

Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board
313 N.E. 21st Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73005
(405) 522-1984 | FAX (405) 557-1770

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 (9:00 am)

Meeting Venue: Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General
313 NE 21st St, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

MEMBERS

Celia Cobb (OCME) [P]	Joy Turney (OJA) [A]	Laura Kuester (OCADVSA) [P]
Susan Laib [P]	Nicole Flemming (DOC) [P]	Vacant (OCADVSA)
Michelle Barr (OSDH alt.) [P]	Tomm Edwards (OSA) [P]	Sheila Stinson (Supreme Court)
Emily Nicholls (OSDH IPS alt.) [P]	Don Sweger (OACP) [A]	[P]
Melissa Belase (OKDHS alt.) [P]	Laura McConnell (OBA) [P]	Shelly Harrison (NAAV) [P]
Francia Thompson (OSBI) [P]	Vacant (DAC)	Tania Bardin (NAAV) [A]
Jennifer Benefiel (ODMHSAS) [P]	Martina Jelley (OSMA) [A]	
	Sara Coffey (OOA) [P]	
	Janice Carr (ONA) [P]	

I. Call to Order and Confirmation of Compliance with Open Meeting Act

Interim DVFRB Chair Janice Carr (ONA) presided over the start of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, which was held at the Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General, 313 NE 21st St, Oklahoma City, OK 73105 on May 27, 2026. Notice of the meeting was posted with the Secretary of State before the December 15, 2025, deadline, and on the front door of the Office of the Attorney General and the agency's website more than 24 hours in advance. Janice Carr (ONA) called the meeting to order at 9:09 am.

II. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Roll call was conducted at 9:09 am. Quorum was achieved at roll call with 15 members present. Three additional members, including Melissa Van Duyne (OAG), Kristie Brooks (ODMHSAS), and Angela Beatty (OCADVSA) were present but were not counted towards quorum due to the primary designee being present.

OAG DVFRB staff present included OAG DVFRB Program Manager (PM) Anthony Hernández Rivera, OAG Research Analyst (RA) Nicholas Massey, OAG Lead Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) Coordinator Scott Hawkins, and LAP Coordinator Jaiden Balthrop-Russell. OAG staff present included Senior Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Greg Winningham, AAG Scott May, and Deputy General Counsel Cheryl Dixon. Quorum was maintained throughout the meeting.

III. Opening Comments*

DVFRB Program Manager (PM) Anthony Hernández Rivera opened the meeting with several remarks. Mr. Hernández mentioned that as of this meeting date the Board had only been able to meet twice in 2026. He reminded members that the last time they convened was in March due to the April community review being cancelled. He further said the community review partners who had been slated to meet with the Board expressed interest in rescheduling for a future meeting. Mr. Hernández added that due to difficulties in meeting quorum during recent annual community reviews, and the necessity for a consistent review agenda throughout the year, it may be necessary to phase out the community review model in subsequent years.

Mr. Hernández pivoted to giving the membership an update on the status of the nominations and appointment process for the July 2026 – June 2028 DVFRB term. He reminded members who are appointed by the Attorney General that their two-year term will expire at the end of June. Mr. Hernández stated he had been working with their professional organizations to obtain their nominations and candidate's application materials. He closed by saying Attorney General appointments would be forthcoming upon receipt and processing of candidates' application materials.

Mr. Hernández finalized his opening remarks by stating the legislative session had ended and a representative of the the OAG's government affairs team was present to give members an update of the Board's policy outcomes and successes over the 2026 Oklahoma legislative session.

IV. Update on Board recommendation during 2026 legislative session. Speakers: DVFRB Program Manager Anthony Hernández Rivera and OAG Deputy Director of Government Affairs Macey Whitehouse-Rice

OAG Deputy Attorney General of Policy, Justin Wolf, stated he was at the meeting on behalf of OAG Chief of Staff Carolyn Thompson and OAG Deputy Director of Government Affairs Macey Whitehouse-Rice, who could not attend due to scheduling conflicts. Mr. Wolf gave an overview of the following legislative bills:

- [HB 4342](#) – Domestic Violence Propensity Evidence (Status: Successful Passage – Veto Override)
 - Bill Authors: Speaker Pro Tempore Anthony Moore and Sen. Todd Gollihare
 - Background: Allows prior instances of domestic violence abuse to be used as admissible evidence in court proceedings.
 - OAG Government Affairs Update: Mr. Wolf stated that the DV Propensity bill was vetoed by the Governor, but the veto was overridden by the Legislature, one of only 5 veto overrides this session. Mr. Wolf noted that this was a victory for the legislative affairs team, given that this was a priority of the District Attorney Council (DAC) for several years. This bill will enable judges and juries to accept patterns of prior domestic violence in current cases.
- [SB 1325](#) – Domestic Violence Offender GPS Monitoring (Status: Successful Passage)
 - Bill Authors: Sen. Bill Coleman and Rep. Toni Hasenbeck
 - Background: Requires a defendant charged with domestic abuse by strangulation, with a dangerous/deadly weapon, or after a prior domestic abuse adjudication to not be released on bail unless they wear a GPS monitoring device until the end of their case. It requires the defendant to pay for the cost of the device.
 - OAG Government Affairs Update: Mr. Wolf stated that this bill, while appearing straightforward and of common sense, was difficult to get through the legislative process because of concerns among legislators about wrongfully accused suspects.
- [SB 1264](#) – Expands the definition of “Great Bodily Injury” – Bill worked on by Deputy Director of Government Affairs Ms. Whitehouse-Rice alongside DAC's Domestic

Violence Resource Prosecutor Assistant District Attorney Jacobi Whatley (Status: Sent to Governor – Under consideration)

- Bill Authors: Sen. Christi Gillespie and Rep. Nicole Miller
 - Background: Expands the definition of “Great Bodily Injury” to include concussions, prolonged pain, and injuries affecting more than 10% of the victim’s body, and covers cases committed in the presence of a minor.
 - OAG Government Affairs Update: Mr. Wolf stated that Oklahoma’s current statutes have a narrow definition of “great bodily injury,” and SB 1264 expands the definition to include prolonged pain or significant discomfort, concussion, and injuries to more than 10% of the body, and updates statutory language relating to domestic assault to match the felony classification system. As of 5/27/2026, no action was taken by the Governor, and if not signed by the end of 5/29/2026, the bill will be pocket vetoed. Mr. Wolf stated that if the bill is not passed, the team is looking to the next session to try to pass the bill again.
- [HB 3763](#) – Requiring annual domestic violence training for Oklahoma law enforcement officers (Status: Did not pass)
 - Bill Authors: Rep. Tim Turner and Senator Warren Hamilton
 - Background: Requires full-time peace officers to receive a mandatory two hours on domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and lethality assessment protocol issues as a part of the officers' annual continuing education requirements. Every active reserve peace officer must receive a mandatory one hour of continuing education on domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and lethality assessment protocol issues annually.
 - OAG Government Affairs Update: This bill was not heard because of opposition by CLEET and law enforcement associations to any additional mandatory training. CLEET would be amenable to additional DV training if it were not statutorily authorized. Discussions on this topic will continue into the next session.
- [HB 3264](#) – Domestic Abuse by Strangulation as an 85% (Status: Did not pass)
 - Bill Authors: Rep. John George and Sen. Kristen Thompson
 - Background: Makes domestic abuse by strangulation an 85% crime, which requires those convicted to serve 85% of their sentence before they are eligible for release. OAG Government Affairs Update: Mr. Wolf stated the passage of this bill was unsuccessful. He suggested reframing the discussion around strangulation, referring to it as attempted murder instead, which could ease the path forward to legislative approval.
- State appropriations funding for the Oklahoma Child and Adolescent Survivor Initiative (OCASI)
 - Background: OCASI will be a specialized program providing comprehensive, trauma-informed, mental health services to children impacted by intimate partner violence (IPV)-related homicide and attempted murder.
 - OAG Government Affairs Update: Mr. Wolf stated a total of \$425,000 was secured for OCASI’s deployment.

Mr. Hernández and Lead LAP Coordinator Scott Hawkins expressed their appreciation to the legislative team for their advocacy efforts. Mr. Hernández also expressed his appreciation to the DVFRB membership and their commitment to lending their expertise to the Board's mission of reducing family violence homicide in Oklahoma. He added the track record of legislative outcomes speaks to the Board's increasing support among legislators, which has led to recurrent appropriations to victim services, the passage of bills to support and facilitate more evidence-based prosecutions, the repeal of policy with unintended consequences, and even a gubernatorial veto override. Mr. Hernández stated the membership should be proud of these accomplishments and said that he looked forward to continuing to work with them to keep moving policy in a direction that benefits families in Oklahoma.

V. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding March 25, 2026, regular meeting minutes. *

Dr. Sara Coffey (OOA) made a motion to approve the March 25, 2026, regular meeting minutes at 10:03 am. Interim DVFRB Vice Chair Laura Kuester (OCADVSA) seconded the motion. The motion passed by roll call vote (12 Aye, 0 Nay, 3 Abstain)

VI. (Action) Discussion and Possible Action to convene in Executive Session pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(C) and 22 O.S. § 1601(C) related to the review and discussion of one (1) or more individual cases of domestic violence deaths.

- a. **Vote to convene in executive session pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(C) and 22 O.S. § 1601(C).**
- b. **Review Case No. 240062**
- c. **Continued review and discussion of case No. 230063**
- d. **Vote to exit executive session.**
- e. **Discussion and possible action regarding item(s) discussed in executive session.**

Judge Sheila Stinson (Judiciary) made a motion to adjourn to executive session at 10:05 am. Celia Cobb (OCME) seconded the motion. The motion passed by roll call vote (15 Aye, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain). The Board voted to exit executive session at 11:15 am. Laura McConnell (OBA) made the motion, and Sara Coffey seconded. The motion passed by roll call vote (15 Aye, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain).

VII. New Business Not Known or Which Could Not Have Been Reasonably Foreseen Before the Posting of the Agenda in Accordance with 25 O.S. § 311(A)(10).

No new business.

VIII. Adjournment*

The meeting adjourned at 11:16 am.