PSC) recently received final approval from the General Assembly.
 - The PSC’s first meeting with the new committee membership will be held on March 29, 2023. During the meeting, members will receive an orientation about the PSC and work of the DCJS Professional Standards Team. This meeting is open to public and will be held at the Tuckahoe Library in Henrico from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 - During subsequent meetings, the PSC will begin hearing recommendations for accreditation.

New Business

- Senator Favola requested that the Advisory Committee receive a future briefing from the Commonwealth’s Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force.

Other Member Announcements

- None

Public Comment

- None

Closing

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

2023 Meeting Dates: **June 14, 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** (virtual meeting)
 September 20, 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (in-person meeting)
 December 13, 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (virtual meeting)



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund

Nancy Fowler, Director, Office of Family Violence
Jana McDermott, Contract Administrator (SDV Prevention Fund)

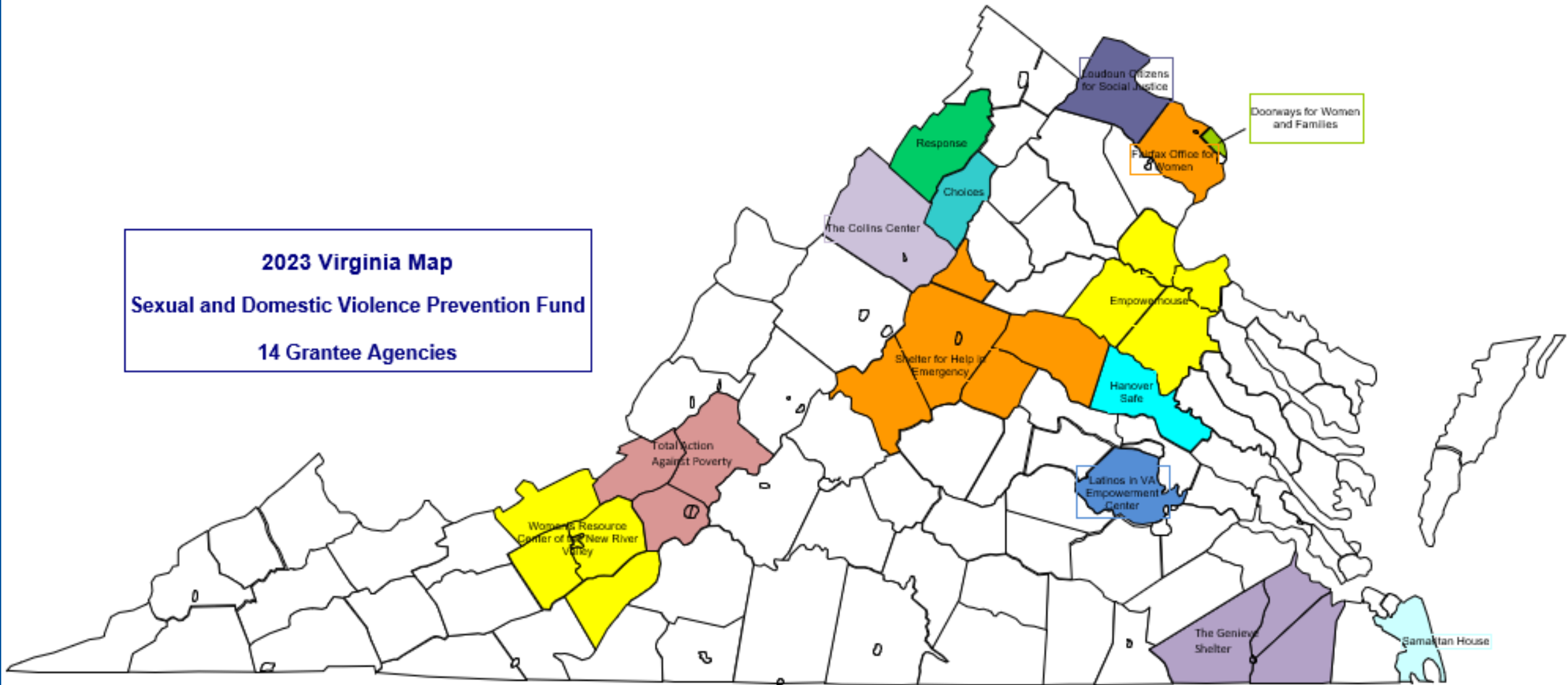
SDV Prevention Fund

- **Established in 2020**
 - Code of Virginia - §63.2-2300
- **Collaborative Grant program: VDH & VDSS**
 - Currently administered by VDSS
- **The only dedicated state funding for the primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence**

SDV Prevention Fund

- **Fund total: \$2,675,000**
- **Grants for the primary prevention of sexual and domestic violence**
 - 14 new grants
 - 7 agencies that are expanding their current, existing prevention efforts
 - 7 agencies that are either brand new to primary prevention or have never received grant funding for their primary prevention efforts.
- **Grant for Training and Technical Assistance**
 - TBD

2023 Virginia Map
Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund
14 Grantee Agencies





Types of Prevention Initiatives:

- Safe Church and Communities
- Do You
- Coaching Boys into Men
- Askable Adult Campaign
- Safe Bars
- Youth Advisory Boards
- Where We Live
- Care For Kids
- Do Something
- HYPE
- Teen Advocates
- Choices and Change
- Safe Dates
- Expect Respect
- Stewards of Children
- Nurturing Parenting
- Grandparents as Parents
- PEACE Line
- Bystander Mixtape
- The 4th R (Healthy Relationships)