

SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

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*Amber Stanwix
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Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee Meeting February 14, 2024 • 10:00a.m. – 3:00p.m. Tuckahoe Branch – Henrico Public Library

- **Welcome & Roll Call (5 minutes)**
 - *Judy Castele, Committee Chairperson*
- **Approval of December 14, 2023 Minutes (5 minutes)**
- **Updates from the Professional Standards Team (5 minutes)**
 - *Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton*
- **Updates from Conversations with Other States (15 minutes)**
 - *Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton*
- **Professional Standards Manual Revision Discussion (1 hour)**
 - *Amber Stanwix and Andrea Sutton*
- **Lunch (1 hour)**
- **Professional Standards Manual Revision Discussion (1 hour)**
- **Break (5 minutes)**
- **Professional Standards Manual Revision Discussion (1 hour)**
- **Selection of Next Meeting Date (5 minutes)**
- **Public Comment (5 minutes)**
- **Closing Remarks (5 minutes)**
 - *Judy Castele, Committee Chairperson*

Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission – Revocation of Accredited Status

The Commission reserves the right to revoke accredited status of any agency for good cause. In those cases where accredited status is revoked, the Commission Chairperson will formally notify the agency. This action will only be taken in extreme cases and as a last resort. For example, a situation that involved an agency presenting misinformation or falsified documentation to the Commission or its assessors would be considered an “extreme case”.

The Commission shall have the authority to revoke a criminal justice agency’s accreditation for disregarding applicable standards or committing serious violations of program rules and regulations. Criminal justice agency representatives shall be given an opportunity to appear before the Commission prior to any such revocation.

Georgia – Certification of Family Violence Intervention Programs

Rule 125-4-9-.12. Enforcement of FVIP Requirements

Grounds for denial, suspension, revocation of certification, or assessment of an administrative fine. The Department may base the denial, suspension, revocation of certification, or assessment of an administrative fine upon any of the following applicable grounds:

- knowingly making any verbal or written false or misleading statement of material fact or omitting to state a material fact in connection with an application for certification or recertification or in connection with an inspection or investigation;
- failing or refusing to provide Department representatives with meaningful access to the program or FVIP premises, facilitators and staff, participants or records (including refusing to allow Department representatives to obtain copies of documents reasonably necessary to making a compliance determination);
- altering or falsifying any FVIP or program records;
- failing or refusing to comply with any of these rules, FVIP requirements or violating any law relating to the operation of an FVIP.

Reapplying for certification after revocation. A program that has had its certification revoked may not reapply for certification for 18 months from the date of the revocation. Reapplying for certification shall be subject to the same procedures as if the program were applying for certification for the first time.

Massachusetts – Certification of BIPs

Each of the following, in and of itself, shall constitute full and adequate grounds on which to deny, revoke, or refuse to renew certification to operate a Program:

- Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification by fraud, misrepresentation, or by the submission of incorrect, false or misleading information.
- Operation of a Program in a manner that fails to give proper Program participant services.
- Operation of a Program that endangers the health or safety of Program participants or victims of intimate partner violence.

Professional Standards Manual for Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs

XXXXX 2024



DCJS

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

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Acknowledgements

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

Welcome to the Professional Standards for Virginia’s sexual and domestic violence agencies. This publication provides standards to help agencies improve the quality and consistency of their response to survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

In addition to the minimum requirements outlined in this Manual, agencies must comply with any other state and federal regulations applying to their programs and services. Furthermore, the Professional Standards accreditation process is not equivalent to, nor in place of, the grant monitoring process.

This Manual includes the Professional Standards and multiple resources. You are encouraged to access these resources as you develop, deliver, and evolve best practices and trauma-informed care for the survivors and the communities you serve. The Manual also includes a Glossary. Please note that there is an asterisk beside words included in the Glossary when such words are first used in the Professional Standards. Finally, please be aware that the definitions in the Glossary are only for the purposes of the Professional Standards.

Professional Standards Committee History

In 2015, legislation was enacted creating the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee (the “Committee”). The purpose of the Committee is to establish voluntary accreditation standards and measures by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process. In addition, the Committee is responsible for reviewing and voting on accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs, establishing a subcommittee as needed to address appeals from applicant programs, and periodically evaluating and revising the accreditation standards and measures.

Under *Code of Virginia* § [9.1-116.3](#), the Committee is required to consist of:

- One nonvoting member from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (“DCJS”)
- One nonvoting member from of the Virginia Department of Social Services
- One nonvoting member from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
- Twelve non-legislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, who must be leadership staff of local sexual and domestic violence programs

The appointment of members must also take into consideration racial and ethnic diversity and must be representative of regional and geographic locations of the Commonwealth.

The Committee receives assistance from the DCJS Professional Standards Team (the “Team”), which is made up of the Professional Standards Program Coordinator (the “Coordinator”) and the Professional Standards Program Monitor (the “Monitor”). Under *Code of Virginia* § 9.1-116.3, the Team is responsible for establishing accreditation procedures by which local sexual and domestic

violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process, assisting local programs in obtaining or retaining accreditation, reviewing and evaluating applications for accreditation, and determining accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs and presenting such recommendations to the Committee.

The Team has the authority to determine the eligibility of agencies applying for accreditation and to interpret the Professional Standards.

Value Statement

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee commits to a respectful, thoughtful, and transparent process to establish best practice standards for sexual and domestic violence programs. The Committee is mindful that these standards are survivor-centered, inclusive, and empowering for both agencies and those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.

Accreditation Statuses

There are three possible status determinations for Professional Standards accreditation applicants:

Fully Accredited

The Committee will determine a status of Fully Accredited for an agency having demonstrated through the review process that the agency meets 100% of the Professional Standards.

Provisionally Accredited

Agencies that do not meet 100% of the Professional Standards may be Provisionally Accredited. To be considered provisionally accredited, applicant agencies must, at a minimum, demonstrate that they provide 24-hour crisis intervention services to all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in their communities, and that these services are confidential and free of charge. These services must include a hotline, provisions for emergency housing, and emergency accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Provisionally accredited agencies will have up to 30 days to submit a Plan of Action and then up to 90 days to document that the Plan of Action has been followed and that the Professional Standards are being met. The Committee may then decide to grant full accreditation status or will deny the application.

Denied

The Committee will deny accreditation status to any agency that does not, at a minimum, demonstrate that it provides 24-hour crisis intervention services to all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in their communities, and that these services are confidential and free of charge. Crisis intervention services must include a hotline, provisions for emergency housing, and emergency accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Additionally, the Committee will deny accreditation to any provisionally accredited agency that does not submit a Plan of Action within 30 days of receiving the provisional accreditation status or does not meet the requirements of the Professional Standards within 90 days from the submission of the Plan of Action.

Revocation of Accreditation Status

The Committee shall have the authority to revoke an agency's accreditation for disregarding applicable standards or committing serious violations of rules and regulations. This action will only be taken in extreme cases and as a last resort. For further information on the revocation process, please see the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Processes and Procedures Guidelines.

Resources

Resources to assist your agency in meeting the Professional Standards are located on the [Professional Standards webpage](#). The [Resources](#) tab has a wealth of information categorized by:

- [Agency & Advocate Wellness](#)
- [Boards](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Direct Services](#)
- [Evaluation](#)
- [Financial Information](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Prevention Education](#)
- [Training for Board, Staff, and/or Volunteers](#)
- [Underserved Populations](#)

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

ADMINISTRATION

The following section relates to the administration or management of a sexual and domestic violence* agency*. The role of the governing body, fiscal and data management, personnel management, and training are addressed. These standards provide for general administration practices that establish a common framework for service delivery.*

STANDARD #1: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will ensure that crisis intervention*, advocacy*, and engagement services are available and accessible to all people within the agency service area regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

- Non-discrimination policy* for staff and client services includes race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- Regardless of income, no fees are charged for crisis intervention, advocacy, and engagement services as outlined in these standards.
- Agency has inclusions noticeable throughout the facility (e.g., diverse and inclusive signage, pictures, materials, social media, and marketing) and inclusive client paperwork. The facility includes staff offices, meeting rooms, and the shelter, if applicable.
- Agency has a website that clearly describes the services provided, is accessible, is inclusive, and provides relevant, up to date, and accurate information.
- Agency ensures staff receives training on civil rights, diversity* issues, and multicultural competency. Topics for training could include implicit bias, microaggressions, reducing disparities in services, and building a culture of inclusion. In addition, the agency could invite culturally specific agencies to provide cross-training or facilitate a training on a topic related to cultural humility*.
- Agency has a written policy, which affirms that staff, board of directors (or similar advisory group), and volunteers should reflect the diversity of the community served. This written policy must include action steps, be reviewed at least annually, and be updated every three years.
- If the agency defines its service population within a specific client group, there must be a clear written rationale for selectivity.

STANDARD #2: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will have trained staff and/or volunteers to provide Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and Engagement Services.

- Agency must have a written training plan* that meets the requirements of the Training Matrix.
- Staff members, volunteers, or interns must complete training within three months of joining the agency as outlined in the Training Matrix.
 - Training modalities can include in-person instruction at the agency, shadowing a trained advocate (up to eight hours), self-directed training programs (e.g., online courses and webinars), local or county trainings, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance trainings, and/or state agency trainings.

- No more than half of the onboarding training can be completed through self-directed training programs.
- Full-time Level II staff will receive at least 20 hours of continuing education each year, while Part-time Level II staff will receive at least 10 hours. Level II volunteers will receive at least 10 hours of training annually.
 - Training modalities for completing the continuing education include in-person instruction at the agency, shadowing a trained advocate (up to four hours), self-directed training programs, local or county trainings, state and national conferences, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance trainings, and/or state agency trainings.
 - No more than half of the continuing education can be completed through self-directed training programs.
 - Training must include a review of the confidentiality*, cultural humility, and vicarious trauma* topics.
- Supervisors* must receive ongoing training to support their management, supervision, and trauma stewardship responsibilities.
 - Anyone in a supervisory position must also, at a minimum, meet the training requirements of Level II staff.
- Agencies are allowed discretion in determining training content requirements for new staff and/or volunteers who possess content expertise via prior education, training, or experience. However, all new staff and volunteers must complete the required agency and confidentiality training content.
 - Rationale for all exceptions to training requirements must be fully documented.

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.

- Supervisors must meet regularly with staff, either individually or as a group.
- Agency shall demonstrate fiscal responsibility (auditing, internal controls, and procurement services).
- Agency shall maintain a plan that protects against the physical and financial interruption of core services*.
- Agency shall maintain a sustainability plan with projected revenues and expenditures for the 36 months of operation following the submission of an application for accreditation.
- Agency shall maintain a written succession plan for the Executive Director (or other agency leadership) position.
- Agency must have written personnel policies.
- Agency must have written job descriptions for all staff, intern, and volunteer positions.
- Agency shall maintain a written staff grievance policy that includes:
 - matters for which grievances can be filed
 - the levels in the agency to which the grievance may be filed and/or appealed
 - the type of information to be submitted when filing a grievance
 - the procedural steps and time limitations for each level in responding to grievances and appeals
 - any criteria for staff representation

- the staff member responsible for coordinating grievance procedures*
 - the process for how grievances are handled, analyzed, and affirmed or denied
- Staff must be provided with contact information for the Chairperson of the board of directors, if applicable, and be given the option to grieve to the board should they not be satisfied with the response from agency leadership.
- Agency shall have written procedures for staff that include instructions for responding to potential emergencies including a medical emergency, a mental health emergency, and an emergency that threatens the safety of staff and/or the individuals being served by the staff. The emergency procedures must include:
 - assignments of tasks and responsibilities
 - instructions for the use of alarm systems, emergency equipment and notification of authorities
 - specification of escape routes in case of fire or natural disaster
 - coordination with law enforcement agencies for emergency plans regarding intruders and with fire departments for emergency plans for fire or natural disasters
- Fire, tornado, bomb threat and intruder drills shall be conducted annually. The date, time, and type of the drill shall be documented.

STANDARD #4: Private Nonprofit Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies must have a board of directors to establish policies, make significant and strategic decisions, and oversee the agency's activities.

- Agency must have written job descriptions for board members.
- Agency must have written by-laws, which provide the governance structure for the organization and its elected board. The by-laws must include:
 - the mission and purpose of the organization
 - the number of times per year that the board is required to meet
 - what constitutes a quorum
 - the length of terms
 - the limits for consecutive terms
 - attendance requirements
 - the number of members required to approve amendments of the by-laws
 - how to address holding meetings or votes that are not conducted in person, such as by conference call or electronic methods
 - a conflict-of-interest policy that clearly explains what a conflict of interest is, reporting procedures, and how to address such conflicts should they occur
- Agency must have a written process for the selection of board members, including those who reflect the diversity of the communities served.
- Board members must complete a board orientation and training which includes information about sexual and domestic violence, the agency's mission, and board members' roles and responsibilities.
- A minimum of one training session for the board of directors' ongoing development must be offered each year.
- Agency must have a written plan for board training.

- All agency policies must be reviewed by the board of directors every three years. The document should then be signed by the Chairperson of the board of directors and dated with the date of review.

STANDARD #5: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to policies and practices that ensure a high standard of professional conduct.

- Agency must ensure compliance with employer/employee state and federal regulations and contracts.
- Agency must maintain a written policy/plan of a criminal background check for all staff, interns, and volunteers and a Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry check for all staff, interns, Level 2 volunteers, and those Level 1 volunteers who may engage with children.
- Agency must maintain a written policy/plan of a driving record from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for those staff, volunteers, or interns who will be transporting clients.
- Background and driving record checks must be updated every five years.
- **Agency must have a written ethical behavior policy.**

STANDARD #6: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will document Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and Engagement services only in databases that comply with current VAWA confidentiality standards and protect personally identifying information.

- Data about services provided must be entered into the system and reviewed regularly for accuracy, trends, and program planning.
- Agency must maintain a record retention policy specifying the client records/files* that will be destroyed, the time frame and method of destruction, and the way personally identifying information is protected.

STANDARD #7: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies preserve privacy and confidentiality, including the identity of and information provided by the person served or acquired from other sources before, during, and after the course of the professional relationship.

- Agency has written operational procedures on client record/file security, maintenance, and access by individuals other than the client. A description of the safeguards for client records/files against unauthorized access, fire, loss, or other hazards is available.
- Agency has written policies/procedures regarding how the agency assures compliance with applicable legal requirements regarding confidentiality.
- Agency has an informed, written, and reasonably time-limited client release of information form. The release of information form must include:
 - the name of no more than one person or organization to which the information is being released
 - the specific information to be released
 - the beginning and ending dates the release is effective, not to exceed the program participant's active length of services
 - the date and the signatures of the program participant and the employee or volunteer

- the right to revoke a release of information at any time
- Agency has a written policy to respond to subpoenas, court orders, and other legal processes which, at a minimum, addresses how the client will be notified about the request and how the request will be processed and responded to by the agency.
- Agency has a written policy addressing the security of home computers, laptops, smart phones, virtual private networks, cloud computing, hotline routing, etc. for any staff who telecommute, including how access is terminated for staff who leave the agency.

STANDARD #8: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies respect and protect the civil and human rights of all those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.

- Agency demonstrates cultural humility in its sexual and/or domestic violence service delivery.
- Persons with limited English proficiency* must have meaningful access to services with equivalent services to those who are native English speakers.
- Agency has a written language access plan*, which includes the provision of relay services for the Deaf or hard of hearing.

STANDARD #9: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies support the voluntary services model and respect survivors’* right to self-determination*.

- Agency must have written documentation that informs all clients of their rights, including the right to self-determination. Such documentation must be made available to the client by the next business day after initial contact with the agency.
- Agency must have a written client grievance policy that is available to each agency participant and should include multiple options for filing a complaint. At a minimum the policy should include:
 - the assurance of the survivor’s right to continue to receive services from the agency during and after the grievance process
 - who the survivor should contact regarding the complaint or issue
 - how the complaint be documented, steps that will be taken to find resolution, and whether the decision is final
 - information regarding the survivors right to file a discrimination complaint with the Office of Justice Programs Office for Civil Rights

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Crisis intervention consists of the interactions and activities conducted by qualified, trained staff members or volunteers with an individual in crisis to stabilize emotions, clarify issues, and provide support and assistance. These standards provide that sexual and domestic violence agencies must establish quality crisis intervention services including 24/7 access, emergency accompaniment, and emergency safe shelter.*

STANDARD #10: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will be accessible 24/7 to the public and to first responders to provide crisis intervention services by trained advocates.

- Agency must ensure 24/7 access and response to all survivors seeking assistance from advocates providing crisis intervention services, risk assessment, safety planning, information, and referrals. Such requirement may be met through the provision of a 24/7 hotline, including the use of a statewide hotline as necessary.
- Agency maintains documentation of number of requests for crisis intervention services that the agency provided.

STANDARD #11: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will ensure that survivors in their community have 24/7 access to accompaniment services when they access emergency medical or justice systems.

- Agency must establish and maintain medical and criminal/civil justice system emergency response procedures.
- Agency maintains documentation of requests for accompaniment services and accompaniment services that the agency provided.

Standard #12: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will provide, or assist to secure, emergency safe shelter to survivors of sexual and domestic violence who are in imminent danger*.

- Agency must provide or coordinate emergency shelter* for survivors and their families who are in imminent danger. If the survivor is within the agency's service area, the agency must safely maintain contact with the client until safe lodging has been established. If the survivor is outside the agency's service area, the agency must ensure that the survivor is connected to the agency within the applicable service area prior to terminating contact.
- If an agency maintains an emergency shelter and such shelter does not meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the agency must secure accommodations appropriate to meet the needs of a client with disabilities if such client qualifies for shelter services.
- Agency must possess a first aid supply kit.
- Agency maintains documentation of requests for emergency shelter services and emergency shelter services that the agency provided.

ADVOCACY

Through advocacy services, agencies attempt to ensure that survivors, their children, and those at risk of sexual and domestic violence are protected and treated compassionately. These standards value an individual response, collaboration, thoughtful evaluation, careful stewardship, and unconditional positive regard through a victim-centered approach.*

STANDARD #13: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies provide a range of individualized advocacy services that foster survivor healing from the trauma of violence.

- Agency shall provide a range of individualized advocacy services that foster healing from the trauma of violence, which must, at a minimum, include justice system advocacy, case management*, general counseling*, and referral resources.
- Agency maintains documentation of requests for advocacy services and advocacy services that the agency provided.

STANDARD #14: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will coordinate services within the agency and the community to promote high quality integrated services and support to survivors.

- Agency must develop and maintain signed agreements (e.g., memoranda of understanding, cooperative agreements, or partnership agreements) as needed to provide and coordinate services to survivors. Examples include cross-training and/or co-location with agencies such as:
 - Victim Witness
 - Social Services to include Adult and Child Protective Services
 - Colleges and universities
 - Mental health
 - Law enforcement
 - Hospitals
 - Schools
 - Immigration services
 - Legal aid
- Agency must maintain, or collaborate with an agency that maintains, a physical or digital resource list with financial, healthcare, mental health, culturally specific, social service, and other resources. The list should include contact information and the services provided. Such list must be updated annually.

STANDARD #15: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will address the diverse needs of the community served, providing specialized advocacy programs and population-specific interventions.

- Agency will identify the diverse needs of the community through at least two methods, such as a community needs assessment, client surveys, or feedback from other community agencies.

- Agency will demonstrate efforts to provide a range of specialized advocacy services to identified populations within the agency's service area.

ENGAGEMENT

Through engagement services, the agency attempts to create an effective response system to sexual and domestic violence and to change cultural attitudes and institutional practices that perpetuate such violence. These standards cover community engagement, prevention services, and systemic engagement.*

STANDARD #16: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in community engagement efforts that promote agency services and effective community responses throughout the agency's service area.

- Agency distributes information about agency services and accessibility through multiple channels. Examples include:
 - tabling at community events
 - flyers/brochures
 - speaking engagements at various events
 - responding to requests for information
 - social media or conventional print/radio/TV media
- Agency engages in initiatives and activities that raise awareness, advocate for survivor access to resources, and promote systemic change (e.g., National Night Out with local police, awareness month activities).
- Agency maintains documentation of number of community engagement activities that the agency provided.

Standard #17: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will deliver effective primary* or secondary* prevention programming that supports the development of healthy relationships* and healthy sexuality*.

- Agency must create a prevention plan that addresses primary or secondary prevention strategies.
- Agency must collaboratively engage with others doing similar prevention work in the community.

STANDARD #18: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in systemic engagement efforts to improve the experiences of survivors.

- Agency demonstrates participation in and/or leadership in sexual and/or domestic violence focused community groups (Domestic Violence Council, Sexual Assault Response Teams, Inter-Agency Councils, or others).
- Agency provides training and education to allied professionals.
- Agency maintains training materials as they apply to community outreach.

TRAINING MATRIX

In the initial three months of training, the goal is for staff, volunteers, and interns to have a basic understanding and awareness of these concepts. This Matrix is also intended to serve as a guide for ongoing training and professional development, with the expectation that over time specific roles will develop greater understanding in these areas.

Please note that, for the purposes of these training requirements, “staff, volunteers, and interns” includes all staff from the point of entry (such as a receptionist) through to the sexual and/or domestic violence program. These terms do not include staff, volunteers, and interns working in different units of an overall agency.

LEVEL I: 8 Hours of Training for All Staff & Volunteers/Interns

Who is Level I	Training Topics
<p>Limited Client Contact Staff, Volunteers, and Interns <i>Staff, Volunteers, or Interns who may have incidental contact with persons accessing services. Examples may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Administrative support</i> ▪ <i>Receptionists</i> ▪ <i>Grant writer</i> ▪ <i>Thrift Store Manager</i> <p><i>Agency can determine if this includes persons providing donated services such as computer maintenance, painting, lawn care, etc.</i></p>	<p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission, history, philosophy, and structure of the agency • Agency policies and procedures • Agency Code of Ethics/Rules of Conduct • Confidentiality • Personal safety and security of staff, volunteers/interns, clients, and visitors <p>Crisis Intervention & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and dynamics of sexual violence and domestic violence • Definitions and dynamics of stalking within the context of sexual and domestic violence • Emergency/Crisis Response to address immediate safety needs • Secondary trauma* • Vicarious trauma • Role of the advocate/volunteer • Making appropriate community referrals, including specialized resources for underserved populations • Voluntary services <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural humility

LEVEL II: 40 Hours of Training for All Staff & Volunteers/Interns

Who is Level II	Training Topics
<p>All Staff, Volunteers, and Interns except Level I staff.</p> <p><i>Direct Service Staff, Volunteers, and Interns who are likely to have on-going contact with persons accessing services</i></p> <p><i>Examples may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Hotline Volunteers</i> ▪ <i>Court Advocacy</i> ▪ <i>Child Services</i> ▪ <i>Shelter Support</i> ▪ <i>Support Group Facilitators</i> ▪ <i>Companion Services</i> ▪ <i>Community Educators or Presenters</i> ▪ <i>Transportation Providers</i> ▪ <i>Childcare Providers</i> 	<p>Level II training includes all topics outlined in Level I with expansions as necessary and the following:</p> <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of the sexual and domestic violence movements • Record keeping and data collection (all staff and relevant volunteers) • How to access/use an interpreter <p>Crisis Intervention & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersection of oppressions* and the societal impact of violence • Theories/Modes of Service Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and Systems Advocacy • Survivor-directed services • Adverse Childhood Experiences, CDC model • Trauma-informed, based on SAMSHA model • Crisis Intervention/Counseling Skills • Trauma of Victimization – Post Traumatic Stress • Boundaries • Safety Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use/abuse of technology • Public assistance benefits • Immigration visas that may be available to survivors • Civil and Criminal Justice systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims’ Rights • Protective Orders • Sexual violence laws, as related to adults and minors • Domestic violence laws • Child abuse and neglect laws • Incapacitated and vulnerable adult abuse laws • Unauthorized practice of law • Sexual Violence as it pertains to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual abuse • Adult survivors of childhood sexual violence • Intimate partner sexual violence • Sexual harassment • Alcohol and other drug-facilitated sexual violence • Domestic Violence as it pertains to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair housing & domestic violence • Lethality/danger assessment • The impact of domestic violence on children

Who is Level II	Training Topics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Evidence Recovery Kit (PERK) • Blind reporting • Sexual Transmitted Infections (Post-exposure Prophylaxis) and pregnancy-related concerns • Reproductive coercion • The Role of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/Forensic Nurse Examiner • Strangulation • Suicide intervention • Human trafficking • Addiction & recovery <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency expectation of engagement: outreach, prevention, and facilitation skills • Coordinated Community Response/Sexual Assault Response Teams

Board of Directors Training

(Professional Standard/Administration Standard #4)

Training for the board of directors is content specific. The length of the training is at the discretion of the agency. Agencies will develop and implement training on the following topics for all board members in their first year of service:

- Definitions and dynamics of Sexual and Domestic Violence
- Intersection of oppressions
- Agency mission, history, philosophy, and structure
- Agency policies and procedures (to include Code of Ethics and/or Rules of Conduct)
- Channeling requests for agency services
- Confidentiality
- General information about agency’s key partners
- Responsibilities of Independent Nonprofit Board of Directors:
 - Personnel Policy Management
 - Fiduciary Responsibility
 - Strategic Planning
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Contingency Planning
 - Succession Planning
 - Fund Development (to include fundraising)
 - Executive Director (or CEO) evaluation

GLOSSARY

Accompaniment: A group of services that involves providing in-person support and advocacy to victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in the aftermath of violence, most often at hospitals as medical treatment is provided or forensic exams are conducted, or within the justice system when criminal charges are being considered or protective orders are pursued.

Advocacy: Speaking and acting for change or justice on behalf of oneself, another person, or a cause. Advocacy can generally be categorized as: self-advocacy, individual advocacy, and systems advocacy. An **Advocate** is the person who takes up the cause and provides assistance in advocacy efforts.

- **Individual Advocacy:** Speaking or acting on behalf of an individual to achieve changes in the practice of another individual or institution, which is necessary to protect legal or social rights or affect justice on behalf of the individual seeking help in affecting change or justice.

The purpose of individual advocacy is to identify what individuals perceive as necessary protective actions for their rights so they can be assisted in asserting them. The persons who experience the sexual and/or domestic violence make this determination. It is imperative that advocates safeguard these persons' rights to make these decisions. Some examples of individual advocacy are the following:

- Helping individuals explore options for increasing their safety
 - Brainstorming ideas with a tenant on how to approach an unreasonable landlord
 - Listening to individuals prioritize their needs and assisting them in identifying avenues to meet those needs
 - Discussing with individuals the benefits and limitations of legal remedies, exploring whether these remedies are appropriate for them, and identifying how to access these remedies
- **Systems Advocacy:** Influencing societal and political systems to bring about change for groups of people. A coalition or less frequently, an individual, will seek alterations in laws, the establishment of new shelter locations, or arrangements for barrier removal to needed services and legal protection.

Systems advocacy is critical to ending sexual and domestic violence. It means changing the policies and practices of institutions and influencing beliefs of the individuals who compose those institutions. These changes can be accomplished through many different strategies. Planning and critical thinking are essential components of systems advocacy. The focus of systems advocacy is on the practices and policies of societal institutions rather than on the individual seeking assistance from the system.

Systems change is accomplished through a combination of advocacy efforts. These efforts may include suggesting policy change, training people on the dynamics and impact of violence, building coalitions, organizing communities, improving media and public awareness, and pursuing strategic education efforts. Examples of systems advocacy include:

- The changes that have been made in police response and arrest policies related to domestic violence
- The development of sexual harassment policies in the workplace
- The creation of legislation criminalizing stalking

- The development of community task forces to address sexual and domestic violence

Case Management: A process whereby advocates help their clients navigate various systems, such as the social service system, the healthcare system, or the justice system. This may involve providing information and resources, connecting clients with community services, and teaching clients how to advocate for themselves. It involves the assessment of a client's needs and the linking of that client to available services and resources.

Client Record/File: Any record or file that includes confidential client information and is created, requested, or held by the agency.

Confidentiality: Protecting information that could compromise the health, safety, or self-determination of any survivor of violence being served by an organization. Agencies must at least comply with the current federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) requirements for confidentiality of policy and practices (safeguarding personally identifying information). In addition, agencies should make every effort to protect the privacy of survivors, ensuring that individuals who experience violence retain control of when, where, and how their story is shared with others.

Core Services: Free and confidential 24-hour crisis intervention services for all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in the agency's community. Such services must include a 24-hour hotline (operated by your agency or through other means), provisions for emergency housing, and emergency medical and judicial accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Crisis Intervention: Providing support, information, resources, and/or advocacy in the wake of an experience of sexual and/or domestic violence or related traumatic event.

Cultural Humility: A life-long process of **self-reflection** to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience, particularly the experiences of those who are marginalized or historically oppressed in society.

Diversity: The inclusion of individuals who are of different identities across all aspects of an organization. These identities include race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other characteristics.

Domestic Violence: A pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual to control or exert power over another individual in an intimate relationship.

- **Pattern:** is the consistent use of a wide variety of abusive behaviors that often increase in frequency and intensity over time.
- **Abusive behaviors:** include, but are not limited to, verbal assaults and threats, emotional abuse tactics such as intimidation and isolation, physical and sexual assaults, weapon use, property destruction, and violence directed toward others significant to the victim.

- **Controlling or exerting power over another:** ongoing behavior of abusers in relationships designed to maintain power over the partner(s).
- **Intimate relationship:** a relationship between two individuals that currently (previously) provides (provided) emotional and/or physical intimacy.

Emergency shelter: Emergency housing (e.g., a Domestic Violence Program residential shelter, safe home, hotel, or other shelter) for sexual and/or domestic violence victims and their minor children (regardless of gender).

General Counseling: A one-to-one interaction between an advocate and a survivor for the purpose of benefiting the survivor. Examples of general counseling include emotional support, education on dynamics of sexual and/or domestic violence, problem solving, and discussing options.

- General counseling differs from **therapeutic counseling**, which is a one-to-one interaction between a licensed or board-certified mental health professional and a survivor for the purpose of addressing trauma. Therapeutic counseling may also be provided by a master's level counselor under supervision pending their licensure.

Healthy Relationship: A respectful connection between people that increases well-being, is mutually enjoyable, and enhances or maintains each individual's positive self-concept.

Healthy Sexuality: The capacity to understand, enjoy, and control one's own sexual and reproductive behavior in a voluntary consensual and responsible manner that enriches individuals and their social lives.

Imminent Danger: A real physical danger that could occur within an immediate timeframe and result in death or serious bodily harm. Some considerations include:

- A recent incident including serious bodily harm, threat of severe bodily harm, or threat to life
- The imprisonment of an abuser who is due to be released
- A Protective Order has been filed and police cannot find the abuser

Intersection of Oppressions: To promote substantive social change and effective service delivery, advocates must recognize and address the intersections of other forms of oppression with sexual and domestic violence. These other forms of oppression include, but are not limited to, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and ageism.

There are many ways to understand how the link between sexual and domestic violence and other oppressions operates. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive:

- Layers of oppression make some people more vulnerable to sexual and domestic violence.
- Sexual and domestic violence are sometimes used as tools of other oppressions (e.g., homophobic man raping a woman because she is lesbian).
- Some forms of oppression contribute directly to perpetuating sexual and domestic violence (e.g., lack of economic justice and a living wage keeping a woman in an abusive relationship because she cannot support her children without the abuser's income).
- Sexual and domestic violence are forms of oppression. People who have experienced sexual and domestic violence are disempowered, judged, and marginalized because of the violence they have experienced.

- People who have experienced sexual and domestic violence are also oppressed in other ways because of their race, class, sexuality, gender, etc. They may also face multiple intersecting barriers to equality and safety (e.g., if an African American woman is raped by a white man, did sexism or racism or both contribute to her experience? What additional oppression might she face as she tries to recover or seek justice?).
- All forms of oppression, including sexual and domestic violence, are perpetuated by the belief that power must be power over, not power shared.

Language Access Plan: A document that describes how to provide services to persons with limited English proficiency.

Persons with Limited English Proficiency: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

Plan: A document that includes specific objectives and the tasks necessary to accomplish those objectives, names the individuals or groups responsible for each task, provides dates by which tasks will be completed, and specifies how success will be measured or gauged, if appropriate.

Policy: A rule or guideline governing the actions in particular situations that has been officially agreed to by an agency. Policies should be approved by the board of directors (if applicable), include the date of approval on each policy, conform with all applicable laws, and contain the elements specified in the applicable Professional Standard.

Prevention: Shifting the attitudes, behaviors, and norms that support and perpetuate the root causes of sexual and/or domestic violence. Promoting healthy behaviors and communities where sexual and/or domestic violence are likely to occur through evidence-based or evidence-informed strategies.

- **Primary prevention** refers to strategies used to prevent trauma before it occurs and reduce overall likelihood that a person will be victimized.
- **Secondary prevention** involves intervening and responding to violence that has already occurred with the goal of stopping violence from occurring again.

Procedure: The operational processes required to implement a policy. Procedures are the guidelines needed to carry out an activity.

Secondary Trauma: The emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.

Self-Determination: Those seeking services from an agency retain the right and responsibility to make decisions in their own best interests and in the best interests of any dependent family members without the interference or undue influence of advocates, except in cases where there is an immediate risk of harm to self or others.

Sexual and Domestic Violence Agency: An agency with an agency or program mission to support survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence. Such agency must have been in operation and providing services to survivors for at least three years.

Sexual Violence: Sexual violence is non-consensual sexual conduct accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and/or power of authority.

- **Non-consensual:** without permission, agreement, or approval
- **Threat:** a behavior, statement, or expression that communicates the intention of someone to cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm to another
- **Coercion:** compelling another to act through manipulation and/or taking advantage of circumstance, personality, and/or emotions (e.g., guilt, fear, pity, anger)
- **Exploitation:** the unjust treatment of a human being as a commodity or an object without consideration for their well-being and for another's benefit
- **Deceit:** communicating a lie, an untrue statement, or creating a false circumstance
- **Force:** to use one's physical strength to make another person act against their will
- **Physical or Mental Incapacitation:** when one is not able to comprehend, process, communicate, and/or act on their own behalf due to a physical disability, a mental health disability, a cognitive disability, an injury, and/or the influence of a controlled substance such as alcohol, prescription medication, or illegal drugs
- **Power of authority:** manipulating and/or taking advantage of one's perceived higher social and/or professional standing over another to influence their thought, opinion, or behavior

Survivor/Victim: A person who has experienced the trauma of sexual and/or domestic violence. Survivors of violence may also be individuals who have committed acts of harm at some point in their lives. When agencies make determinations about providing services developed specifically for survivors or perpetrators, they must consider the context of the experience that led the person to reach out for services.

Supervisor: Leadership position within the agency whose title may include words like director, manager, supervisor, lead, coordinator, or other words that imply management responsibilities.

Trauma: Trauma results from an event, a series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening. Trauma has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. In the context of this work, trauma most often is sexual and/or domestic violence or the exposure to that violence, although we recognize the intersectionality of traumatic experiences.

Trauma-Informed: An agency or advocate that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

Underserved Populations: A population for which there is a disparity between the presence of that population in the agency's service area and the presence of that population among the persons receiving the agency's services. Populations that may be underserved include foreign born persons; persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; persons who are gay, lesbian,

bisexual, or transgender; persons of certain racial or ethnic backgrounds; older persons; men; and others.

Vicarious Trauma: A shift in world view that occurs in helping professionals when they work with individuals who have experienced trauma. Advocates may notice that their fundamental beliefs about the world are altered and possibly damaged by being repeatedly exposed to traumatic material.

Professional Standards Manual for Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs

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OVERVIEW

~~*Professional Standards Committee History*~~

~~During the 2015 Regular Session of the Virginia General Assembly, so that the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) would oversee the accreditation of local sexual and domestic violence agencies. This amendment included the creation of the **Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs** and the **Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee**. Prior to 2015, the accreditation process had been created and overseen by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (Action Alliance).~~

~~The purpose of the **Advisory Committee** is to provide communication between state agencies and local sexual and domestic violence agencies, evaluate the methods of awarding and monitoring grant funding, and make recommendations as needed to improve local services for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. The 15 member Advisory Committee includes state agencies who award grant funding to sexual and domestic violence agencies, the Attorney General of Virginia, a member of the Virginia Senate, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, the Chair of the Virginia State Crime Commission, the Executive Director of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, a member of a victim/witness organization, and representatives from sexual and domestic violence agencies.~~

~~The purpose of the **Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee** is to establish voluntary accreditation standards and procedures by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically measured and evaluated with a peer-reviewed process. The committee is responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to it under . The committee is comprised of six directors of local sexual and domestic violence programs appointed by the Advisory Committee and six directors of local sexual and domestic violence programs appointed by the Action Alliance, as well as one non-voting member appointed by DCJS and one non-voting member appointed by the Action Alliance. In addition, the committee receives assistance from the DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator. The Professional Standards Coordinator acts as staff support (e.g. meeting logistics; researching info; best practices; presentation), facilitates and implements the accreditation process (e.g. measures; technical assistance), and serves as a liaison.~~

~~Value Statement~~

~~The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee commits to a respectful, thoughtful, and transparent process to establish best practice standards for Sexual and Domestic Violence programs. We are mindful that these standards are survivor-centered, inclusive, and empowering for both programs and those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.~~

Introduction

Welcome to the Professional Standards for Virginia's ~~Sexual~~ sexual and ~~Domestic Violence Agencies~~ domestic violence agencies. This publication provides standards to help ~~programs~~ agencies improve the quality and consistency of their response to survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

~~The Professional Standards Committee, made up of appointees from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance and the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence, began meeting in March 2016. Development of these Standards has included the input of many directors from around the state. The committee gave careful consideration to the needs of survivors as these standards were being developed. Care was given to the varying challenges for programs throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, recognizing that each locality is responding to their own community's needs. Consideration was also given to the variety of ways organizations are structured in the delivery of these services (e.g. government, non-profit, umbrella, stand alone, and dual sexual and domestic violence agencies), and in how they collaborate with community partners.~~

In addition to the minimum requirements outlined in this Manual, agencies must comply with any other state and federal regulations applying to their programs and services. Furthermore, the Professional Standards accreditation process is not equivalent to, nor in place of, the grant monitoring process.

This Manual includes the Professional Standards

~~In addition to the Standards themselves, we have included a glossary and multiple resources. We encourage you~~ You are encouraged to access these resources as you develop, deliver, and evolve best practices and trauma-informed care for the survivors and the communities you serve. The Manual also includes a Glossary. Please note that there is an asterisk beside words included in the Glossary when such words are first used in the Professional Standards. Finally, please be aware that the definitions in the Glossary are only for the purposes of the Professional Standards.

Professional Standards Committee History

In 2015, legislation was enacted creating the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee (the "Committee"). The purpose of the Committee is to establish voluntary accreditation standards and measures by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process. In addition, the Committee is responsible for reviewing and voting on accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs, establishing a subcommittee as needed to address appeals from applicant programs, and periodically evaluating and revising the accreditation standards and measures.

Under Code of Virginia § 9.1-116.3, the Committee is required to consist of:

- One nonvoting member from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services ("DCJS")
- One nonvoting member from of the Virginia Department of Social Services
- One nonvoting member from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

- Twelve non-legislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, who must be leadership staff of local sexual and domestic violence programs

The appointment of members must also take into consideration racial and ethnic diversity and must be representative of regional and geographic locations of the Commonwealth.

The Committee receives assistance from the DCJS Professional Standards Team (the “Team”), which is made up of the Professional Standards Program Coordinator (the “Coordinator”) and the Professional Standards Program Monitor (the “Monitor”). Under *Code of Virginia* § 9.1-116.3, the Team is responsible for establishing accreditation procedures by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process, assisting local programs in obtaining or retaining accreditation, reviewing and evaluating applications for accreditation, and determining accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs and presenting such recommendations to the Committee.

The Team has the authority to determine the eligibility of agencies applying for accreditation and to interpret the Professional Standards.

Value Statement

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee commits to a respectful, thoughtful, and transparent process to establish best practice standards for sexual and domestic violence programs. The Committee is mindful that these standards are survivor-centered, inclusive, and empowering for both agencies and those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.

Accreditation Statuses

There are three possible status determinations for Professional Standards accreditation applicants:

Fully Accredited

The Committee will determine a status of Fully Accredited for an agency having demonstrated through the review process that the agency meets 100% of the Professional Standards.

Provisionally Accredited

Agencies that do not meet 100% of the Professional Standards may be Provisionally Accredited. To be considered provisionally accredited, applicant agencies must, at a minimum, demonstrate that they provide 24-hour crisis intervention services to all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in their communities, and that these services are confidential and free of charge. These

services must include a hotline, provisions for emergency housing, and emergency accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Provisionally accredited agencies will have up to 30 days to submit a Plan of Action and then up to 90 days to document that the Plan of Action has been followed and that the Professional Standards are being met. The Committee may then decide to grant full accreditation status or will deny the application.

Denied

The Committee will deny accreditation status to any agency that does not, at a minimum, demonstrate that it provides 24-hour crisis intervention services to all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in their communities, and that these services are confidential and free of charge. Crisis intervention services must include a hotline, provisions for emergency housing, and emergency accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Additionally, the Committee will deny accreditation to any provisionally accredited agency that does not submit a Plan of Action within 30 days of receiving the provisional accreditation status or does not meet the requirements of the Professional Standards within 90 days from the submission of the Plan of Action.

Revocation of Accreditation Status

The Committee shall have the authority to revoke an agency's accreditation for disregarding applicable standards or committing serious violations of rules and regulations. This action will only be taken in extreme cases and as a last resort. For further information on the revocation process, please see the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Processes and Procedures Guidelines.

Resources

Resources to assist your agency in meeting the Professional Standards are located on the Professional Standards webpage. The Resources tab has a wealth of information categorized by:

- [Agency & Advocate Wellness](#)
- [Boards](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Direct Services](#)
- [Evaluation](#)
- [Financial Information](#)

- [Human Resources](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Prevention Education](#)
- [Training for Board, Staff, and/or Volunteers](#)
- [Underserved Populations](#)

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

ADMINISTRATION

The following section relates to the administration or management of a sexual* and domestic violence* agency*. The role of the governing body, fiscal and data management, personnel management, and training are addressed. These standards provide for general administration practices that establish a common framework for service delivery.

STANDARD #1: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will ensure that crisis intervention*, advocacy*, and ~~community~~ engagement services are available and accessible to all people within the agency service area regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

- Non-discrimination policy ~~or sexual and domestic violence unit protocol and compliance*~~ for staff and client services includes race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- Regardless of income, no fees are charged for crisis intervention, advocacy, and ~~community~~ engagement services as outlined in these standards.
- ~~Agency has inclusions noticeable inside their throughout the facility (e.g., diverse and inclusive signage, pictures, materials, social media, website, and marketing) and inclusive client paperwork.~~
- Ensure The facility includes staff ~~has received~~ offices, meeting rooms, and the shelter, if applicable.
- Agency has a website that clearly describes the services provided, is accessible, is inclusive, and provides relevant, up to date, and accurate information.
- Agency ensures staff receives training on civil rights, diversity* issues, and multicultural competency. Topics for training could include implicit bias, microaggressions, reducing disparities in services, and building a culture of inclusion. In addition, the agency could invite culturally specific agencies to provide cross-training or facilitate a training on a topic related to cultural humility*.
- ~~Agency has a written policy, which affirms that staff, board/ of directors (or similar advisory ~~committee, group~~), and volunteers, should reflect the diversity of the community that you serve.~~
- Written agency served. This written policy ensures that domestic and/or sexual violence services are offered without discrimination except if the agency defines its service populations as those of a specific client group, must include action steps, be reviewed at least annually, and be updated every three years.
- If the agency defines its service population within a specific client group, there must be a clear written rationale for selectivity.

STANDARD #2: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will have trained ~~advocates (staff and/or volunteer)~~volunteers to provide Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and ~~Community~~ Engagement Services.

- Trained Crisis Advocates (any staff member, volunteer) Agency must have a written training plan* that meets the requirements of the Training Matrix.

- ~~Staff members, volunteers, or interns providing Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, or Community Engagement Services): Complete interns must complete~~ training within ~~3~~three months of joining the agency ~~in provision of direct services~~ as outlined in the Training Matrix.
 - Training modalities can include in-person instruction at the agency, shadowing a trained advocate, (up to eight hours), self-directed training programs (e.g., online courses and webinars), local or county trainings, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance trainings, and/or state agency trainings.
 - No more than half of the Level I and Honboarding training can be completed through self-directed training programs.
- ~~Staff (paid) Crisis Advocates~~Full-time Level II staff will receive at least 20 hours of continuing ~~sexual and domestic violence advocacy~~ education each year ~~and Volunteer Crisis Advocates, while Part-time Level II staff will receive at least 10 hours. Level II volunteers~~ will receive at least 10 hours of training annually.
 - Training modalities for completing the ~~20 hours (staff) and 10 hours (volunteers)~~ of continuing ~~sexual and domestic violence advocacy~~ education include in-person instruction at the agency, shadowing a trained advocate, (up to four hours), self-directed training programs, local or county trainings, state and national conferences, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance trainings, and/or state agency trainings.
 - No more than half of the continuing ~~sexual and domestic violence advocacy~~ education can be completed through self-directed training programs.
 - Training ~~can~~must include ~~an overall~~ review of the confidentiality*, cultural humility, and vicarious trauma* topics ~~in the~~.
- Supervisors* must receive ongoing training matrix and/or expanding on a topic from to support their management, supervision, and trauma stewardship responsibilities.
 - Anyone in a supervisory position must also, at a minimum, meet the training matrix such as offering Advanced Advocacy or Cultural Humility requirements of Level II staff.
- ~~Ensure agency training materials define sexual violence and domestic violence.~~
- ~~Maintain training materials as they apply to community outreach.~~
- Agencies are allowed discretion in determining training content requirements for new staff and/or volunteers who possess content ~~expertise~~ via prior education, training, or experience. However, all new staff and volunteers must complete the required agency, ~~community~~ and confidentiality training content.
 - Rationale for all exceptions to training requirements must be fully documented.

~~Exceptions to training requirements, while sometimes reasonable, should not be used widely by an agency (percentage of staff, etc.).~~

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.

- ~~Supervisors receive ongoing training to support their management, supervision, and trauma stewardship responsibilities.~~
- Supervisors must meet regularly with staff, either individually or as a group, ~~to provide ongoing support and guidance.~~
- Demonstrates Agency shall demonstrate fiscal responsibility (auditing, internal controls, and procurement services).

- ~~Maintains~~ Agency shall maintain a plan that protects against the physical and financial interruption of core services.*.
- ~~Written~~ Agency shall maintain a sustainability plan with projected revenues and expenditures for the 36 months of operation following the submission of an application for accreditation.
- Agency shall maintain a written succession plan for the Executive Director (or other agency leadership) position.
- Agency must have written personnel policies.
- ~~Written~~ Agency must have written job descriptions for all staff, intern, and volunteer positions.
- ~~Written protocol for~~ Agency shall maintain a written staff grievance policy that includes:
 - matters for which grievances can be filed
 - the levels in the agency to which the grievance may be filed and/or appealed
 - the type of information to be submitted when filing a grievance
 - the procedural steps and time limitations for each level in responding to grievances and appeals
 - any criteria for staff representation
 - the staff member responsible for coordinating grievance procedures*
 - the process for how grievances are handled, analyzed, and affirmed or denied
- Staff must be provided with contact information for the Chairperson of the board of directors, if applicable, and be given the option to grieve to the board should they not be satisfied with the response from agency leadership.
- Agency shall have written procedures for staff that include instructions for responding to potential emergencies including a medical emergency, a mental health emergency, and an emergency that threatens the safety of staff and/or the individuals being served by the staff. The emergency procedures must include:
- ~~Private non-profit agencies must have a Board of Directors and adhere by the following:~~
 - Job description assignments of tasks and responsibilities
 - instructions for the use of alarm systems, emergency equipment and notification of authorities
 - specification of escape routes in case of fire or natural disaster
 - coordination with law enforcement agencies for emergency plans regarding intruders and with fire departments for emergency plans for fire or natural disasters
- Fire, tornado, bomb threat and intruder drills shall be conducted annually. The date, time, and type of the drill shall be documented.

STANDARD #4: Private Nonprofit Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies must have a board of directors to establish policies, make significant and strategic decisions, and oversee the agency's activities.

- Agency must have written job descriptions for board members.
— By-laws
- ~~Written~~ Agency must have written by-laws, which provide the governance structure for the organization and its elected board. The by-laws must include:
 - the mission and purpose of the organization
 - the number of times per year that the board is required to meet
 - what constitutes a quorum

- the length of terms
- the limits for consecutive terms
- attendance requirements
- the number of members required to approve amendments of the by-laws
- how to address holding meetings or votes that are not conducted in person, such as by conference call or electronic methods
- a conflict-of-interest policy that clearly explains what a conflict of interest is, reporting procedures, and how to address such conflicts should they occur
- Agency must have a written process for the selection of board members, including those who reflect the diversity of the communities ~~they serveserved.~~
- ~~Completes~~Board members must complete a board orientation and training which includes information about sexual and domestic violence, ~~agency~~the agency's mission, and board members' ~~roleroles~~ and responsibilities.
- ~~Written~~A minimum of one training session for the board of directors' ongoing development must be offered each year.
- Agency must have a written plan for board training.
- All agency policies must be reviewed by the board of directors every three years. The document should then be signed by the Chairperson of the board of directors and dated with the date of review.

STANDARD #45: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to policies and practices that ensure a high standard of professional conduct.

- Agency ~~assures~~must ensure compliance with employer/employee state and federal regulations and contracts.
- ~~Written~~Agency must maintain a written policy/plan of a criminal background check for all staff, interns, and volunteers and a ~~Child Protective Services background~~Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry check for all staff, interns, Level 2 volunteers, and those Level 1 volunteers who may engage with children.
- ~~Written~~Agency must maintain a written policy/plan of a driving record from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for those staff, volunteers, or interns who will be transporting clients.
- Background and driving record checks must be updated every five years.
- Agency must have a written ethical behavior policy.

STANDARD #56: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will document Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and ~~Community~~ Engagement services only in databases that comply with current VAWA confidentiality standards and protect personally identifying information.

- Data about services provided ~~are~~must be entered into the system and reviewed regularly for accuracy, trends, and program planning.
- ~~Programs~~Agency must maintain a record retention policy specifying the client records/files* that will be destroyed, the time frame and method of destruction, and the way personally identifying information is protected.

STANDARD #67: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies preserve privacy and confidentiality, including the identity of and information provided by the person served or

acquired from other sources before, during, and after the course of the professional relationship.

- ~~Written~~ Agency has written operational procedures on client record/file security, maintenance, and access by individuals other than the client. ~~Description~~ A description of the safeguards for client records/files against unauthorized access, fire, loss, or other ~~hazard~~. ~~Description of how long records are maintained~~ hazards is available.
- Agency has written policies/procedures regarding how the agency assures compliance with applicable legal requirements regarding confidentiality.
- Agency has an informed, written, and reasonably time-limited client release of information form. The release of information form must include:
 - the name of no more than one person or organization to which the information is being released
 - the specific information to be released
 - the beginning and ending dates the release is effective, not to exceed the program participant's active length of services
 - the date and the signatures of the program participant and the employee or volunteer
 - the right to revoke a release of information at any time
- Agency has a written policy to respond to subpoenas, court orders, and other legal processes which, at a minimum, addresses how the client will be notified about the request and how the request will be processed and responded to by the agency.
- Agency has a written policy addressing the security of home computers, laptops, smart phones, virtual private networks, cloud computing, hotline routing, etc. for any staff who telecommute, including how access is terminated for staff who leave the agency.

STANDARD #78: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies respect and protect the civil and human rights of all those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.

- Agency demonstrates cultural humility ~~of~~ in its sexual and/or domestic violence service delivery.
- ~~Agency services are available and delivered regardless of the client's race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.~~
- Persons with limited English proficiency* must have meaningful access to services with equivalent services to those who are native English speakers.
- Agency has a written language access plan*, which includes the provision of relay services for the Deaf or hard of hearing.

STANDARD #89: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies support the voluntary services model and respect survivors' right to self-determination.*.

- ~~Written protocols and practices that support survivors' right to self-determination.~~
- ~~Written protocol~~ Agency must have written documentation that informs all clients of their rights, including the right to self-determination. Such documentation must be made available to the client by the next business day after initial contact with the agency.
- Agency must have a written client grievance policy that is available to each agency participant and should include multiple options for filing a complaint. At a minimum the policy should include:

- the assurance of the survivor's right to continue to receive services from the agency during and after the grievance process
- who the survivor should contact regarding the complaint or issue
- how the complaint be documented, steps that will be taken to find resolution, and whether the decision is final
- information regarding the survivors right to file a discrimination complaint with the Office of Justice Programs Office for Civil Rights

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Crisis intervention consists of the interactions and activities conducted by qualified, trained staff members or volunteers with an individual in crisis to stabilize emotions, clarify issues, and provide support and assistance. These standards provide that sexual and domestic violence agencies must establish quality crisis intervention services including 24/7 access, emergency accompaniment*, and emergency safe shelter.

STANDARD #910: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will be accessible 24/7 to the public and to first responders to provide crisis intervention services by trained advocates.

- Ensure Agency must ensure 24/7 access and response to all survivors seeking assistance from advocates providing crisis intervention services, risk assessment, safety planning, information, and referrals. Such requirement may be met through the provision of a 24/7 hotline, including the use of a statewide hotline as necessary.
- Maintain Agency maintains documentation of number of requests for crisis intervention services that the agency provided.

STANDARD #1011: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will ensure that survivors in their community have 24/7 access to accompaniment services when they access emergency medical or justice systems.

- Establish Agency must establish and maintain medical and criminal/civil justice system emergency response ~~protocols~~ procedures.
- Maintain Agency maintains documentation of requests for accompaniment services and accompaniment services that the agency provided.

Standard #1112: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will provide, or assist to secure, emergency safe shelter to survivors of sexual and domestic violence who are in imminent danger.*.

- ~~Establish and maintain protocols for addressing shelter requests including those that cannot be met and those that originate outside your service area. These protocols must include collaborative efforts across agencies to directly connect survivors in imminent danger to appropriate resources.~~
- ~~Safeguard confidentiality and/or personally identifying information during the referral process.~~
- Maintain Agency must provide or coordinate emergency shelter* for survivors and their families who are in imminent danger. If the survivor is within the agency's service area, the agency must safely maintain contact with the client until safe lodging has been established. If the survivor is outside the agency's service area, the agency must ensure that the survivor is connected to the agency within the applicable service area prior to terminating contact.
- If an agency maintains an emergency shelter and such shelter does not meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the agency must secure accommodations appropriate to meet the needs of a client with disabilities if such client qualifies for shelter services.
- Agency must possess a first aid supply kit.

- Agency maintains documentation of requests for emergency shelter services and emergency shelter services that the agency provided.

ADVOCACY

Through advocacy services, agencies attempt to ensure that survivors, their children, and those at risk of sexual and domestic violence are protected and treated compassionately. These standards value an individual response, collaboration, thoughtful evaluation, careful stewardship, and unconditional positive regard through a victim*-centered approach.

STANDARD #1213: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies ~~will~~ provide a range of individualized advocacy services ~~which~~that foster survivor healing from the trauma of violence.

- ~~Provide~~Agency shall provide a range of individualized advocacy services ~~which~~that foster healing from the trauma of violence, ~~to~~which must, at a minimum, include: justice system advocacy, ~~counseling, support groups, case management,*, general counseling*, and~~ referral resources, ~~accompaniment services, and/or other holistic services.~~
- ~~Maintain~~Agency maintains documentation of requests for advocacy services and advocacy services that the agency provided.

STANDARD #1314: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will coordinate services within the agency and the community to promote high quality integrated services and support to survivors.

- ~~Develop~~Agency must develop and maintain signed agreements (e.g. ~~Memorandum Of Understanding, memoranda of understanding,~~ cooperative agreements, or partnership agreements) as needed to provide and coordinate services to survivors. Examples include: ~~Cross~~cross-training and/or co-location with agencies such as:
 - Victim Witness
 - Social Services to include Adult and Child Protective Services
 - Colleges and universities
 - Mental health
 - Law enforcement
 - Hospitals
 - Schools
 - Immigration services
 - Legal aid
- Agency must maintain, or collaborate with an agency that maintains, a physical or digital resource list with financial, healthcare, mental health, culturally specific, social service, and other resources. The list should include contact information and the services provided. Such list must be updated annually.

STANDARD #1415: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will address the diverse needs of the community served, providing specialized advocacy programs and population-specific interventions.

- ~~Identify~~Agency will identify the diverse needs of the community through at least two methods, such as a community needs assessment, client surveys, or feedback from other community agencies.

- ~~Demonstrate~~Agency will demonstrate efforts to provide a range of specialized advocacy services to identified populations within the agency's service area ~~that may include race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, refugees and immigrants, Deaf and hard of hearing, age and developmentally specific, non-English speaking, and people with disabilities.~~

~~COMMUNITY~~ **ENGAGEMENT**

Through engagement services, the agency attempts to create an effective response system to sexual and domestic violence and to change cultural attitudes and institutional practices that perpetuate such violence. These standards cover community engagement, prevention* services, and systemic engagement.

STANDARD #1516: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in community engagement efforts that promote agency services and effective community responses throughout the agency's service area.

- Agency distributes information about agency services and accessibility through multiple channels. Examples include:
 - ~~Tabling~~ tabling at community events
 - ~~Fliers~~ flyers/brochures
 - ~~Speakings~~ speaking engagements at various events
 - ~~Responding~~ responding to requests for information
 - ~~Sœial~~ social media or conventional print/radio/TV media
- Maintain Agency engages in initiatives and activities that raise awareness, advocate for survivor access to resources, and promote systemic change (e.g., National Night Out with local police, awareness month activities).
- Agency maintains documentation of number of community engagement activities that the agency provided.

Standard #1617: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will deliver effective primary* or secondary* prevention programming that supports the development of healthy relationships* and healthy sexuality*.

- ~~Create~~ Agency must create a prevention plan, ~~after assessing resources and community prevention readiness, that either:~~
 - ~~— Focuses on building capacity through prevention awareness education efforts; or~~
- ~~Focuses on designing and delivering~~ addresses primary or secondary prevention strategies consistent with Virginia's State Prevention Plan and Guidelines for Primary Prevention.
- Agency ~~is~~ must collaboratively ~~engaged~~ engage with others doing similar prevention work in the community.
- ~~Maintain documentation of number of prevention programs that the agency provided.~~

STANDARD #1718: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in community systemic engagement initiatives efforts to improve the experiences of survivors ~~and advocate for systemic change.~~

- ~~Demonstrate~~ Agency demonstrates participation in and/or leadership in sexual and/or domestic violence focused community groups (Domestic Violence Council, Sexual Assault Response Teams, Inter-Agency Councils, or others).
- ~~Provide~~ Agency provides training and education to allied professionals.

- ~~• Engage in initiatives and activities that raise awareness, advocate for survivor access to resources, and promote systemic change (e.g. National Night Out with local police, awareness month activities).~~
- ~~• Maintain documentation of number of community engagement initiatives that the agency provided.~~
- Agency maintains training materials as they apply to community outreach.

TRAINING MATRIX

As the Professional Standards reference, these training requirements can be achieved through a variety of modalities and should happen in the first three months of employment. See Administration: Standard #2 for more information and guidance.

In the initial three months of training, the goal is for staff, volunteers, and interns to have a basic understanding and awareness of these concepts. This Matrix is also intended to serve as a guide for ongoing training and professional development, with the expectation that over time specific roles will develop greater understanding in these areas.

Please note that, for the purposes of these training requirements, “staff, volunteers, and interns” includes all staff from the point of entry (such as a receptionist) through to the sexual and/or domestic violence program. These terms do not include staff, volunteers, and interns working in different units of an overall agency.

LEVEL I: 8 Hours of Training for All Staff & Volunteers/Interns

Who is Level I	Training Topics
<p>Limited Client Contact Staff, Volunteers, and Interns <i>Staff, Volunteers, or Interns who may have incidental contact with persons accessing services. Examples may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Administrative support</i> ▪ <i>Receptionists</i> ▪ <i>Grant writer</i> ▪ <i>Thrift Store Manager</i> <p><i>Agency can determine if this includes persons providing donated services such as computer maintenance, painting, lawn care, etc.</i></p>	<p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission, history, philosophy, and structure of the agency • Agency policies and procedures • Agency Code of Ethics/Rules of Conduct • Confidentiality • Personal safety and security of staff, volunteers/interns, clients, and visitors <p>Crisis Intervention & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and dynamics of sexual violence and domestic violence • Definitions and dynamics of stalking within the context of sexual and domestic violence • Emergency/Crisis Response to address immediate safety needs • Secondary trauma* • Vicarious trauma • Role of the advocate/volunteer • Making appropriate community referrals, including specialized resources for underserved populations • Voluntary services <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural humility

LEVEL II: 40 Hours of Training for All Staff & Volunteers/Interns

Who is Level II	Training Topics
<p>All Staff, Volunteers, and Interns except Level I staff.</p> <p><i>Direct Service Staff, Volunteers, and Interns who are likely to have on-going contact with persons accessing services</i></p> <p><i>Examples may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Hotline Volunteers</i> ▪ <i>Court Advocacy</i> ▪ <i>Child Services</i> ▪ <i>Shelter Support</i> ▪ <i>Support Group Facilitators</i> ▪ <i>Companion Services</i> ▪ <i>Community Educators or Presenters</i> ▪ <i>Transportation Providers</i> ▪ <i>Childcare Providers</i> 	<p>Level II training includes all topics outlined in Level I with expansions as necessary and the following:</p> <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of the sexual and domestic violence movements • Record keeping and data collection (all staff and relevant volunteers) • How to access/use an interpreter <p>Crisis Intervention & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersection of oppressions* and the societal impact of violence • Theories/Modes of Service Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and Systems Advocacy • Survivor-directed services • Adverse Childhood Experiences, CDC model • Trauma-informed, based on SAMSHA model • Crisis Intervention/Counseling Skills • Trauma of Victimization – Post Traumatic Stress • Boundaries • Safety Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use/abuse of technology • Public assistance benefits • Immigration visas that may be available to survivors • Civil and Criminal Justice systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims’ Rights • Protective Orders • Sexual violence laws, as related to adults and minors • Domestic violence laws • Child abuse and neglect laws • Incapacitated and vulnerable adult abuse laws • Unauthorized practice of law • Sexual Violence as it pertains to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual abuse • Adult survivors of childhood sexual violence • Intimate partner sexual violence • Sexual harassment • Alcohol and other drug-facilitated sexual violence • Domestic Violence as it pertains to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair housing & domestic violence • Lethality/danger assessment • The impact of domestic violence on children

Who is Level II	Training Topics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Evidence Recovery Kit (PERK) • Blind reporting • Sexual Transmitted Infections (Post-exposure Prophylaxis) and pregnancy-related concerns • Reproductive coercion • The Role of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/Forensic Nurse Examiner • Strangulation • Suicide intervention • Human trafficking • Addiction & recovery <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency expectation of engagement: outreach, prevention, and facilitation skills • Coordinated Community Response/Sexual Assault Response Teams

Board of Directors Training

(Professional Standard/Administration Standard #34)

Training for the ~~Boardboard~~ of ~~Directorsdirectors~~ is content specific. The length of the training is at the discretion of the agency. Agencies will develop and implement training on the following topics for all ~~Boardboard~~ members in their first year of service:

- Definitions and dynamics of Sexual and Domestic Violence
- ~~Intersectionality~~Intersection of oppressions
- Agency mission, history, philosophy, and structure
- Agency policies and procedures (to include Code of Ethics and/or Rules of Conduct)
- Channeling requests for agency services
- Confidentiality
- General information about agency's key partners
- Responsibilities of Independent ~~Non-Profit~~Nonprofit Board of Directors:
 - Personnel Policy Management
 - Fiduciary Responsibility
 - Strategic Planning
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Contingency Planning
 - Succession Planning
 - Fund Development (to include fundraising)
 - Executive Director (or CEO) evaluation

GLOSSARY

~~24/7/365: Refers to services provided around the clock and calendar—24 hours per day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year, including holidays.~~

Accompaniment: A group of services that involves providing in-person support and advocacy to victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in the aftermath of violence, most often at hospitals as medical treatment is provided or forensic exams are conducted, or within the justice system when criminal charges are being considered or protective orders are pursued.

Advocacy: Speaking and acting for change or justice on behalf of oneself, another person, or a cause. Advocacy can generally be categorized as: self-advocacy, individual advocacy, and systems advocacy. An **Advocate** is the person who takes up the cause and provides assistance in advocacy efforts.

- **Individual Advocacy:** Speaking or acting on behalf of an individual to achieve changes in the practice of another individual or institution, which is necessary to protect legal or social rights or affect justice on behalf of the individual seeking help in affecting change or justice.

The purpose of individual advocacy is to identify what individuals perceive as necessary protective actions for their rights so they can be assisted in asserting them. The persons who experience the sexual and/or domestic violence make this determination. It is imperative that advocates safeguard these persons' rights to make these decisions. Some examples of individual advocacy are the following:

- Helping individuals explore options for increasing their safety;
 - Brainstorming ideas with a tenant on how to approach an unreasonable landlord;
 - Listening to individuals prioritize their needs and assisting them in identifying avenues to meet those needs;
 - Discussing with individuals the benefits and limitations of legal remedies, exploring whether ~~or not~~ these remedies are appropriate for them, and identifying how to access these remedies.
- **Systems Advocacy:** Influencing societal and political systems to bring about change for groups of people. A coalition or less frequently, an individual, will seek alterations in laws, the establishment of new shelter locations, or arrangements for barrier removal to needed services and legal protection.

Systems advocacy is critical to ending sexual and domestic violence. It means changing the policies and practices of institutions and influencing beliefs of the individuals who compose those institutions. These changes can be accomplished through many different strategies; ~~requiring skills like that of individual advocacy.~~ Planning and critical thinking are essential components of systems advocacy. The focus of systems advocacy is on the practices and policies of societal institutions rather than on the individualsindividual seeking assistance from the system.

Systems change is accomplished through a combination of advocacy efforts. These efforts may include suggesting policy change, training people on the dynamics and impact of violence, building coalitions, organizing communities, improving media and public awareness, and pursuing strategic education efforts. Examples of systems advocacy include:

- The changes that have been made in police response and arrest policies related to domestic violence;

- The development of sexual harassment policies in the workplace;
- The creation of legislation criminalizing stalking;
- The development of community task forces to address sexual and domestic violence

Case Management: A process whereby advocates help their clients navigate various systems, such as the social service system, the healthcare system, or the justice system. This may involve providing information and resources, connecting clients with community services, and teaching clients how to advocate for themselves. It involves the assessment of a client's needs and the linking of that client to available services and resources.

Client Record/File: Any record or file that includes confidential client information and is created, requested, or held by the agency.

Confidentiality: Protecting information that could compromise the health, safety, or self-determination of any survivor of violence being served by an organization. Agencies must at least comply with the current federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) requirements for confidentiality of policy and practices (safeguarding personally identifying information). In addition, agencies should make every effort to protect the privacy of survivors, ensuring that individuals who experience violence retain control of when, where, and how their story is shared with others.

~~**Counseling:** A collaborative effort between a counselor and client. Counselors help individuals who have experienced trauma to identify avenues for healing. Therapeutic counseling may be offered by licensed professionals or an individual supervised by a licensed professional. Agencies also provides peer support/supportive counseling from advocates who may not be formally credentialed.~~

Core Services: Free and confidential 24-hour crisis intervention services for all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in the agency's community. Such services must include a 24-hour hotline (operated by your agency or through other means), provisions for emergency housing, and emergency medical and judicial accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.

Crisis Intervention: Providing support, information, resources, and/or advocacy in the wake of an experience of sexual and/or domestic violence, or related traumatic event.

Cultural Humility: A life-long process of **self-reflection** to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience, particularly the experiences of those who are marginalized or historically oppressed in society.

Diversity: The inclusion of individuals who are of different identities across all aspects of an organization. These identities include race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other characteristics.

Domestic Violence: A pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual to control or exert power over another individual in an intimate relationship.

- **~~pattern~~Pattern:** is the consistent use of a wide variety of abusive behaviors that often increase in frequency and intensity over time.
- **~~abusive~~Abusive behaviors:** include, but are not limited to, verbal assaults and threats, emotional abuse tactics such as, intimidation and isolation, physical and sexual assaults, weapon use, property destruction, and violence directed toward others significant to the victim.
- **~~controlling~~Controlling or exerting power over another:** ongoing behavior of abusers in relationships designed to maintain power over the partner(s).
- **~~intimate~~Intimate relationship:** a relationship between two individuals that currently (previously) provides (provided) emotional and/or physical intimacy.

~~Effective: Programs and services that lead to a beneficial and measurable outcome that meets the identified needs of survivors of violence and/or contributes to preventing violence.~~

Emergency shelter: Emergency housing (e.g., a Domestic Violence Program residential shelter, safe home, hotel, or other shelter) for sexual and/or domestic violence victims and their minor children (regardless of gender).

~~Evidence-based and Evidence-informed: Programs and services that are informed by current research and faithfully implemented based on that research are considered to be “evidence-based.” Sound research on effective interventions and prevention strategies related to sexual violence and domestic violence is very limited. Therefore, agencies may also use an “evidence-informed” approach to develop practices and programs that combine the findings of the best available research with intuition, experience and available expertise.~~

General Counseling: A one-to-one interaction between an advocate and a survivor for the purpose of benefiting the survivor. Examples of general counseling include emotional support, education on dynamics of sexual and/or domestic violence, problem solving, and discussing options.

- General counseling differs from **therapeutic counseling**, which is a one-to-one interaction between a licensed or board-certified mental health professional and a survivor for the purpose of addressing trauma. Therapeutic counseling may also be provided by a master’s level counselor under supervision pending their licensure.

Healthy Relationship: A respectful connection between people that increases well-being, is mutually enjoyable, and enhances or maintains each individual’s positive self-concept.

Healthy Sexuality: The capacity to understand, enjoy, and control one’s own sexual and reproductive behavior in a voluntary consensual and responsible manner that enriches individuals and their social lives.

Imminent Danger: A real physical danger that could occur within an immediate timeframe and result in death or serious bodily harm. Some considerations include:

- A recent incident including serious bodily harm, threat of severe bodily harm, or threat to life
- The imprisonment of an abuser who is due to be released
- A Protective Order has been filed and police cannot find the abuser

Intersection of Oppressions: To promote substantive social change and effective service delivery, advocates must recognize and address the intersections of other forms of oppression with sexual and domestic violence. These other forms of oppression include, but are not limited to, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and ageism.

There are many ways to understand how the link between sexual and domestic violence and other oppressions operates. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive:

- Layers of oppression make some people more vulnerable to sexual and domestic violence.
- Sexual and domestic violence are sometimes used as tools of other oppressions (e.g., homophobic man raping a woman because she is lesbian).
- Some forms of oppression contribute directly to perpetuating sexual and domestic violence (e.g., lack of economic justice and a living wage keeping a woman in an abusive relationship because she cannot support her children without the abuser's income).
- Sexual and domestic violence are forms of oppression. People who have experienced sexual and domestic violence are disempowered, judged, and marginalized because of the violence they have experienced.
- People who have experienced sexual and domestic violence are also oppressed in other ways because of their race, class, sexuality, gender, etc. They may also face multiple intersecting barriers to equality and safety (e.g., if an African -American woman is raped by a white man, did sexism or racism or both contribute to her experience? What additional oppression might she face as she tries to recover or seek justice?).
- All forms of oppression, including sexual and domestic violence, are perpetuated by the belief that power must be power over, not power shared.

~~**Marginalized:** Being left out or devalued by a larger group that sets norms and holds power. Any person can feel marginalized in certain groups at certain times. Marginalization is different from being oppressed because it has the weight of societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices behind it.~~

Language Access Plan: A document that describes how to provide services to persons with limited English proficiency.

Persons with Limited English Proficiency: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

Plan: A document that includes specific objectives and the tasks necessary to accomplish those objectives, names the individuals or groups responsible for each task, provides dates by which tasks will be completed, and specifies how success will be measured or gauged, if appropriate.

Policy: A rule or guideline governing the actions in particular situations that has been officially agreed to by an agency. Policies should be approved by the board of directors (if applicable), include the date of approval on each policy, conform with all applicable laws, and contain the elements specified in the applicable Professional Standard.

Prevention: Shifting the attitudes, behaviors, and norms that support and perpetuate the root causes of sexual and/or domestic violence. Promoting healthy behaviors and communities where sexual and/or domestic violence are likely to occur through evidence-based or evidence-informed strategies.

- **Primary prevention** refers to strategies used to prevent trauma before it occurs and reduce overall likelihood that a person will be victimized.
- **Secondary prevention** involves intervening and responding to violence that has already occurred with the goal of stopping violence from occurring again. ~~Tertiary prevention provides ongoing support and services to survivors of trauma to reduce the long-term effects.~~

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Protective Factors: Experiences, beliefs and norms that have been observed to lessen the likelihood of violence perpetration or victimization. While they cannot ensure all elimination of risk, they do reduce the likelihood of perpetrating violence by promoting health and connectedness. These factors exist at the individual, relational, community and societal levels. Understanding these factors can help identify opportunities for prevention.

Risk Factors: Attributes, characteristics or exposures that increase the likelihood of perpetrating or experiencing sexual and/or domestic violence. These factors contribute to risk and may not be direct causes. Not everyone identified as “at risk” becomes a perpetrator or victim of violence. Risk Factors are found at the individual, relational, community and societal levels. Understanding these factors can help identify opportunities for prevention.

Self-Determination/Clients’ Rights to

Procedure: The operational processes required to implement a policy. Procedures are the guidelines needed to carry out an activity.

Secondary Trauma: The emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.

Self-Determination: Those seeking services from an agency retain the right and responsibility to make decisions in their own best interests and in the best interests of any dependent family members without the interference or undue influence of advocates, except in cases where there is an immediate risk of harm to self or others.

Sexual and Domestic Violence Agency: An agency with an agency or program mission to support survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence. Such agency must have been in operation and providing services to survivors for at least three years.

Sexual Violence: Sexual violence is non-consensual sexual conduct accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and/or power of authority.

- **Non-consensual:** without permission, agreement, or approval
- **Threat:** a behavior, statement, or expression that communicates the intention of someone to cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm to another
- **Coercion:** compelling another to act through manipulation and/or taking advantage of circumstance, personality, and/or emotions (e.g., guilt, fear, pity, anger)
- **Exploitation:** the unjust treatment of a human being as a commodity or an object without consideration for their well-being and for another’s benefit
- **Deceit:** communicating a lie, an untrue statement, or creating a false circumstance.
- **Force:** to use one’s physical strength to make another person act against their will
- **Physical or Mental Incapacitation:** when one is not able to comprehend, process, communicate, and/or act on their own behalf due to a physical disability, a mental health disability, a cognitive disability, an injury, and/or the influence of a controlled substance such as alcohol, prescription medication, and/or illegal drugs
- **Power of authority:** manipulating and/or taking advantage of one’s perceived higher social and/or professional standing over another to influence their thought, opinion, or behavior

Survivor/Victim: A person who has experienced the trauma of sexual and/or domestic violence. Survivors of violence may also be individuals who have committed acts of harm at some point in their lives. When agencies make determinations about providing services developed specifically

for survivors or perpetrators, they must ~~take into account~~consider the context of the experience that led the person to reach out for services.

Supervisor: Leadership position within the agency whose title may include words like director, manager, supervisor, lead, coordinator, or other words that imply management responsibilities.

Trauma: Trauma results from an event, a series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening. Trauma has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. In the context of this work, trauma most often is sexual and/or domestic violence or the exposure to that violence, although we recognize the intersectionality of traumatic experiences.

Trauma-Informed: An agency or advocate that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and, responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

Underserved Populations: A population for which there is a disparity between the presence of that population in the ~~agency~~agency's service area and the presence of that population among the persons receiving the agency's services. Populations that may be underserved include foreign born persons; persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; persons who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; persons of certain racial or ethnic backgrounds; older persons; men; and others.

RESOURCES

All resources that can assist your agency in meeting the professional standards are located online at the [. The **Vicarious Trauma**: A shift in world view that occurs in helping professionals when they work with individuals who have experienced trauma. Advocates may notice that their fundamental beliefs about the world are altered and possibly damaged by being repeatedly](#)

[exposed to traumatic material.](#) **Resources** tab has a drop-down menu of a plethora of tips, guides, samples, and more categorized by:

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If you need further assistance (e.g. additional samples) that cannot be found on any of the resource pages above, please contact the Professional Standards Coordinator for technical assistance. The coordinator is available to help sexual and domestic violence programs preparing for accreditation, and can provide assistance via e-mail, phone, fax, mail, and/or in person.

Contact the DCJS Professional Standards Coordinator for assistance at

STANDARD #1: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will ensure that crisis intervention, advocacy, and community engagement services are available and accessible to all people within the agency service area regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.	
Recommendations	
1. Add a measure stating, “Programs shall conform to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.”	Ok <i>After reviewing the total document, the Professional Standards Team concluded that this requirement would be too burdensome and may conflict with other Standards. Therefore, this measure was not included.</i>
2. For D&I, clarify that inclusions need to be visible throughout the facility; and be more specific as to what we are looking for.	Ok – Added language to indicate inclusions must be noticeable “throughout the facility”, “diverse and inclusive” signage, pictures, etc., removed “website”
3. For “multicultural competency”, we should offer some examples as to what would meet that requirement.	Ok – Added “Topics for training could include implicit bias, microaggressions, reducing disparities in services, and building a culture of inclusion. In addition, the agency could invite culturally specific agencies to provide cross-training or facilitate a training on a topic related to cultural humility.”
4. The written policy regarding representation of the community should be required to have action steps and be reviewed annually.	Ok – Added “This written policy must include action steps, be reviewed at least annually, and be updated every three years.”
Questions	
5. Under the D&I category, should agency websites have their own category with specific examples as to what we will be reviewing?	Ok – Added “Agency has a website that clearly describes the services provided, is accessible, is inclusive, and provides relevant, up to date, and accurate information.”
6. Should we remove the “advisory committee” language for the written policy concerning representation of the community?	Added “board of directors (or similar advisory group)”

STANDARD #2: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will have trained advocates (staff and/or volunteer) to provide Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and Community Engagement Services.

Non-Team Recommendations

<p>1. (CM) I think we should differentiate between the hours of continuing ed required for full and part time staff. My suggestion is that folks full-time staff receive 20 hours of training and part-time staff get an equivalent of ½ of their work week. (For instance, a 20-hour employee would be required to get 10 hours of continuing ed annually).</p>	<p>Ok – Added “while Part-time Level II staff will receive at least 10 hours.”</p>
<p>2. (PUBLIC) - For local social services agencies, would the staff working under the Adult Protective Services or Child Protective Services agencies be considered Level 1 or Level 2 staff for training purposes; or would they not fall under the requirements of the Training Matrix?</p>	<p>Added the following statement in the Training Matrix section - Please note that, for the purposes of these training requirements, “staff, volunteers, and interns” includes all staff from the point of entry (such as a receptionist) through to the sexual and/or domestic violence program. These terms do not include staff, volunteers, or interns working in different units of an overall agency.</p>

Team Recommendations

<p>3. We should require more information regarding the training process. A written training plan, including the number of hours and the training topics, should be required.</p>	<p>Ok – Added “Agency must have a written training plan that meets the requirement of the Training Matrix.”</p>
<p>4. We should specify a limit on the amount of training that can be done through shadowing.</p>	<p>Ok – Added “(up to eight hours)” for the onboarding training and “(up to four hours)” for the continuing education.</p>
<p>5. There should be specifics as to some continuing education topics, such as refreshers on confidentiality.</p>	<p>Ok – Added “Training must include a review of the confidentiality, cultural humility, and vicarious trauma topics.”</p>
<p>6. The measure regarding training materials for community engagement should be moved to the Community Engagement section.</p>	<p>Ok – Moved to new Standard #18 (current Standard #17)</p>

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.	
Non-Team Recommendations	
1. The prior Committee discussed that there is an expectation that directors understand the work involved in the domestic and sexual violence field. They believed that this would include receiving the same Level 2 training as direct staff. Should this be required in the Standards?	Added “Anyone in a supervisory position must also, at a minimum, meet the training requirements of Level II staff.” to Standard #2.
2. In terms of supervisory training, the prior Committee discussed that there may need to be some examples of training topics provided; or there may need to be a new Level 3 category for training requirements.	The Committee would like to see Level 3 language -> <i>Not added. After considerations regarding cost and locating such training, the PST recommends sending alerts when such training is available, but not including it as a requirement.</i>
Team Recommendations	
3. Standard 3 needs clarification so agencies understand that “interruption of core services” means financial AND physical.	Ok – Added “physical and financial”
4. A sustainability plan should be required.	Ok – Added “Agency shall maintain a sustainability plan with projected revenues and expenditures for the 36 months of operation following the submission of an application for accreditation.”

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.

5. There should be a requirement for a grievance policy for staff, which should include information as to how to contact the Board.

Ok – Added “Agency shall maintain a written staff grievance policy that includes: matters for which grievances can be filed, the levels in the agency to which the grievance may be filed and/or appealed, the type of information to be submitted when filing a grievance, the procedural steps and time limitations for each level in responding to grievances and appeals, any criteria for staff representation, the staff member responsible for coordinating grievance procedures, and the process for how grievances are handled, analyzed, and affirmed or denied. Staff must be provided with contact information for the Chairperson of the board of directors, if applicable, and be given the option to grieve to the board should they not be satisfied with the response from agency leadership.”

6. There should be requirements as to what emergency plans should contain.

Ok – Added “Agency shall have written procedures for staff that include instructions for responding to potential emergencies including a medical emergency, a mental health emergency, and an emergency that threatens the safety of staff and/or the individuals being served by the staff. The emergency procedures must include: assignments of tasks and responsibilities, instructions for the use of alarm systems, emergency equipment and notification of authorities, specification of escape routes in case of fire or natural disaster, and coordination with law enforcement agencies for emergency plans regarding intruders and with fire departments for emergency plans for fire or natural disasters. Fire, tornado, bomb threat and intruder drills shall be conducted annually. The date, time, and type of the drill shall be documented.”

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.	
7. The by-laws should include a Conflict-of-Interest Policy and require 2/3 of the members of the board to approve any changes to the by-laws.	Ok Created a new Standard for boards: STANDARD #4: Private Nonprofit Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies must have a board of directors to establish policies, make significant and strategic decisions, and oversee the organization's activity.
8. The by-laws should state how many members constitutes a quorum, the length of terms for members, and the number of consecutive terms that a member may serve.	Ok – Added to new Standard #4
9. There should be requirements for contingency and/or succession planning.	Ok – Added “Agency shall maintain a written succession plan for the Executive Director (or other agency leadership) position.”
10. There should be a continuing education requirement for boards.	Ok – Added “A minimum of one training session for the board of directors’ ongoing development must be offered each year” to the new Standard #4 .
11. There should be a requirement that policies are reviewed by the Board (or agency if there is no Board) at a certain time (every X number of years). The policy should then be signed and dated with the date of review.	Ok – Added, “All agency policies must be reviewed by the board of directors every three years. The document should then be signed by the Chairperson of the board of directors and dated with the date of review” to the new Standard #4 .
Questions	
12. Should the supervisor training measure be moved from Standard #3 to Standard #2? Should there be more descriptions as to what we would like to see for this requirement?	Moved, “Supervisors must receive ongoing training to support their management, supervision, and trauma stewardship responsibilities.” from Standard #3 to Standard #2 . Included a definition of Supervisor in the Glossary : Supervisor: Leadership position within the agency whose title may include words like director, manager, supervisor, lead, coordinator, or other words that imply management responsibilities.

STANDARD #3: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to sound management practices that demonstrate operational stability, including organizational principles and practices that reflect accountability and transparency.	
13. “Supervisors meet regularly with staff, either individually or as a group, to provide ongoing support and guidance” -> What do we do if staff does not feel supported? Report to Committee? Speak to ED?	Delete “to provide ongoing...” - DONE
14. Should boards be required to meet at least four times per year; and should this be stated in the by-laws?	Specify that the number of times per year should be stated in the by-laws. - Added to new Standard #4

STANDARD #4: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will adhere to policies and practices that ensure a high standard of professional conduct.	
Non-Team Recommendations	
1. (CM) - Strike “Child Protective Services background check for those who may engage with children”, add “Virginia Department of Social Services Central Registry background check prior to employment for all employees”.	Added - “and a Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry check for all staff, interns, Level 2 volunteers, and those Level 1 volunteers who may engage with children.”
Team Recommendations	
2. Background checks should be re-verified after a certain time period. This may need to consider the requirements of, and limitations set by, government agencies.	Yes, use 5 years as that matches grant guidelines Added - “Background and driving record checks must be updated every five years.”
3. There should there be a DMV check for any staff who are transporting clients.	Yes. Added - “Agency must maintain a written policy/plan of a driving record from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for those staff, volunteers, or interns who will be transporting clients.”

STANDARD #5: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will document Crisis Intervention, Advocacy, and Community Engagement services only in databases that comply with VAWA confidentiality standards and protect personally identifying information.	
Team Recommendation	
1. This Standard needs to be clarified to identify to which documents the record retention measure is referring.	Added definition of “client record/file” to the Glossary : Client Record/File: Any record or file that includes confidential client information and is created, requested, or held by the agency.
Questions	
2. What information does the Committee was want from the measure stating, “Data about services provided are entered into the system and reviewed regularly”? Is it what information the agency is gathering from the review? Are we looking for information about program evaluation?	Add “for accuracy, trends, and program planning”. DONE
3. Does the record retention policy need to address how records are destroyed? If so, is this something that would be specified by the Committee?	Added - “Agency must maintain a record retention policy specifying the client records/files that will be destroyed, the time frame and method of destruction, and the way personally identifying information is protected.”
4. Do we need to address the issue of agencies moving to electronic records (not VA Data) and how those records may be destroyed? Should it depend on what information is contained in the record?	“Current” VAWA confidentiality standards. -DONE Also added “current” to the definition of “Confidentiality” in the Glossary . No change specifically for electronic records.

STANDARD #6: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies preserve privacy and confidentiality, including the identity of and information provided by the person served or acquired from other sources before, during, and after the course of the professional relationship.	
Team Recommendations	
1. This Standard should be updated to account for staff who may be working remotely.	Ok. Added - “Agency has a written policy addressing the security of home computers, laptops, smart phones, virtual private networks, cloud computing, hotline routing, etc. for any staff who telecommute, including how access is terminated for staff who leave the program.”
2. We should remove “Description of how long records are maintained”, given that this is addressed in Standard #5.	Ok - DELETED
3. We need to specify that the “legal requirements” in “Agency has written policies/procedures regarding how the agency assures compliance with applicable legal requirements” refer to confidentiality requirements.	Ok Added - “regarding confidentiality”
4. We need to provide specific information as to what needs to be included on the release of information form.	Added - “Agency has an informed, written, and reasonably time-limited client release of information form. The release of information form must include: the name of no more than one person or organization to which the information is being released, the specific information to be released, the beginning and ending dates the release is effective, not to exceed the program participant's active length of services, the date and the signatures of the program participant and the employee or volunteer, and the right to revoke a release of information at any time.”
5. There must be a requirement for a policy regarding the response to subpoenas.	Added - “Agency has a written policy to respond to subpoenas, court orders, and other legal processes which, at a minimum, addresses how the client will be notified about the request and how the request will be processed and responded to by the agency.”

STANDARD #7: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies respect and protect the civil and human rights of all those impacted by sexual and domestic violence.	
Team Recommendation	
1. Limited English proficiency should have its own measure that requires meaningful access to services with equivalent services to those who are native English speakers.	Ok. Added - “Persons with limited English proficiency must have meaningful access to services with equivalent services to those who are native English speakers.”

STANDARD #8: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies support voluntary services model and respect survivors’ right to self-determination.	
Team Recommendations	
1. Combine measures to read, “Written protocol that informs all clients of their rights, including the right to self-determination”.	Agreed - Done
2. Require grievance procedures for clients.	Added: “Agency must have a written client grievance policy that is available to each agency participant and should include multiple options for filing a complaint. At a minimum the policy should include: the assurance of the survivor’s right to continue to receive services from the agency during and after the grievance process, who the survivor should contact regarding the complaint or issue, how the complaint be documented, steps that will be taken to find resolution, and whether the decision is final, and information regarding the survivors right to file a discrimination complaint with the Office of Justice Programs Office for Civil Rights”.
3. Require that clients are notified of non-discrimination policies and how to file complaints, including with the Office for Civil Rights.	Included in the grievance policy requirements.
4. Require that client rights/responsibilities be posted in the shelter.	Added “Agency must have written documentation that informs all clients of their rights, including the right to self-determination. Such documentation must be made available to the client by the

STANDARD #8: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies support voluntary services model and respect survivors’ right to self-determination.	
	next business day after initial contact with the agency.”

STANDARD #9: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will be accessible 24/7 to the public and to first responders to provide crisis intervention services by trained advocates.	
	Questions regarding what this means, concerns regarding clarity in terms of the hotline. Added " Such requirement may be met through the provision of a 24/7 hotline, including the use of a statewide hotline as necessary.”

Standard #11: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will provide, or assist to secure, emergency safe shelter to survivors of sexual and domestic violence who are in imminent danger.	
Non-Team Recommendations	
1. (CM) - I think we need clarification on what it means to address shelter requests that cannot be met. Our experience is that some other shelters simply say “call [another shelter].” If we can’t shelter someone in imminent danger, we provide another option such as a hotel. Are we looking for something like that in the policy?	Added -> “Agency must provide or coordinate emergency shelter for survivors and their families who are in imminent danger. If the survivor is within the agency’s service area, the agency must safely maintain contact with the client until safe lodging has been established. If the survivor is outside the agency’s service area, the agency must ensure that the survivor is connected to the agency within the applicable service area prior to terminating contact.”
Team Recommendations	

Standard #11: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will provide, or assist to secure, emergency safe shelter to survivors of sexual and domestic violence who are in imminent danger.

2. There should be requirements that the shelter complies with the ADA, has CPR certification for shelter staff/volunteers, and has a first aid kit.

Added " Agency must possess a first aid supply kit."

Added -> "If an agency maintains an emergency shelter and such shelter does not meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the agency must secure accommodations appropriate to meet the needs of a client with disabilities if such client qualifies for shelter services."

STANDARD #12: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will provide a range of individualized advocacy services which foster survivor healing from the trauma of violence.

Question

1. Do we need this Standard? If so, how do we measure this? What are we measuring?

DSS has information on this, will send to PST

Added -> "Agency shall provide a range of individualized advocacy services that foster healing from the trauma of violence, which must, at a minimum, include justice system advocacy, case management, general counseling, and referral resources."

STANDARD #13: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will coordinate services within the agency and the community to promote high quality integrated services and support to survivors.

Team Recommendation	
1. We should require that agencies maintain a resource manual with community listings and that it be updated annually. The date that the update was completed should be listed.	Added -> “Agency must maintain, or collaborate with an agency that maintains, a physical or digital resource list with financial, healthcare, mental health, culturally specific, social service, and other resources. The list should include contact information and the services provided. Such list must be updated annually.”

STANDARD #14: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will address diverse needs of the community served, providing specialized advocacy programs and population-specific interventions.

Team Recommendation	
1. We should require that the Language Access Plan includes the provision of relay services for the Deaf or hard of hearing.	Added a measure to Standard #7 reading: “Agency has a written language access plan, which includes the provision of relay services for the Deaf or hard of hearing.” Also added definition of “language access plan” to Glossary : Language Access Plan: A document that describes how to provide services to persons with limited English proficiency.
Question	
2. Clarification may be needed in terms of the way agencies are required to identify the diverse needs of their communities. Are community needs assessments required? Do they need more than just client feedback?	Added -> “Agency will identify the diverse needs of the community through at least two methods, such as a community needs assessment, client surveys, or feedback from other community agencies.”

Standard #16: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will deliver effective prevention programming that supports the development of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality.	
Non-Team Recommendation	
1. (CM) This standard is unrealistic when many programs do not have funding for prevention programming. Until prevention services are considered as essential services, I don't think we should require such programming. Perhaps this should be in a category on its own for those who have funding for prevention.	<p>Changed the Standard to read, "Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will deliver effective primary or secondary prevention programming that supports the development of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality.</p> <p>Added -> "Agency must create a prevention plan that addresses primary or secondary prevention strategies."</p> <p>Definitions of primary and secondary prevention are included in the Glossary.</p> <p>Question for Committee -> Is it just the plan they must have? Do they have to be doing the work currently, or is it something they will do in the future when funding is there? What is the end goal of this Standard in terms of what we need to see?</p>

STANDARD #17: Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in community engagement initiatives to improve the experiences of survivors and advocate for systemic change.	
Team Recommendation	
1. This Standard should be revised to distinguish it from Standard #15.	Moved third bullet, changed Standard to read, "Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies will participate in systemic engagement efforts to improve the experiences of survivors."

Training Matrix	
Team Recommendations	
1. The term “voluntary services” in the Training Matrix should be changed to “client-directed services”.	DSS will send us information for the glossary
2. Delete “Services, structure, and content information of Agency’s key partners (e.g., funders, the Action Alliance)”.	OK - Done
3. Delete “Acronyms/Jargon – Language of sexual and domestic violence work”.	OK - Done
4. Delete the bullet point regarding “Civil rights, diversity issues, and multicultural humility when working with people who have experienced sexual and/or domestic violence and have mental health, cognitive, and/or physical disabilities, or are a member of an underserved population (e.g., male victims, older adults, children, LGBTQIA, immigrants)”.	OK - Done
5. Add a training category for the unauthorized practice of law.	OK – Added under Civil and Criminal Justice Systems
6. Add a training category for public assistance benefits.	OK – Added under Safety Planning
7. Add a training category for the various types of immigration visas that may be available to survivors.	OK – Added under Safety Planning
8. Add more specific requirements regarding diversity and inclusion training.	Added following language to Standard #1 - “Topics for training could include implicit bias, microaggressions, reducing disparities in services, and building a culture of inclusion. In addition, agencies could invite culturally specific communities to provide cross-training or facilitating a training on a topic related to cultural humility.”
Questions	
9. In the Administration topic for Level 2 employees, it says “3rd party reporting/blind reporting”. Does that mean how the agency reports to 3 rd parties, such as DCJS for grant purposes, etc.? Can this be deleted?	Deleted

Glossary	
Team Recommendations	
<p>1. Define the terms “policies”, “protocols”, “plans”, and “practices”. These words are used somewhat interchangeably, so more clarification is needed.</p>	<p>Ok Defined “plan” and “policy”. Recommend changing “protocols” to “procedures” and defining that term. Did not add definition for “practices”.</p> <p>Plan: A document that includes specific objectives and the tasks necessary to accomplish those objectives, names the individuals or groups responsible for each task, provides dates by which tasks will be completed, and specifies how success will be measured or gauged, if appropriate.</p> <p>Policy: A rule or guideline governing the actions in particular situations that has been officially agreed to by an agency. Policies should be approved by the board of directors (if applicable), include the date of approval on each policy, conform with all applicable laws, and contain the elements specified in the applicable Professional Standard.</p> <p>Procedure: The operational processes required to implement a policy. Procedures are the guidelines needed to carry out an activity.</p>
<p>2. Delete “protective factors” and “risk factors” as they are not used in the Manual.</p>	<p>Ok - Done</p>
<p>3. Add a definition of “core services”.</p>	<p>Ok</p> <p>Core Services: Free and confidential 24-hour crisis intervention services for all victims of sexual and/or domestic violence in the agency’s community. Such services must include a 24-hour hotline (operated by your agency or through other means), provisions for emergency housing, and emergency medical and judicial accompaniment for victims of sexual and/or domestic violence.</p>

Glossary	
4. Add a definition of “sexual and domestic violence agencies” and require a period of service prior to being able to apply for accreditation.	Ok - Sexual and/or Domestic Violence Agency: An agency with an agency or program mission to support survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence. Such agency must have been in operation and providing services to survivors for at least three years.
5. Add definitions for secondary and vicarious trauma.	Ok - Secondary Trauma: The emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another. Vicarious Trauma: A shift in world view that occurs in helping professionals when they work with individuals who have experienced trauma. Advocates may notice that their fundamental beliefs about the world are altered and possibly damaged by being repeatedly exposed to traumatic material.
6. Add a definition of “record” for the purposes of the record retention policy.	Ok - Client Record/File: Any record or file that includes confidential client information and is created, requested, or held by the agency.
7. Add a definition of a "persons with limited English proficiency”.	Ok - Persons with Limited English Proficiency: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.
Question	

Glossary	
8. Should we modify/clarify the definition of “counseling” for the purposes of the Professional Standards? Add a definition of “therapy” in order to distinguish?	<p>Distinguished between general and therapeutic counseling.</p> <p>General Counseling: A one-to-one interaction between an advocate and a survivor for the purpose of benefiting the survivor. Examples of general counseling include emotional support, education on dynamics of sexual and/or domestic violence, problem solving, and discussing options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General counseling differs from therapeutic counseling, which is a one-to-one interaction between a licensed or board-certified mental health professional and a survivor for the purpose of addressing trauma. Therapeutic counseling may also be provided by a master’s level counselor under supervision pending their licensure.

Other Issues	
Team Recommendations	
1. Clarify in the Manual that the Standards process is not equivalent to, or in place of, the grant monitoring process.	Ok. Also add info that the Glossary is only for the purposes of the Professional Standards. - Done
2. The Professional Standards Manual needs to be updated to reflect the changes of the 2021 General Assembly Session	Ok - Done
3. Add a section about the different levels of accreditation.	Ok - Done
4. Move the information about our resources to the beginning of the Manual.	Ok - Done

Other Issues	
<p>5. Add an introduction to each section of the Professional Standards explaining the purpose of the section.</p>	<p>Ok</p> <p>Administration -> The following section relates to the administration or management of a sexual and domestic violence agency. The role of the governing body, fiscal and data management, personnel management, and training are addressed. These standards provide for general administration practices that establish a common framework for service delivery.</p> <p>Crisis Intervention -> Crisis intervention consists of the interactions and activities conducted by qualified, trained staff members or volunteers with an individual in crisis to stabilize emotions, clarify issues, and provide support and assistance. These standards provide that sexual and domestic violence agencies must establish quality crisis intervention services including 24/7 access, emergency accompaniment, and emergency safe shelter.</p> <p>Advocacy -> Through advocacy services, agencies attempt to ensure that survivors, their children, and those at risk of sexual and domestic violence are protected and treated compassionately. These standards value an individual response, collaboration, thoughtful evaluation, careful stewardship, and unconditional positive regard through a victim-centered approach.</p> <p>Engagement -> Through engagement services, the agency attempts to create an effective response system to sexual and domestic violence and to change cultural attitudes and institutional practices that perpetuate such violence. These standards cover community engagement, prevention services, and systemic engagement.</p>
<p>6. Include a statement reading, “In addition to the minimum requirements outlined in this manual, agencies must comply with any other state and federal regulations applying to their programs and services.”</p>	<p>Ok - Done</p>

Other Issues	
Questions	
7. Should there be a Standard/policy for rescinding accreditation if there is a substantial issue with an agency?	<p>Added -> “The Committee shall have the authority to revoke an agency’s accreditation for disregarding applicable standards or committing serious violations of rules and regulations. This action will only be taken in extreme cases and as a last resort. For further information on the revocation process, please see the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Processes and Procedures Guidelines.”</p> <p>Requested PST to look at other accreditation/certification documents, such as VLEPSC - DONE</p>

Changes Made by Professional Standards Team	
Change	Reasoning
Moved the “ Introduction ” paragraph ahead of the “Professional Standards Committee History” paragraph	It seemed more logical to have the introduction first
Added asterisks by the first appearances of words that are included in the Glossary .	Helpful to readers
Changed “community engagement” to engagement throughout the Manual	This change was made to reflect the fact that the last section of the standards covers community engagement, prevention, and systemic engagement.
Deleted “or sexual and domestic violence unit protocol and compliance” from the first measure of Standard #1 .	Duplicative
Added “The facility includes staff offices, meeting rooms, and the shelter, if applicable.” from the fourth measure of Standard #1 .	Provide specification in terms of where inclusive signage should be located

Changes Made by Professional Standards Team	
Deleted “Written agency policy ensures that domestic and/or sexual violence services are offered without discrimination except if the agency defines its service populations as those of a specific client group.” from the sixth measure of Standard #1 .	Duplicative
Deleted “sexual and domestic violence advocacy” throughout the second measure of Standard #2 .	Unnecessary
Deleted “Training can include an overall review of topics in the training matrix and/or expanding on a topic from the training matrix such as offering Advanced Advocacy or Cultural Humility.” from the second measure of Standard #2 .	Unnecessary
Deleted “Ensure agency training materials define sexual violence and domestic violence.” from the third measure of Standard #2 .	Unnecessary
Deleted “community” from the fifth measure of Standard #2 .	Unnecessary
Deleted “Exceptions to training requirements, while sometimes reasonable, should not be used widely by an agency (percentage of staff, etc.)” from the fifth measure of Standard #2 .	Unnecessary
Deleted “Agency services are available and delivered regardless of the client’s race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.” from Standard #7 .	Duplicative
Deleted “Safeguard confidentiality and/or personally identifying information during the referral process.” from the second measure of Standard #11 .	Duplicative
Deleted “that may include race, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, limited English proficiency, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, refugees, age and developmentally specific, and non-English speaking” from the second measure of Standard #14 .	Duplicative

Changes Made by Professional Standards Team	
Deleted “Agency maintains documentation of number of prevention programs that the agency provided.” from Standard #16 .	Unnecessary, as agencies are not required to provide prevention programs
Deleted “Maintain documentation of number of community engagement initiatives that the agency provided.” from the fourth measure of Standard #17 .	Duplicative with the requirement in Standard #15 (new Standard #16)
Deleted, “As the Professional Standards reference, these training requirements can be achieved through a variety of modalities and should happen in the first three months of employment. See Administration: Standard #2 for more information and guidance” from the introduction to the Training Matrix .	Unnecessary
Deleted, “Public Awareness” from the examples of Level II staff in the Training Matrix .	Unnecessary
Deleted “24/7/365: Refers to services provided around the clock and calendar—24 hours per day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year, including holidays.” from the Glossary .	Unnecessary
Added a definition of case management to the Glossary : Case Management: A process whereby advocates help their clients navigate various systems, such as the social service system, the healthcare system, or the justice system. This may involve providing information and resources, connecting clients with community services, and teaching clients how to advocate for themselves. It involves the assessment of a client's needs and the linking of that client to available services and resources.	The term “case management” is included in Standard #12 (new Standard #13)
Deleted “Effective: Programs and services that lead to a beneficial and measurable outcome that meets the identified needs of survivors of violence and/or contributes to preventing violence” from the Glossary .	Unnecessary

Changes Made by Professional Standards Team	
Deleted “Evidence-based and Evidence-informed: Programs and services that are informed by current research and faithfully implemented based on that research are considered to be “evidence-based.” Sound research on effective interventions and prevention strategies related to sexual violence and domestic violence is very limited. Therefore, agencies may also use an “evidence-informed” approach to develop practices and programs that combine the findings of the best available research with intuition, experience and available expertise.” from the Glossary .	Not used in the Professional Standards
Deleted “Marginalized: Being left out or devalued by a larger group that sets norms and holds power. Any person can feel marginalized in certain groups at certain times. Marginalization is different from being oppressed because it has the weight of societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices behind it.” from the Glossary .	Not used in the Professional Standards
Changed “Self-Determination/Clients’ Rights to Self-Determination” to “Self-Determination” in the Glossary .	Simplification
Deleted “Tertiary prevention provides ongoing support and services to survivors of trauma to reduce the long-term effects.” from the Glossary .	Not used in the Professional Standards