

SANTA CLARA COUNTY
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL



**POLICIES &
PROCEDURES
MANUAL**

March 7, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I. MEMBERSHIP

A. Voting Members	2
-------------------------	---

SECTION II. CONDUCTING COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Meetings	3
B. Standing Committees	3
C. Decision Making	3

SECTION III. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

A. Sources of Funds	4
B. Allocation and Record Keeping of Funds	4

SECTION IV. STANDING AND TASK FORCE/SUB-COMMITTEES

A. Structure of Standing Sub-Committees.....	4
B. Membership.....	4
C. Selection and Responsibilities of Committee Chairs	5
D. List of Standing Committees	
1. Batterers' Intervention	5
2. Children's Issues	5
3. Community Education	6
4. Court Systems	6
5. Executive	6
6. Housing	7
7. Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence	7
8. Police/Victim Advocacy	7
9. South County Domestic Violence	7
E. Structure of Task Forces/Sub-Committees.....	7
F. List of Task Forces/Sub-Committees	
1. Nominations Committee	8
2. Annual Conference Committee	8
3. Engagement Group Task Force	9
4. Annual Council Retreat	9
5. Web-Site Committee	9
6. Law Enforcement Protocols Task Force	9

INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Violence Council (DVC) was created by the Board of Supervisors as an advisory commission and has no independent legal standing. The following is the Policies and Procedures manual that was developed by the DVC for optimal service to the County of Santa Clara by providing clarity and organization for the process of addressing Domestic Violence in this County.

SECTION I. MEMBERSHIP

A. VOTING MEMBERS: The Board of Supervisors appoints members to the DVC. Each Board member designates positions to fill on the DVC.

1. The number of voting members is limited to 22 by July 1, 2010.
2. Membership is for three years, and an individual can serve three full terms. *Rosters and terms are established by the Clerk of the Board.* Terms begin at the start of the Council fiscal year, July 1, or upon appointment by the Board of Supervisors. Terms are staggered so that one-third of the seats becomes vacant through term expiration each year.
3. Voting members must have residency within Santa Clara County.
4. Vacancies on the Council can occur three ways: through resignation of a member, completion of three terms, or termination of membership by the Council. Grounds for termination by the Council include failure to attend three (3) council meetings in one year *or* inactivity on a Committee.
5. Procedure for filling vacancies:
 - a) A vacancy is declared by the Membership Vice-Chair at a Council meeting upon the receipt of a letter of resignation or upon termination of membership. The opening is posted through appropriate channels as prescribed by the Board of Supervisors and applications are accepted for a minimum of 35 days.
 - b) The Membership Vice-Chair works closely with the Board of Supervisors' staff to ensure that vacancies are filled.
 - c) Board of Supervisors appoints voting members at their regular meeting.
 - d) New Council members must then be contacted and sworn-in by the Clerk of the Board in order to receive voting privileges.
6. Procedure for Resignation
 - a) Resignations from the Council shall be submitted in writing to the Membership Vice-Chair and filed with the Clerk of the Board. The original shall be sent to the appointing Supervisor with a copy to the Membership Vice-Chair.
 - b) Resignations from Committees shall be submitted in writing to the Chairperson of the Committee.

SECTION II. CONDUCTING COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. MEETINGS

1. The Council will meet at 7:30 a.m. on the first Friday of each month in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, unless otherwise notified. The agenda will be distributed to all members and available on the County's website approximately one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. There will be eight regularly scheduled business meetings per year. These are the only meetings in which Council decisions can be made. The minutes for these meetings will be taken by the Clerk of the Board and will serve as a formal record of Council activities. The agenda for all meetings will be set by the Chair of the Council in consultation with the Executive Committee.
3. Special meetings require permission of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to authorize the attendance of a deputy clerk.

B. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Standing Committee meetings must follow the same procedures as Domestic Violence Council meetings, including the County Charter and the Brown Act. Meetings must be posted, agendas distributed in advance to the Committee members, the agenda adhered to during the meeting, and a quorum must be present to conduct business. A quorum is one-half the documented membership, plus one.
2. Committee minutes shall be submitted to the Clerk of the Board to serve as an official record and be sent to all committee members.
3. Chairs must be a current Council member.
4. In a voting situation, a majority vote carries unless specified otherwise by the By-Laws. All committee members have a vote in their committee.
5. Standing Committees shall submit a yearly Work Plan for each new fiscal year, or be deemed inactive. If the Work Plan is not submitted in the next year, the committee shall be eliminated.

C. DECISION MAKING

1. In general, the Council as a whole makes overall decisions concerning the goals and directions of the Council. Priority areas for each year are established at the annual retreat. These focus areas are researched by the Engagement Group and a recommendation is made to the full Council at the following business meeting for a vote.
2. Committee activities are governed by the goals set by the Council and the overall mission of the Council.
3. Each committee handles the decisions relevant to its activities. Each shall report to the Council regularly on its progress towards its goals. Committees may make recommendations to the Council concerning actions or positions relevant to its particular purposes.
4. Goals set by the Council that do not fit under any of the standing committees may require the formation of a task force which is focus specific and temporary in scope in order to carry out a specific objective or project.

SECTION III. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

A. SOURCES OF FUNDS

1. The Domestic Violence Council receives no funding from the Board of Supervisors as a matter of course. Special projects or events will be addressed to the Board of Supervisors for funding on a case-by-case basis.
2. The Domestic Violence Council possesses a nominal amount of “seed” money for the annual conference. This seed money can also be used for DV related training and projects at the discretion of the Council.
3. The Domestic Violence Council currently uses Domestic Violence Interagency Collaborative (DVIC), a private, non-profit domestic violence agency, as its Fiscal Agent for this money.
4. Council Members as private citizens may continue to request funding from both the public and private sector for funding of conferences, training or projects that further the vision and mission of the Council.
5. The Domestic Violence Council must approve expenditures.

B. ALLOCATION AND RECORD KEEPING OF FUNDS

1. All expenditures of the Domestic Violence Council shall be approved by the Domestic Violence Council at a public meeting.
2. The Domestic Violence Council’s Administrative Vice-Chair will give monthly reports to the Council as to current balances.
3. For record keeping, the Council shall receive a copy of the annual financial audit of its fiscal agent.

SECTION IV. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. STRUCTURE

Committees are essential to accomplishing the basic work of the Council. There is no limitation on the size of each committee, with the exception of the Executive Committee. Standing Committees are subject to the Brown Act requirements.

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. Each Council member (or designee) is required to serve actively on at least one committee. At the beginning of each fiscal year, members select which committee(s) they will serve on that year. It is important to establish the committee membership in order to meet quorum requirements for meetings.
2. Committees are encouraged to recruit members who are not Council members. Community persons may vote on committee business, but may not be a Chair.
3. If a committee member wishes to resign from that committee but not from the Council, he/she should transmit a letter of resignation to the committee chairperson, who should then submit that information to the Membership Vice-Chair.

C. SELECTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

1. Committee chairs must be regular members of the Council. Committee chairs will be selected and presented to the Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting. In general, it is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the committee's efforts work toward fulfilling the mission, goals, and objectives of the Council.
2. Lack of attendance will jeopardize a member's status on the committee and will be brought to the attention of the Council Membership Vice-Chair by the Committee Chair, who will then take appropriate action. (See Section I, A, 7).
3. The Chair of each committee will have the responsibility to see that the following activities are properly executed:
 - a) Meet with previous chairperson to learn of work in hand and future plans.
 - b) Prepare agenda, minutes and conduct meeting in accordance with the Brown Act and submit to the Clerk of the Board;
 - c) Arrange for substitute chairperson in case of absences;
 - d) Make reports of committee activities to the Council and to the Executive Committee;
 - e) Consult with the Chairperson, Clerk of the Board and Staff person as may be necessary;
 - f) Orient new committee members to the committee and Council as may be necessary;
 - g) Provide up-dated rosters to Council Membership Vice Chairperson and the Clerk of the Board;
 - h) Inform Council Membership Vice Chairperson when a member becomes inactive or resigns from the committee;
 - i) Submit updated fiscal year annual work plan.

D. LIST OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. **BATTERERS' INTERVENTION COMMITTEE:** As an integral part of a community wide response to family violence, BIC provides a forum for the exchange of information, ideas and solutions towards perpetrator and systems accountability with the goal of victim safety.
2. **CHILDREN'S ISSUES COMMITTEE:** The mission of the Children's Issues Committee is: "To organize, inform and advocate on behalf of children exposed to domestic violence."
3. **COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE:** The Community Education Committee is responsible for raising community awareness of Domestic Violence issues. This may be accomplished through the use of community meetings, with issue-oriented training for either the public or professionals in the field, the use of print or electronic media, or whatever method is appropriate to the task.

Members of this committee are also responsible for outreach to the Medical and Interfaith community. Workplace Violence is also an area this committee will be mindful of and take action on issues when appropriate.

4. **COURT SYSTEMS COMMITTEE:** The Court Systems Committee goal is to improve the court's handling of domestic violence cases and to educate the service providers on how their clients can access and navigate the court system more easily. It brings together representatives from all parts of the court system in Santa Clara County with key service providers.

5. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** The purpose of this committee is to assist the Council Chairperson in making decisions and to provide leadership in maintaining the vision and mission of the Council. It is comprised solely of the Council Chairperson, Vice Chairpersons, and Chairpersons of committees. The Executive Committee will oversee the Council administrative affairs including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Minutes of Executive Committee meetings;
 - b. Mailings by the Council and to the Council, not including publicity or mailings generated by a committee;
 - c. Point of liaison with the County as a whole which includes correspondence and phone calls;
 - d. Make arrangements for an annual retreat (place, food, facilitator, etc.);
 - e. Ensure that the County Ordinance, By-laws and Policies and Procedures are current;
 - f. Be of assistance to the Chairperson as may be needed;
 - g. Set the agenda for Council meetings and assisting the Chairperson as needed in developing agenda for business meetings;
 - h. Monitor the Council activities as they relate to carrying out the priorities for the focuses as defined during the retreat;
 - i. Committee chairpersons shall report on activities of their committees to the Executive Committee as needed, and the Executive Committee will assist a committee in achieving its objectives if necessary;
 - j. Monitor the Council's adherence to the mission statement, which shall be a forum for discussions of future directions of the Council in terms of emerging needs of the county;
 - k. Assist the Chairperson as needed in the preparation of an annual report to the Board of Supervisors;
 - l. Carry out functions delegated to them by majority vote of the Council.

The Executive Committee is also responsible for overseeing the work of the Death Review Committee. Due to the confidentiality and sensitive nature of the information discussed at the death review team meeting, this committee is not open to the public and not subject to the Brown Act. The Committee Chair approves membership and obtains a confidentiality statement from every member.

This committee reviews homicides, homicide/suicides, accidents and all other cases where an individual died as a result of domestic violence. Members of the committee are committed to community education and volunteer to talk about Death Review to all requestors, in or out of county. The committee produces an annual, statistical Death

Review Report for dissemination to the public and makes recommendations to the Council.

6. **HOUSING COMMITTEE:** This Committee is to address the shelters and number of beds available for victims and their children throughout the county. They are to keep a current database by working with all of the DV Agencies in the County and any other agencies or departments as necessary to keep such information up to date. This Committee shall submit an annual report of its findings when it submits its work plan and accomplishments each year.
7. **IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS COMMITTEE:** The Committee directly addresses the needs of immigrants and their encounter with the continuum of domestic violence services in Santa Clara County with the stated mission of: “bridging the gaps, providing advocacy and increasing access to services for all battered and abused individuals in Santa Clara County regardless of their immigration status.”
8. **POLICE/VICTIM ADVOCACY:** This committee will coordinate and collaborate on efforts between law enforcement agencies and victims of domestic violence and abuse, victim advocates, and victim-assistance agencies. Additionally, this committee will provide awareness, empowerment and resource information to the community and for victims and survivors of domestic/family violence. It will inform systems of the needs of victims and survivors; as well as research and provide training information for the community, victims, and survivors of domestic/family violence
9. **SOUTH COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:** SCDV is dedicated to providing a collaborative response to domestic violence, accomplished through the availability of an immediate response from law enforcement, advocacy and social workers from the Department of Family and Children Services. The committee meets monthly to review recent incidents and look for ways to improve services.

E. STRUCTURE OF TASK FORCES/SUB-COMMITTEES

1. Goals set by the Council that do not fit under any of the standing committees may require the formation of a Task Force/Sub-Committee that is focus-limited by definition to carry out a specific objective or project.
2. Task Forces/Sub-Committees are limited in scope and time schedule; singular and project specific, and can meet multiple times within a month.
3. New Task Forces/Sub-Committees may be formed or dismantled by the Council Chair or by the whole Council at any time deemed necessary.

F. LIST OF TASK FORCES/SUB-COMMITTEES

1. **NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE:** The purpose of this committee is to determine the slate of officers elected by a public vote of the Council membership

for the following Executive Committee positions: Chair, Administrative Vice-Chair, and Membership Vice-Chair.

- a) The Nomination Committee will be selected by the Council in March and serve until the end of June of each year.
- b) One member of the Nomination Committee will be selected by the Council Chairperson to chair the Committee.
- c) In an effort to promote leadership and ensure as smooth a transition as possible for new officers, the Nomination Committee will give an opportunity to all voting members to submit their interest in assuming an officer position for the next fiscal year.
- d) All perspective candidates will be interviewed after submitting a letter of interest to the Nomination Committee. The Nomination Committee will begin interviewing and selecting candidates for Council officers in April and May. The names will be distributed to all members not less than 10 days prior to the second to last meeting of the fiscal year.
- e) At the time the slate of officers is presented to the Council, the Chairperson of the Council will call for any additional nominations from the floor. A nomination does not need to be seconded; it is simply accepted by the Chair.
- f) No less than ten (10) days prior to the September meeting, a final slate of candidates will be presented to the full Council. If more than one candidate is nominated for an office, a public vote will be taken for each office. If there are no additional candidates for each office, the Council may vote on the slate presented as a whole, rather than vote for each office, respectively.
- g) If vacancies occur among the officers during the time that the Task Force is not in effect, the Membership Vice-Chair will be consulted by the Chairperson of the Council in filling those vacancies temporarily.

2. ANNUAL CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE: The Conference Sub-Committee plans and produces an annual event for the community members of Santa Clara County. The emphasis of the Conference is determined by the priorities that the Council sets during its retreat. A fee may be charged for the Conference that reflects only the cost of services for the actual conference, so that as many persons as possible may take advantage of the training. This is not a “for profit” event.

- c) The Chairperson of the committee is selected at the beginning of the fiscal year.
- d) Responsibilities of the committee include:
 - Finding a site;
 - Determining the number and subjects of the workshops;
 - Securing the speakers;
 - Developing and distributing the program;
 - Producing and mailing a brochure/registration form;
 - Organizing the day and volunteers
 - Tabulating the evaluations and submitting a final report to the Council
 - Keeping financial records on the event;

- Turning receipts over to the Council.

c) All financial accounts will be kept by the Fiscal Agent which is public information and subject to regular audits.

- 3. ENGAGEMENT GROUP TASK FORCE:** This task force is made up of at least three voting members of the DVC or any committee and appointed by the Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee. This task force solicits project ideas and makes a proposal to the Conference Planning Committee each year before the retreat as to which projects the Council will accomplish as a whole in the next fiscal year. The proposal will include the project, a list of persons or committees needed to staff the project and any other resources needed to complete the task. The Engagement Group Task Force is to be formed by the fall of each year, and assists the leadership of the Council in brainstorming ideas and presenting to the retreat participants. The EGTF will be finished with its responsibilities upon the completion of the January retreat.
- 4. ANNUAL COUNCIL RETREAT COMMITTEE:** Assisted by the Executive Committee, the Council Chair will facilitate and organize the Annual Retreat. The purpose of this Retreat is to discuss goals, develop visions and to provide examination of the Council structure to ensure that the Council continues to serve the community as is mandated in the 1991 Ordinance. The Retreat will take place generally each January in lieu of a regular Council meeting.
- 5. WEB-SITE COMMITTEE:** This committee is made up of a chairperson selected by the DVC chair, and one member of each standing committee. It will serve from July to October of each year. The purpose is to update and develop content of the Council website that is maintained by the county as a useful informational and educational tool for domestic violence victims, practitioners and the community as a whole.
- 6. LAW ENFORCEMENT PROTOCOL TASK FORCE:** This task force meets annually in December and January to discuss and agree upon changes in the protocol for law enforcement officers /dispatchers in the county. It is reviewed and approved by the County Chief's preferably at their February meeting.