

Governor's Family Violence Council Meeting
Staffed by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy
Wednesday, April 16, 2025
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Participating Members:

Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, Co-Chair
Dr. Lillian Agbeyegbe, Survivor Advocate
Heather Amador for Dorothy Lennig, Esq., Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy
Jessica Dickerson for Secretary Vincent Schiraldi, Department of Juvenile Services
Jason Dowding, CASA Inc.
Debbie Feinstein, Esq., Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office
Lolita Gleaton for Secretary Rafael Lopez, Department of Human Services
Norwood Johnson, Survivor
Molly O'Hara for Senator Mary Beth Carozza
Pamela Love, DP Love Enterprises
John McGinnis for Superintendent Carey Wright, State Department of Education
Kimberly Miller for Secretary Carmel Martin, Governor's Office for Children
Lisa Nitsch, House of Ruth Maryland
Katie O'Malley, Women's Law Center of Maryland
Zachary Norfolk, Esq. for Attorney General Anthony Brown, Office of the Attorney General
Funsho Oparindo for Secretary Carolyn Scruggs, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Leslye Orloff, National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project
Jen Pauliukonis for Secretary Meena Seshamani, Maryland Department of Health
Jennifer Pollitt Hill, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Laure Ruth, Esq.
David Shultie, Administrative Office of the Courts
Delegate Karen Simpson
Jeanne Yeager, Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence

Guests:

Stephanie Erdice, Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Kamal Essaheb, Senior Advisor to the Governor and Director of Immigrant Affairs
Angelina Guarino, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Brandon Uebel, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Staff:

Rebecca Allyn, Marianne Camino, Caitlin Kearney

I. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:01 a.m. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Ms. Allyn welcomed two new Council members:

- Jen Pauliukonis, Representative for the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health
- Delegate Karen Simpson, Maryland General Assembly

II. Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Updates

Ms. Allyn shared the Office is currently accepting applications for several grant programs including:

- Domestic Violence Program (DOMV) - Due 5/2
 - Only comprehensive domestic violence programs are eligible to apply
- Regional Navigator Program - Due 5/2
 - Only current navigators are eligible to apply
- Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) - Due 4/28
- Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) - Due 4/28
- Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIPP) - Due 4/25

The open grant opportunities can be found [here](#). The Office is actively reviewing Victims of Crime (VOCA) applications and anticipate providing award notices in June.

Ms. Allyn also shared FY26 Legislative Funding Actions which included \$60,000,000 combined State and Federal funding for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and \$1,000,000 for the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault to distribute to rape crisis centers.

III. Approval of Minutes

The January 2025 Council meeting minutes were provided to members and guests. Lieutenant Governor Miller made a motion to approve the minutes; Ms. Dickerson seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the minutes were approved.

IV. MNADV Certification

Ms. Pollitt Hill provided members with an overview of Chapter 767 of 2024, which requires domestic violence programs to be certified by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) as a comprehensive domestic violence program. Ms. Pollitt Hill shared that 18 out of 19 comprehensive domestic violence programs are currently certified and the MNADV is working with the last program to work towards certification. To be a comprehensive program, Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 01.05.01.05 requires programs to provide hotline, safe housing, counseling and abuse intervention programming. MNADV's certification process only allows one of the required services to be outsourced.

V. Workgroup Updates

a. Abuse Intervention Program Certification

Ms. Allyn shared that applications for Abuse Intervention Program Certification are due on May 2. Seven programs are due for recertification in 2025 and the Council is expecting a few new programs to submit for certification. The Council held a certification application technical assistance call on April 3, where three current programs and two new programs participated. Ms. Allyn emphasized the need for Council members to assist with reviewing certification applications.

b. Abusers Not Meeting Conditions of Court Orders

Ms. Guarino provided members with an overview of a recent data project that the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services conducted where they looked at individual special conditions for cases, and what is being shown when cases are closed. Ms. Guarino shared that there are approximately 11,000 cases with victim-related conditions where 78% of the case conditions were reported as satisfied, but AIP is still not being noted in case outcomes and the Department is continuing to address this.

c. Access to Benefits for Immigrant Survivors

Ms. Orloff shared that the workgroup plans to address healthcare expansion through non-legislative avenues and will meet with a Maryland Department of Health representative that works with Medicaid.

Ms. Orloff provided members with a detailed overview of [Senate Bill 608](#) - Criminal Procedure - U Nonimmigrant Status Petitions and Immigration Enforcement at Sensitive Locations. The bill alters the requirements for certification of a U Nonimmigrant Status Petition, as well as:

- Aligns Maryland statute with federal law and Department of Homeland Security guidelines
- Clarifies certifier responsibilities; covers all federal certifiers except judges
- Expanding certification requests to be filed by attorneys, victim advocates, or other representatives
- Requiring certification when a victim assists a certifying agency (e.g., LE, CPS)
- Providing directions on what to include in certification, including articulating helpfulness and criminal activity
- 45-day deadline to certify
- Requiring a written explanation to the victim for denials

Ms. Orloff shared that her team at the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) presented at the 2025 Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference on April 9 on VAWA confidentiality and legal rights of immigrant victims. Ms. Orloff also shared that NIWAP recently received VAWA funding to offer presentations to law enforcement, state's attorney's offices, and other certifiers.

d. Stalking Prevention

Ms. Allyn shared that the workgroup will hold one last meeting to wrap up the workgroup.

e. Survivor Advisory Council

Ms. Allyn shared that the Office provided 55,000 mandated victims' rights brochures to commissioner's offices in January as this was an area indicated from the focus groups that needed more information for survivors. The workgroup is continuing to develop a protective order one pager and checklist/guidance for survivors.

Members discussed updating the [*Healthy Teen Dating: A Guide for Educators and Youth Service Providers*](#) that was initially published in 2019.

VI. FY26 Workgroups

The Council discussed the status of current workgroups to determine if workgroups should continue or if there are new topics the Council wants to address. The Council determined that the Stalking Prevention Workgroup will finish at the close of this fiscal year, and discuss potential new workgroup topics at the next meeting.

VII. Legislation

Ms. Allyn shared that the Council submitted letters of support for House Bill 281/Senate Bill 146 - Admission of Out-of-Court Statements - Assault in the Second Degree, which did not pass, and for Senate Bill 608 - Criminal Procedure – U Nonimmigrant Status Petitions and Immigration Enforcement at Sensitive Locations, which Ms. Orloff shared information about earlier.

Ms. Erdice shared the [*Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault \(MCASA\) 2025 Legislative Final Report*](#) with members.

VIII. Old/New Business

Mr. Dowding shared that the Western Maryland Reentry Task Force hosted a reentry simulation with around 50 participants, including community leaders, the mayor, elected officials, and service providers.

Ms. Pauliukonis shared that the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention currently has an open grant opportunity, *Safeguarding Survivors from Lethal Harm: Examining Domestic Violence Protective Order Processes and Firearm Removal Practices to Improve Safety Outcomes*, due on May 31. The grant solicitation can be found [here](#).

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:33 a.m.

NEXT MEETING:
Wednesday, July 9, 2025
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401