



Safe in Our Communities

**Community Recognition Program for Promising Practices
in Domestic Violence Response**

APPLICATION MATERIALS

August 2012

**Safe in Our Communities:
Community Recognition Program for Promising Practices in Domestic
Violence Response**

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Acknowledgments

The Office of the Attorney General would like to thank the Office of the Governor, the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Department of State Police, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court, the Department of Social Services, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Commonwealth Attorneys' Services Council, and the Virginia Poverty Law Center for their support in the development and implementation of the Community Recognition Program. Thanks to the members of the Community Recognition Program Work Group for their input and guidance in this process. A special thanks to Verizon Wireless for their continuous advocacy on behalf of victims of domestic violence and for their generous support of monetary awards to local recognition recipients.

Introduction

Domestic violence is an issue that impacts families, homes, communities, schools and workplaces on a daily basis. The statistics in Virginia are concerning. From 1999 to 2009, 1,520 people in Virginia lost their lives to domestic and dating violence. Roughly one in three homicides during that time period was attributable to family and intimate partner violence. Preliminary data indicates a 19.4% increase in family and intimate partner homicides from 2009 to 2010.¹ In 2010, 79,215 protective orders were issued by magistrates and courts across the Commonwealth.² Also in 2010, a total of almost 62,000 calls were made to domestic and sexual violence hotlines across the state, and shelter programs provided 188,982 nights of emergency shelter to 6,261 adults and children due to domestic violence.³

The Attorney General's Community Recognition Program for Promising Practices in Domestic Violence Response is designed to recognize localities that have instituted promising or innovative practices in responding to domestic violence in their communities. This Program also encourages localities to develop and implement policies and practices to enhance their community response to domestic violence issues.

The Program is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Attorney General with several state agencies and non-profit organizations, including the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Department of State Police, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court, the Virginia Poverty Law Center, the Department of Social Services, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Commonwealth Attorneys' Services Council, and the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance.

This Program also represents a unique public-private partnership of the Office of the Attorney General, the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, and Verizon Wireless. Through its HopeLine Program, Verizon Wireless has pledged grant funding to provide monetary awards to communities recognized by the Program.

To participate and be recognized by the Attorney General, eligible localities must meet all of the identified Essential Elements and at least five Optional Elements in their community response to domestic violence. For each identified element, the locality must provide a written explanation of, and to the extent possible, documentation of the locality's satisfaction of the element.

Localities selected through the Program will be publicly recognized by the Attorney General in the Fall of 2012. **Applications will be available to localities in August 2012, and will be accepted through October 19, 2012.**

¹ 2009 *Family and Intimate Partner Homicide Report*, Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, 2012; *Ten Year Review of Family and Intimate Partner Homicide in Virginia*, Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, 2010.

² Supreme Court of Virginia, 2011.

³ *2010 VAdata reporting*, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, 2011.

Application Process

In order to be eligible, the locality must meet the following three requirements:

1. **The applicant locality must be a locality in the Commonwealth of Virginia** (a city, county, or incorporated town, or any combination thereof within the geographic confines of a county, including any contiguous cities).
2. **The applicant locality must designate a local coordinator representing an existing inter-agency domestic violence coordinating team as the contact point for the recognition process.** Only one application per locality may be submitted to the program; therefore, a local coordinator who represents an existing inter-agency domestic violence coordinating team is essential for the application process.
3. **The board of supervisors or governing council of the locality must adopt a resolution confirming the locality's application for recognition by the Attorney General.** The locality must submit a resolution from the local governing body (city council, board of supervisors, etc.) which confirms and supports the locality's application for recognition by the Attorney General. A sample resolution is provided as part of the application materials.

Localities that were recognized by the Community Recognition Program in April 2009, November 2009, and October 2010 are not eligible to apply for recognition during this phase of the program.

To apply for recognition, the eligible locality must meet all of the 19 Essential Elements required by the program and at least five of the 15 Optional Elements suggested by the program.

For each element, whether Essential or Optional, the locality must provide a written explanation (200 words at minimum) of the locality's satisfaction of the element. The explanation should include the following information:

- A description of how the locality satisfies/has satisfied the element, or the steps that the locality is actively, *currently* taking to satisfy the element;
- The local agency or agencies which are involved in or which are responsible for satisfaction of the element; and
- Whether and how the local agency(ies) collaborate with other agencies (state, local) or non-profit or for profit organizations in order to satisfy the element.

Where appropriate, written documentation of the locality's satisfaction of the element should be provided with the application in addition to the written explanation. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, copies of agency policies and procedures, program brochures, copies of information distributed to victims or others, website information, membership lists, newspaper articles, or training agendas. Existing Memoranda of Understanding or Memoranda of Agreement with other agencies may provide documentary support for some elements.

All application packets should be typewritten on standard-size paper, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and in 12-point font. Written explanations for the individual elements should be numbered or lettered according to the number/letter provided in the program materials. Each application must be provided both in hard copy and in electronic form (preferably as a pdf (portable document format) file on a floppy disk, zip disk, CD, or thumb drive).

To aid in the application process, an application checklist is included within these application materials. Please include a copy of the checklist with the application packet. A hard copy of the completed application packet should be forwarded to the following address, postmarked no later than **October 19, 2012**:

**Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Hunter W. Fisher
Community Defined Solutions Program Coordinator
900 E. Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219**

An electronic copy of the application may be submitted on a CD or disk with the hard copy, or may be sent by e-mail to **hfisher@oag.state.va.us**.

Questions regarding the Program or completion of a local application should be directed to Hunter W. Fisher at (804) 692-0485, hfisher@oag.state.va.us, or Corie Tillman Wolf, Assistant Attorney General, at (804) 786-9593, cwolf@oag.state.va.us.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

The following nineteen (19) elements are Essential Elements that the locality must meet in order to be recognized for its local response to domestic violence. These elements have been divided into three categories: Community Response, Policies and Procedures, and Training.

Community Response

1. There is an inter-agency domestic violence coordinating team that meets at least quarterly with a defined purpose that includes reviewing and enhancing local policy and procedure. The coordinating team includes, but is not limited to, the following representatives:
 - Commonwealth's Attorney's Office
 - Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Clerk
 - Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judge
 - Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Court Services Unit
 - General District Court Clerk's Office
 - Local Community Services Board
 - Local Department of Social Services
 - Local Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Agency
 - Local Police Department
 - Local Sheriff's Office
 - Local Government
 - Victim/Witness Program
2. The local government actively supports local domestic violence efforts, which may include, but is not limited to, commitment of resources such as funding, meeting space, or administrative support.
3. An accredited domestic violence agency or program is available to victims and their children within the locality, or within a reasonable distance of the center of the locality. An accredited domestic violence agency is a domestic violence agency or program that has met the training, administrative, and technical requirements set forth for accreditation by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance.
4. The Commonwealth's Attorney has coordinated the establishment of a multidisciplinary response to criminal sexual assault and holds a meeting, at least annually, to (i) discuss implementation of protocols and policies for sexual assault response teams consistent with those established by the Department of Criminal Justice Services; and (ii) establish and review guidelines for the community's response, including the collection, preservation, and secure storage of evidence from Physical Evidence Recovery Kit examinations. Va. Code Ann. § 15.2-1627.4.

Policies and Procedures

5. The local law enforcement agency has a written policy that establishes arrest policies and procedures for domestic violence and family abuse cases. This policy is reviewed and updated annually. Va. Code Ann. § 9.1-1300.
6. When responding to calls involving domestic violence, law enforcement officers provide victims of domestic violence with both oral and written information regarding the legal and community resources available to them. Va. Code Ann. § 19.2-81.3(D).
7. Local prosecutors have established policies and procedures regarding the prosecution of misdemeanor domestic violence cases and protective order violations.
8. When issuing an emergency protective order, the judge or magistrate provides a protected person with the form for use in filing a petition for a protective order and with written information regarding protective orders, including the telephone numbers of domestic violence agencies and legal referral sources. Va. Code Ann. § 16.1-253.4.
9. The local Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court has an intake process for domestic violence cases, including protective order petitions; the local General District Court has an intake process for protective order petitions.
10. Local Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court intake officers routinely provide a person seeking a protective order with a written explanation of the conditions, procedures, and time limits applicable to the issuance of protective orders. Va. Code Ann. § 16.1-260.
11. The magistrate or court enters and transfers electronically protective order information to the VCIN System no later than the end of business on the day of issuance of the protective order. Va. Code Ann. §§ 16.1-253.1, 16.1-253.4, 16.1-279.1, 19.2-152.8, 19.2-152.9, 19.2-152.10.
12. A process exists for referral of first-time domestic violence offenders to local community-based probation services for assessment where available. Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-57.3.
13. Local judges routinely notify respondents of the firearms restrictions, both federal and state, related to protective orders. Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-308.1:4; 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8).
14. Local sheriffs' offices have established policies and procedures regarding security for court personnel and to protect court users from potential harm from alleged abusers.
15. Local courts have a current list of qualified spoken and sign language interpreters. Va. Code Ann. §§ 19.2-164, 19.2-164.1.

Training

16. Law enforcement personnel receive annual training on domestic violence policies and responding to domestic and family violence calls.
17. Local prosecutors who prosecute domestic violence cases receive annual training on domestic violence-related issues.
18. Local judges receive training on domestic violence issues, including the issue of stalking, and updates on changes to state laws related to domestic violence.
19. Local magistrates receive training on domestic violence issues and updates on changes to state laws related to domestic violence.

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

The following fifteen (15) elements are Optional Elements, of which the locality must meet a minimum of five (5) in order to be recognized for its local response to domestic violence. Where a locality has implemented an innovative or promising local practice or program related to domestic violence in the community that is not included on this list, Element “O” permits the locality to provide information on this practice or program. If deemed appropriate by the Program, the locality’s local practice or program may be used to satisfy an optional element. Although a minimum of five (5) Optional Elements are required for recognition, localities are encouraged to provide information on as many Optional Elements as possible.

- A. The locality has a certified Batterer Intervention Program.
- B. The locality supports educational programs in local middle and high schools regarding domestic and intimate partner violence.
- C. The locality has a TRIAD Program (a crime prevention program for seniors and law enforcement) that includes an elder abuse prevention component.
- D. The locality has a local or regional Fatality Review Team for review of adult fatalities related to domestic violence.
- E. The local inter-agency domestic violence response team includes representatives from local healthcare providers, hospitals, or public health.
- F. The local inter-agency domestic violence response team includes a local magistrate.

- G. The local inter-agency domestic violence response team includes representatives from agencies or programs focusing on the elderly, disabled, and/or limited English speaking populations.
- H. Local law enforcement policies and procedures address guidelines on the service of protective orders across jurisdictional lines and, if applicable, across state lines.
- I. Local law enforcement policies and procedures include provisions for the expedited service of protective orders.
- J. The locality, or a local public or private agency, provides services to children and youth exposed to domestic violence.
- K. The local courts have designated waiting areas for children during court proceedings.
- L. The locality has a community-based primary prevention program that addresses domestic violence (e.g. DELTA, Red Flag Campaign, Student Connections Clubs, Mentors in Violence Prevention, Men of Strength Clubs, etc.).
- M. The locality has implemented use of the I-CAN! System for online completion of protective order forms.
- N. The locality has established protocols or policies for the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) monitoring of persons, both pre-trial and post-conviction, including defendants in cases involving domestic violence.
- O. The locality has other domestic violence related programs deemed appropriate by the Attorney General's Community Recognition Program. Please specify the name of the program.

Application Review Process

Once application packets have been submitted to the Office of the Attorney General for consideration, the Community Recognition Program work group, comprised of representatives from the supporting agencies and organizations, will perform a preliminary review of the applications for completeness. If appropriate, a member of the work group will notify the local contact person to assist with completion of the application. The locality will then be granted an extension of thirty (30) days in order to complete or correct the application.

Completed applications will be subject to a thorough review by the work group, which will determine whether the locality has satisfactorily met the Essential and Optional Elements for recognition and make a final recommendation to the Attorney General regarding which localities should be recognized for their efforts.

Based upon the recommendation of the work group, the Attorney General will recognize localities for their promising and innovative practices in response to domestic violence in their communities. There is no limit to the number of localities that may be recognized by the program.

Localities selected for recognition through the program will be notified by the Office of the Attorney General in the Fall of 2012.

Application Checklist

Application Checklist (completed)

Designated Local Coordinator as Contact Person for Application

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ (w) _____ (c)

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Resolution from Local Governing Body

Application

The application is typewritten on standard letter-size paper, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and in 12-point font. Written explanations for the individual elements are numbered or lettered according to the number/letter provided in the Program materials.

The application is submitted both in hard-copy and in electronic form.

Essential Elements – The locality has satisfied all 19 Essential Elements and has provided a written explanation and, if appropriate, documentary support for each element.

Optional Elements – The locality has satisfied at least five of the 15 Optional Elements and has provided a written explanation and, if necessary or appropriate, documentary support for each such element satisfied.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should my locality apply for recognition from this Program?

If your locality is selected for recognition through this Program, it will receive statewide, public recognition from the Attorney General for its promising and innovative practices in responding to domestic violence in the community. This recognition is not only a reflection of the efforts made by local agencies, organizations, and individuals, it is also an important tool for local marketing and crime prevention efforts.

In addition, through a generous grant from the Verizon Wireless HopeLine Program, recognized localities will receive a monetary award for their local domestic violence program.

The localities previously recognized by the Community Recognition Program were recognized at formal press events and were highlighted in the Attorney General's *Annual Reports on Domestic and Sexual Violence*, available at www.vaag.com.

Is the 200 word requirement necessary for each element?

Although the word requirement can be onerous, the word minimum was instituted to encourage the applicant community to provide a thorough explanation of their local efforts to meet the elements. The more information provided by the locality, the more information the Program has to determine whether there are local practices that should be highlighted during the recognition process.

In addition to narrative information, where appropriate or available, communities may provide written documentation to show their satisfaction of the element(s).

What is the timeline for the application process?

Application materials will be available on the Attorney General's website (www.vaag.com) beginning in August 2012. Completed applications will be accepted from applicant localities through October 19, 2012.

Upon receipt of an incomplete or incorrect application, the designated contact person for the locality will be notified within fifteen (15) days by a member of the Work Group. The locality will have an additional thirty (30) days to submit a complete or corrected application.

Localities selected through the Program will be publicly recognized by the Attorney General in the Fall of 2012.

Appendix A – Model Resolution

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Domestic violence impacts thousands of Virginians each year and threatens our citizens, our families, our children, our homes, and our communities; and

WHEREAS, the _____ [governing body: City or Town Council; or County Board of Supervisors] of _____ [locality] is committed to the safety and security of our citizens and communities who are impacted by domestic violence and to holding perpetrators of domestic violence accountable for their actions; and

WHEREAS, the _____ [governing body] continues to support promising programs and initiatives to address the issue of domestic violence in our community and among our citizens; and

WHEREAS, the _____ [governing body] has the opportunity to apply for recognition for the domestic violence practices and initiatives of our community from the Attorney General’s Community Recognition Program for Promising Practices in Domestic Violence Response; and

WHEREAS, an application for recognition by the Attorney General’s Community Recognition Program requires a resolution of support from the local governing body;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the _____ [governing body] that our community, _____ [locality], wishes to apply for recognition by the Attorney General’s Community Recognition Program for Promising Practices in Domestic Violence Response and that the [governing body] fully supports all reasonable efforts to meet the application requirements established by the Office of the Attorney General for such application; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that our community application for recognition requires the designation of a local coordinator representing an existing inter-agency domestic violence team as the contact point for the recognition process, and the [governing body] designates _____ [contact] to represent our community for participation in this program.

This Resolution is in full effect upon its adoption this _____ day of _____, 20__.

SEAL:

Official

Attest

Title

Title

Appendix B - Definitions

The following definitions are provided to assist localities in the completion of their applications:

“Domestic violence agency” or **“Domestic violence program”** means public and not-for-profit agencies the primary mission of which is to provide services to victims of sexual or domestic violence. Va. Code Ann. § 2.2-515.2.

"Domestic violence" is defined by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance as "[a] pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual intended to exert power and control over another individual in the context of an intimate or family relationship."

The Code of Virginia defines "domestic violence" as:

[t]he occurrence of one or more of the following acts by a current or former family member, household member as defined in § 16.1-228, person against whom the victim obtained a protective order or caretaker:

- a. Attempting to cause or causing or threatening another person physical harm, severe emotional distress, psychological trauma, rape or sexual assault;
- b. Engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly committing acts toward another person, including following the person without proper authority, under circumstances that place the person in reasonable fear of bodily injury or physical harm;
- c. Subjecting another person to false imprisonment; or d. Attempting to cause or causing damage to property so as to intimidate or attempt to control the behavior of another person.

Va. Code Ann. § 38.2-508.

“Accredited domestic violence agency” means a domestic violence agency or program that has met the training, administrative, and technical requirements set forth for accreditation by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (www.vsdvalliance.org).

“I-CAN! System” is the online forms program offered by the Supreme Court of Virginia to aid victims of domestic violence in the completion of a petition for a family abuse protective order. www.courts.state.va.us/courtadmin/aoc/judpln/programs/afapo/home.html#resources