

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

Tuesday, February 20, 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, Karen Cunningham, Kristie Chandler, Special Judge Leah Edwards, Ashley Henson, Whitney Anderson, Eileen Meadows, and Myel Solorzano Sutton. Non-members present included: Anthony Hernandez-Rivera, Melissa Van-Duyne, Erica Glotz, Rose Turner, Miguel Mojica, and Sarah Wray.

**b. Assurance of Compliance with Open Meeting Act**

**c. Introductions**

**2. Discussion and Possible Action on DVSA Council Positions**

a. Danni Johnson opened the discussion by asking what positions the Council had in the past. Kristie Chandler stated that with the previous DVSA Advisory Council, Ann Lowrance served as Chair. Danni asked if the Council also needed to create a Co-Chair and Secretary position, to which the Council agreed that just a Co-Chair position would be necessary.

b. Ann Lowrance stated that she would serve as the Council's Chair for a one-year term. The Council agreed to make the service term for the Chair and Co-Chair one year. Whitney Anderson volunteered to serve as the Council's Co-Chair.

c. Karen Cunningham made a motion that Ann Lowrance serve as Chair for a one-year term and Whitney Anderson serve as Co-Chair for a one-year term. Danni Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously

**3. Discussion and Possible Action on Approval of 2024 Regular Meeting Dates, Times, and Venue**

a. All 2024 regular meeting dates, times, and venue were reviewed. Rose Turner made a motion to accept all of the 2024 regular meeting dates, times, and venue. Judge Leah Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Discussion and Possible Action of Rules and Regulations of DVSAAC Members**

a. Danni Johnson mentioned that at the last meeting, the Council discussed the idea of members serving three-year terms, but asked about switching to one-year terms instead. Judge Leah Edwards explained that the three-year terms were meant to be implemented and staggered so that the Council would have a constant rotation of members who were familiar with the Council's history and vision.

b. Ann Lowrance suggested that the Council re-elect officers every year at the first meeting of the year.

- c. For all other voting members of the Council, Whitney Anderson and Judge Leah Edwards suggested that Danni Johnson designate terms for each member in a random order. Danni Johnson announced the term for each voting member. All OAG members were not designated a term since their terms would be the time they serve in their current positions with the office. Corrie Obanion, Judge Leah Edwards, Ann Lowrance, and Whitney Anderson were given a one-year term on the Council. Ashley Henson, Eileen Meadows, and Kelsey Samuels were given a two-year term on the Council. Brandon Pasley, Jackie Steyn, and Kristie Chandler were given a three-year term on the Council. The Council did not set a limit on the number of terms a member may serve.
- d. Kristie Chandler inquired as to the recruitment of Council members. The Council identified a need for a sexual assault expert, preferably someone familiar with SANE information, a service provider who works with adult victims of human sex trafficking, a domestic violence and sexual assault program from a rural region of the state, a domestic violence and sexual assault program from an urban region, a judge, a BIP expert, and a sexual assault expert. Ann Lowrance suggested that the Council members continue to brainstorm which members should be included.
- e. The group discussed how many members there should be on the Council. The Council agreed there should be nine members.

#### **5. Discussion and Possible Action of Title 75 Attorney General Chapter 1 Administration on Certifications**

- a. Kristie Chandler suggested that we go through Chapter 1 and change all of the “he”, “she”, “him”, or “her” to “their.” The Council agreed.
- b. Whitney Anderson pointed out that on page five under Part 3. Contracts and Contracting Purposes, the language states “including adult sex trafficking services.” Anderson stated that this sets a precedent that AVHST programs don’t meet the threshold to be included with discussions surrounding DVSA programs. Ann Lowrance explained that it was originally stated that way to get AVHST programs under the umbrella for discussion, but we could now change the verbiage.
- c. Kristie Chandler pointed out that on the top of page seven, 75:1-5-4 and 75:1-5-5 seem to have footnote marks and need to be changed. Chandler also pointed out that on the current OAG Certification Team’s grading workbooks, there is not a section where reviewers are able to give a weighted score and document if there were any program observation concerns, confidentiality concerns, or right’s violations. Ann Lowrance asked if the Council would need to suggest an addition of language to Chapter 1, but the Council agreed we would just need to add those sections to the workbooks since it would just be procedural.
- d. Eileen Meadows asked if there was a provision in the standards that would protect the Certification of an agency if the OAG’s office is not re-certifying agencies in a timely

manner. Danni Johnson directed Meadows to 75:1-7-10 Contingency for Non-Action by the Attorney General.

- e. Whitney Anderson asked how the issue is addressed when programs are providing services without Certification. Danni Johnson explained that the OAG's office would need documentation that the individual has been providing services and a staff attorney would send a Cease-and-Desist letter. If the letter does not stop the individual from providing services, a staff Agent and Attorney would go and shut down the location where the services are being provided. Judge Edwards also highlighted that the failure to stop services after the cease-and-desist letter was received could lead to the individual being held in contempt.
- f. Ann Lowrance asked if it would be helpful to have the process for the distribution of funds included in Chapter 1. Danni Johnson stated that Susan Laib and Stephanie Lowery have been working with outsiders to change the current funding formula, but thinks it would be good to have something in the standards. The Council agreed that the addition would help ward off potential issues surrounding the distribution of funds for programs, allow for a better, concrete distribution system, and increase transparency.
- g. The Council agreed that the following language should be added: Appropriated funds will be distributed according to a formula recommended by the DVSA advisory council and approved by the Attorney General. This language should be added to Chapter 1 on page six 75:1-3-20 Contractor Reimbursement Rates as the new number two with all other numbers moved down.
- h. Rose Turner made a motion to accept the additional verbiage and add the aforementioned location. Judge Leah Edwards seconded the motion. Rose completed the roll call. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **6. Discussion and Possible Action of Service Codes Used for Billing and Funding**

- a. Agenda item was tabled for further information to be provided at the next meeting.

#### **7. Discussion and Possible Action of Coalition**

- a. Eileen Meadows reported that she attends the monthly EVO meetings, but nothing surrounding the Coalition or replacing them has been discussed in the past few meetings. Meadows asked when EVO would be able to become the next coalition. Ann Lowrance stated that the OCADVSA was given the closing notice a few weeks ago and assumes that means that their dissolution was accepted and that a new organization will be moving forward to take its place. Lowrance stated that the letter can be requested from the Federal Government.
- b. Ann Lowrance reported that although the closing notice was received, she is unaware if the audit of OCADVSA will be finished after four years. Lowrance also highlighted that the Federal Government has criteria to admit a new coalition, and EVO, or whoever steps up, would need to familiarize themselves with this process.

- c. Eileen Meadows pointed out that when we get to Chapters 15, 25, and 30 we will need to remove any mention of the Coalition.

## **8. New Business and Announcements**

- a. Ann Lowrance announced that she has been invited to participate in the legislative committee process. Kelsey Samuels serves as the Chair.
- b. Judge Edwards announced that in November 2023, there were two new versions passed of the sentencing powers of the courts in Title 22 section 991 A. In the first version, the word “**shall**” was replaced with “**may**.” The updated version reads as follows, “in addition to other sentencing powers of the court, in the case of a person convicted of any crime related to domestic abuse, the court **may** require the defendant undergo treatment or participate in an intervention program for batterers certified by the Attorney General’s Office...”
- c. Version two eliminated the requirement that the BIP be Certified through the OAG’s office. Judge Edwards stated that according to statutory interpretation, since this is the latest version to pass and go into effect, it is what is currently being followed. Danni Johnson will send the two updated versions to the Council members after the meeting.
- d. Ann Lowrance offered to raise the Council’s concerns in her legislative committee group and suggest that the language revert to the previous verbiage. Judge Edwards stated she is willing to testify to the negative impact these new versions are having on the courts.
- e. Whitney Anderson reported that a few members of OCAT, AVHST programs, and Jared Mason with the OAG’s HT unit met and revamped Chapter 30 of the Oklahoma Administrative Code. The group revised the sexual assault program language and switched from mandating a domestic violence lethality assessment tool to other assessment methods. These changes will make their intake process of clients easier and allow them to provide virtual assistance to victims. Anderson stated that the Attorney General reviewed the updates, and it will now move to legislative review. Danni Johnson will send the updated Chapter 30 to the Council.
- f. Danni Johnson reported that the OAG Certification Team is planning to implement an online New Director Orientation Training by the end of the year.
- g. Judge Edwards announced that the JC education committee has contracted with the National Center on Domestic Violence to come and provide judicial training during the week of April 15<sup>th</sup>. During that week, the Center will travel to five areas of the state, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, McAlester, Arapaho, and Chickasha, and present domestic violence trainings free of charge to Judges. Credits will also be available. Judge Edwards anticipates high attendance rates and will keep the Council updated.
- h. Ann Lowrance emphasized that the Council would like to formally forward our thanks to Attorney General Gentner Drummond for his leadership on the VOCA appropriations matter. The Council recognizes and appreciates his leadership and support.

**9. Adjournment**

- a. Whitney Anderson motioned to adjourn. Danni Johnson seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

APPROVED