

**Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advisory Council
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, April 16th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Oklahoma Judicial Center, Room E123

Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

1. Call to Order

a. Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum

- i. The meeting was called to order by Danni Johnson, in accordance with the Open Meeting Act at 10:07 a.m. Members present included Ann Lowrance, Kristie Chandler, Whitney Anderson, Karen Cunningham, Jacqueline Steyn, Eileen Meadows, Kelsey Samuels, Rose Turner, and Brandon Pasley. Non-members present included Mary Wickstrom, Stephanie Lowery, Danni Johnson, Myel Solorzano Sutton, Alicia Mercer, Kristy Stewart, Miguel Mojica, Caroline Drummond, Anthony Hernandez-Rivera, Tara Tyler, Paul Fockler and Leslie Clingenpeel.

b. Assurance of Compliance with Open Meeting Act

2. Discussion and Possible Action on Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes From Tuesday, March 19, 2024:

- a. Judge Leah Edwards motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Brandon Pasley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion and Possible Action on Changing FVPSA Statewide Needs Assessment:

- a. Stephanie Lowery reported that last summer, the funding formula committee discussed action on changing the FVPSA statewide needs assessment. Originally, this task would have been work done by the coalition, but since our coalition has dissolved, Stephanie stated that we are currently re-using the last state plan.
- b. Tara Tyler suggested that since we won't have a coalition within the next 2-3 years, we need to be operating with that assumption. Stephanie Lowery stated that other states have contracted out to complete the state's plan, but we don't have to do that. Stephanie also highlighted that the new plan doesn't have to be as elaborate as the previous one.
- c. Stephanie Lowery reported that she plans on recommending an NNDEV private led session at the upcoming Partners for Change conference that would allow DVSA programs a space to talk about where to go from here as far as forming a new coalition and what the steps are. If the session doesn't take place at the conference, they can also consider holding a virtual meeting instead.
- d. Kristie Chandler suggested centering the voices of those who have received services through the programs and gathering input from community partners through the use of surveys for the plan.
- e. Jacqueline Steyn stated that she doesn't recall when the previous state needs assessment was completed or how it was translated into a state plan. Stephanie Lowery said that she believes it got lost during COVID. The years for the previous

plan was 2018-2023, but with OAG staff changes, it was never followed up on. Stephanie also stated that the previous report was great, but it was 300 pages. She also highlighted that she thinks the assessment should not be contracted out.

- f. Eileen Meadows asked what the timeline looks like for completing a needs assessment. Stephanie stated that FVPSA requires it be completed by the end of January 2025, but we can request an extension to the end of March 2025 if necessary. Tara Tyler suggested having a private session room booked at the Partners for Change conference for all programs to meet and discuss strategic planning. Eileen Meadows agreed and stated that also might incentivize attendance at the conference.
- g. Ann Lowrance stated that it might be helpful to create a survey in order to examine the results. Kelsey Samuels was volunteered to make the survey.
- h. Ann Lowrance asked what the next steps are. Stephanie Lowery stated that she will reach out to NNDEV for the next steps.

4. Discussion on Funding Formula for DVSA and AVHST Programs:

- a. Stephanie Lowery reported that the funding formulas are still being created. They are being worked on by three different people. The funding formula committee will be holding a preliminary findings meeting on May 1st. Ann Lowrance asked if they give a number of options for the formula to which Stephanie replied yes. There will also be a period for the committee to comment.
- b. Stephanie Lowery said that the goal is to have the new formula ready and implemented for the next fiscal year. Anthony Hernandez-Rivera reported that the committee is waiting on the professors to do the math for the formulas. Leslie Clingenpeel asked if the plan will include the programs that are not currently funded and Stephanie said yes. Kristie Chandler asked if FVPSA is required to approve the new funding formula. Stephanie Lowery replied that FVPSA will need to be notified, but approval is not required.
- c. Whitney Anderson highlighted that Oklahoma doesn't do a good job supporting new or different types of programs. She highlighted that she believes it's extremely important to invest in underserved populations and culturally specific programs, but current efforts don't. Ann Lowrance stated that historically, Oklahoma has lacked a focus on funding victim services in general, and other states typically do a better job than we do.
- d. Leslie Clingenpeel asked if the new funding goes into effect on June 1, 2024, will there be additional appropriations? Stephanie Lowery reported that there are ongoing talks at the Capitol, but she does not know. Karen Cunningham stated that last year there was.
- e. Kristie Chandler stated that when Executive Director Jayra Camarena was starting her culturally specific DVSA program, La Luz, it was extremely difficult. She stated that there are FVPSA dollars available, and it's important to advocate for

virtual training so that those who qualify and do culturally specific work are aware of funding opportunities. Stephanie Lowery asked the Council to reach out to her if they know of anyone who may be interested or qualify for that type of funding so that she can add them to her emailing list.

- f. Stephanie Lowery stated that there have been six new programs certified in the past five years that are not currently receiving funding. The funding formula committee is researching other states that have had to add new programs to their funding.
- g. Kelsey Samuels asked how the new formula will measure duplicative services in areas where certain programs may have been serving historically and if there will be a cap on duplication. Stephanie Lowery said that she has noted the concern and will keep it in mind for the funding committee.
- h. Ann Lowrance asked how they will determine service areas, but Stephanie stated that since there is no map, there is overlap. Ann said that due to the nature of the services, there will always be overlap. Ann suggested acquiring a data set of counties, residencies, demographics, and service information. Danni stated that she had recently met with the organization “DV Beds” and they keep track of available shelter beds across the state. Ann asked if tribal program could also utilize the program to which Danni replied she believes so.
- i. Kelsey Samuels asked if service determination has been discussed in the funding formula committee. Stephanie stated that is self-determined, but they can’t only rely on that information since there is a lot of overlap. Ann Lowrance suggested measuring overlap date over a three-year period in order to better alleviate damage to new programs.
- j. Kelsey Samuels asked if the billing codes and definitions sub-committee met and Stephanie Lowery reported that they have not. Stephanie stated that comparing definitions between the billing codes and standards won’t be difficult, but changing the billable totals will be a different discussion. Kelsey asked what that process for that would look like and Stephanie said that more than likely, it will require the creation of a new committee dedicated to updating invoice pricing because of how outdated the current ones are.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on Adding Council Members:

- a. Whitney Anderson suggested adding a culturally specific program and tribal representative. Danni Johnson stated that she sent out a list to the Council with the new potential members listed.
- b. Ann Lowrance said that in order to manage a workable group, the size cannot be too large.
- c. Kristie Chandler asked if the Council’s goal was to still have nine members. Danni Johnson stated that we are currently at nine, but if we add the culturally specific program and NAAV, we will have 11.

- d. Whitney Anderson motioned to expand the Council to 11 members. The two remaining spots are for a tribal representative and culturally specific program. Rose Turner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on Subcommittee Work - Victim Advocate and Service Providers Code of Ethics:

- a. Jacqueline Steyn reported that the sub-committee formed last month has not yet met, but she has started reviewing victim advocacy codes of ethics, including NOVA's. Jacqueline stated that there are several Attorney General Office's across the country who have developed similar codes of ethics. The next step will be scheduling a time for the sub-committee to meet and review the codes she has pulled. At this time, Jacqueline is unsure if it will be ready by May, but maybe by June.
- b. Jacqueline Steyn asked if the code of ethics that is created is entered into the standards, how will we hold programs and individuals accountable and measure whether programs comply. Kristie Chandler suggested having the programs adopt the code into their policies and procedures.
- c. Karen Cunningham stated that once a code is created, DAC and CLEET can be approached and we can request that the code is included in training.
- d. Ann Lowrance stated that since each program operates as an independent corporation, we may consider having each program develop their own code of ethics and it must contain "x,y,z, and z." Tara Tyler reported that her program utilizes an extensive code of ethics that she makes all employees sign. She will send it to Jacqueline. Jacqueline Steyn agreed and stated that maybe the Council should consider just adding into standards that programs have to have a code of ethics in place and not necessarily the one that the subcommittee creates.

7. Discussion of Database Issues:

- a. Stephanie Lowery reported that years ago, the OAG paid for a custom database that is now inaccessible to OAG staff. Staff is unable to create new employee passwords and is looking at purchasing a new database. Stephanie also said that currently, a good portion of the programs pay for their own database. She asked if programs would prefer for the OAG's office to pursue a new database or change how we do invoicing. Ann Lowrance suggested reaching out to all of the programs. Kristie Chandler reported that when they were looking at purchasing a new database in the past, they were considering Empower DB. She asked if there were funds available, could the OAG's office allocate funding to the programs specifically for purchasing a database. Stephanie stated that funding is available through grant administrative dollars and that can be awarded to programs.
- b. Danni Johnson requested that all programs select one database and utilize the same one. She suggested adding this into standards. Kelsey Samuels stated that might put a burden

on certain programs as they would have to purchase multiple databases to stay in compliance with certain conditions of grants they may receive.

- c. Rose Turner, Paul Fockler and Kelsey Samuels reported that their program's utilize Empower DB and they are able to customize reports and make their own in the ways that they need. Kelsey stated that she's unsure about pricing now, but they pay about \$750 a year. Eileen Meadows reported that they are scheduled to start using the database May 1st, 2024.
- d. Stephanie Lowery asked if the OAG's office didn't purchase the database, how will invoices be processed? Stephanie also stated that if we begin a bidding process to utilize Empower DB, we will need to tailor the bid for their database specifically.

8. Discussion and Possible Action of Title 75 Attorney General Chapter 15: Standards and Criteria for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Programs:

- a. Eileen Meadows suggested updating all mentions of "mental health" to "mental wellbeing."
- b. Eileen Meadows stated that there is no term for "dependent" in the definitions and the Council should consider adding that.
- c. Kristie Chandler suggested to OAG staff making a working, editable version of the standards in order to be able to search the document quickly, help with grammatical changes and avoid human error. Additionally, we will be able to project the editable document for the Council at all upcoming meetings.
- d. For definition supportive services, Eileen Meadows asked if it needed to be updated. Judge Leah Edwards stated that she believes it is a good, generalized statement that solves the issue of obscurity.
- e. Kristie Chandler asked if any programs still operate Safe Homes. Kelsey Samuels reported that she believes her program had the last operating Safe Home, but they closed their doors. Kelsey additionally stated that Safe Homes are dangerous and she would recommend not having them available as options for certification. Ann Lowrance stated we should strike Safe Homes and Safe Home providers. Kelsey stated if we do, it will protect newly certified programs from the ramifications that might come with operating one. Danni Johnson asked if we currently billed for Safe Home Services and said if we don't we can strike that certification option. The Council agreed to strike section 75:15-2-4 Safe Home program.
- f. Ann Lowrance reported that mentions of the coalition still needed to be removed from the standards. Once we have an editable document, it will be easier to search and make edits.
- g. Kristie Chandler suggested changing 75:15-2-5 Crisis intervention services from "(1) Twenty-four (24) hour crisis telephone services staffed by trained staff or volunteers, and 24- hour immediate, direct access to crisis advocates. Pagers, answering machines or answering services that do not offer immediate access to a crisis advocate shall not be sufficient to meet this requirement;" to "(1) Twenty-four (24) hour crisis telephone

services staffed by trained staff or volunteers, and 24- hour immediate, direct access to crisis advocates. Technology or services that do not offer immediate access to a crisis advocate shall not be sufficient to meet this requirement;”

- h. Rose Turner suggested changing 75:15-2-5 Crisis intervention services from “(7) Foreign language interpretation; and” to “(7) Language interpretation; and.”
- i. Ann Lowrance suggested changing 75:15-2-5 Crisis intervention services from “(4) The program shall provide twenty-four (24) hour emergency transportation or access to shelter, to and from SANE exams or other emergency services. Additionally, transportation shall be offered for necessary services. This shall not require service providers to be placed in a situation that could result in injury;” to “(4) The program shall provide twenty-four (24) hour emergency transportation or access to shelter, to and from SANE exams or other emergency services. Additionally, transportation shall be offered for other services necessary for victim safety. This shall not require service providers to be placed in a situation that could result in injury;”
- j. The Council suggested changing 75:15-2-5 Crisis intervention services from “(2) Advocacy services, both in person and by telephone, either in the locations of other community services and systems, or in the program's offices. Other locations include but are not limited to those necessary to provide court advocacy services to clients; and” to “(2) Advocacy services, both in person and by telecommunication, either in the locations of other community services and systems, or in the program's offices. Other locations include but are not limited to those necessary to provide court advocacy services to clients; and.”

9. New Business:

- a. No new business reported.

10. Announcements

- a. Karen Cunningham announced that Crime Victims Right’s Day will be held at the Capitol on 4/25/24 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 100.
- b. Ann Lowrance announced that Marsy’s Law is encouraging everyone to change their porch light bulbs to the color purple for Crime Victims Right’s week. She also stated that the bridge downtown will be lit up with purple lights.

11. Adjournment:

- a. Brandon Pasley motioned to adjourn. Rose Turner seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.