

**FREDERICK COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL
BYLAWS**

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Frederick County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (Coordinating Council).

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The Coordinating Council was formed in recognition that domestic violence affects the entire community and in order to increase collaboration and communication to maximize resources to reduce and prevent domestic violence in Frederick County.

ARTICLE III. AUTHORITY

The authority for the Coordinating Council is derived from Article XIV, Sections 1-2-400 through 1-2-406 of the Frederick County Code.

ARTICLE IV. POWERS AND DUTIES

The Coordinating Council shall:

- (1) Advise the County Executive, County Council, and Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission and its members on policies, programs, and legislation necessary to prevent domestic violence and assist victims and their families with safety, stability, and services.
- (2) Promote and facilitate an effective community-wide, victim-centered response to domestic violence, including a well-coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to all programs serving victims of domestic violence and their families;
- (3) Coordinate with the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence and all other County, State, Federal, and non-governmental agencies, committees, boards, commissions, and organizations that operate, monitor, provide education or technical assistance or coordinate domestic violence programs or services in the County to maximize the effectiveness of these programs and services;
- (4) Develop recommendations to improve the coordination and effectiveness of County, State, federal, and non-governmental multi-disciplinary, victim-centered efforts regarding domestic violence, including prevention, intervention, treatment, law enforcement, prosecution, correctional, and advocacy efforts;
- (5) Cooperate with the any relevant departments, agencies, committees, boards, commissions, and organizations to periodically review the quality and sufficiency of programs and facilities available to domestic violence victims, offenders, and their children throughout the County.
- (6) Obtain, evaluate, and assist in implementing the recommendations of the County's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team established under the Annotated Code of

Maryland, Title 4, Subtitle 7 of the Family Law Article;

(7) Obtain and evaluate statistical data, reports, and other information related to domestic violence, including information regarding innovative efforts by other governmental and non-governmental entities, as necessary to implement the requirements of this section; and

(8) Subject to subsection § 1-2-404 of the Frederick County Code, advocate or policies or legislation at the County, State, and Federal levels that would improve efforts to address domestic violence issues, including prevention, intervention, treatment, law enforcement, prosecution, correctional, and advocacy efforts.

ARTICLE V. APPOINTMENT AND TERMS OF MEMBERS

Section 1. Members

- A. The Coordinating Council shall include the following members or their designee:
- (1) A member of the County Council;
 - (2) The Administrative Judge for Frederick County District Court;
 - (3) The Administrative Judge for the Frederick County Circuit Court;
 - (4) The State's Attorney for Frederick County;
 - (5) The Regional Director of the Division of Parole and Probation, Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections;
 - (6) The Frederick County Sheriff;
 - (7) The Chief of the City of Frederick Police Department;
 - (8) The Forensic Nursing Services Coordinator at Frederick Health Hospital;
 - (9) The President of a comprehensive domestic violence program serving County residents;
 - (10) The Director of the Frederick County Office of the Maryland Department of Human Services;
 - (11) The Director of the Frederick County Health Department;
 - (12) The Superintendent of Frederick County Public Schools;
 - (13) The Director of the Frederick County Child Advocacy Center
- B. A Coordinating Council member may send a designee from within their agency or organization to temporarily represent the member at Coordinating Council meetings, due to a conflict of scheduling or unforeseen circumstances of the appointed member. The designee must be able to speak and make binding voting decisions on behalf of the agency or organization in the appointed members absence. A designee shall abstain from voting if the member is present. Any member appointing or changing a designee shall notify the Chair in writing and specify if the designee has voting authority. It is the responsibility of each Coordinating Council member to update designee information as needed.

Section 2. Public Members

A. Subject to confirmation by the County Council, with input from the Coordinating Council's membership listed in Section 1, Paragraph A, above, the County Executive must

appoint the following individuals to serve 3-year terms, or until a successor is confirmed by the County Council, on the Coordinating Council:

- (1) One (1) attorney with experience representing victims of domestic violence
- (2) One (1) attorney with experience representing criminal defendants of domestic violence charges
- (3) One (1) member of the public with a demonstrated interest in domestic violence issues, with preference for a survivor of domestic violence.
- (4) One (1) student member with a demonstrated interest in addressing domestic and dating violence to serve a 1-year term on the Coordinating Council. The student member's term may be renewed for 1 additional year. The student member must be a high school or college student who resides in the County when initially appointed.

B. Public Members may be reappointed under the above parameters, but may not serve more than two full, consecutive terms, with the exception of student members, as outlined above.

Section 3. Vacancies and Removals

- A. A member may resign from the Coordinating Council at any time by giving written notice to the County Executive and Co-Chairs. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof. Acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- B. Any member of the Coordinating Council who fails to attend at least 50% of the meetings during any period of 12 consecutive months shall be considered to have resigned.
- C. Vacancies shall be filled on the same basis as the original appointments for the unexpired terms.

ARTICLE VI. VOTING

Section 1. All members of the Coordinating Council are voting members.

Section 2. There shall be no voting by proxy.

ARTICLE VII. STAFFING

The State's Attorney for Frederick County, upon agreement, will provide the primary staff for the Coordinating Council. At the request of the State's Attorney, the Courts and membership agencies may provide additional staff assistance to the Coordinating Council.

ARTICLE VIII. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Section 1. Members are subject to the Frederick County Ethics Law.

Section 2. Members with conflicts of interest shall disclose such conflicts and recuse themselves from participating in and voting on such matters.

ARTICLE IX. OFFICERS

Section 1. The Chair and Vice Chair will be selected by the members of the Coordinating Council by majority vote. The Chair and Vice Chair will serve 2-year terms.

Section 2. The Chair shall preside over all Coordinating Council meetings.

Section 3. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.

Section 4. Authority and Duties.

A. The presiding Chair shall have full authority to carry out their duties as specified below:

- (1) Preside at meetings of the Coordinating Council
- (2) Serve as ceremonial representative of the Coordinating Council
- (3) Establish *ad hoc* committees to assist in carrying out the Coordinating Council's responsibilities
- (4) Keep Coordinating Council members informed of matters pertinent to Coordinating Council
- (5) Set the final agenda for all meetings of the Coordinating Council and distribute to members
- (6) Ensure the preparation of meeting minutes and distribution to members
- (7) Sign communications on behalf on the Coordinating Council
- (8) Represent the Coordinating Council at governmental, community, or other meetings

B. Removal of Officers. Any Coordinating Council officer may be removed by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the full members present at a scheduled meeting of the Coordinating Council for which this topic was included in the posted agenda for said meeting. Three consecutive, unexcused Coordinating Council meeting absences shall constitute a voluntary resignation of office.

ARTICLE X. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Immediate Past chair when sitting as a member of the Coordinating Council, and at large designee(s) to be determined by the Chair. The Executive Committee shall meet on a regular basis at the discretion of the Chair.

Article XI: SUBCOMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Subcommittees.

Standing committees shall be responsible for addressing specific areas on a regular basis. The following shall be standing subcommittees to the Coordinating Council:

- (1) Victim Services

- (2) Community Engagement
- (3) Legislative and Policy Planning
- (4) Offender Programing

Section 1: Creation. The Coordinating Council Chair may propose changes to the standing subcommittees. Changes must be approved by majority vote of the Coordinating Council membership.

Section 2: Subcommittee Member Selection. A subcommittee must include at least two full Coordinating Council members, but less than a quorum. A subcommittee may also include others from the Frederick County community or community organizations, as approved by Coordinating Council by majority vote.

Section 3: Voting. All members of subcommittees are voting members of the subcommittee. However, only full members of the Coordinating Council are voting members regarding decisions of the Coordinating Council.

Section 4: Officers. The Coordinating Council Chair shall appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of a subcommittee or a pair of Co-Chairs at their discretion.

Section 5: Authority and Duties. The Subcommittee Chair, and Vice-Chair in the Chair's absence, shall have full authority to carry out the duties as specified below:

- i. Preside at meetings of the subcommittee
- ii. Keep subcommittee members informed of matters pertinent to their responsibility
- iii. Establish subcommittee meeting schedules
- iv. Set the agenda for all subcommittee meetings and ensure distribution to members
- v. Ensure the preparation of meeting minutes and distribution to members
- vi. Report subcommittee activities and progress to the Coordinating Council

Section 6: Member Resignation. A subcommittee member may resign at any time from the subcommittee upon providing written notice to the Subcommittee Chair and the Coordinating Council Chair.

Section 7: Member Removal. Any member of the subcommittee who is not a member of the Coordinating Council may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a scheduled subcommittee meeting. The Subcommittee Chair shall notify the Coordinating Council Chair and Vice-Chair in writing of any subcommittee member removal.

ARTICLE XI **MEETINGS**

Section 1. The Coordinating Council shall meet as frequently as determined by the Chair of the Coordinating Council but not less than quarterly.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the written request of a majority of the current members. Reasonable notice shall be given to all members of the Coordinating Council of the date, time, place and reason for such special meeting.

Section 3. All meetings and special meetings shall comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. Notice of the date, time, and place of the Coordinating Council meetings shall also comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Section 4. A majority of the Coordinating Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 5. Agendas for each Coordinating Council meeting shall be developed by the Executive Committee and provided to the members in advance of the meeting. The agendas will be posted to the Coordinating Council website before each meeting, as required by the Open Meetings Act.

Section 6. The order of business at regular meetings shall be as follows.

- A. Call to Order
- B. Establishment of a quorum
- C. Old Business
- D. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)
- E. Presentation(s)
- F. New Business
- G. Announcements
- H. Public Comment (if required)
- I. Adjournment

Section 7. The minutes of all Coordinating Council meetings shall be sent to all members of the Coordinating Council prior to the next meeting. Minutes will be posted to the Coordinating Council webpage following approval.

ARTICLE XII. COMPENSATION

Members of the Coordinating Council shall receive no compensation for their services.

ARTICLE XII. ADOPTION OF THE BYLAWS AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Section 1. The bylaws shall not take effect until approved by a majority of the voting Coordinating Council members and approved by the County Executive.

Section 2. The bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Coordinating Council by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members of the Coordinating Council, provided the amendment(s) has/have been submitted to the Coordinating Council members in writing at a previous meeting. Prior to voting, the amendment must be reviewed by the County Attorney's Office. Any amendment is not effective until approved by the County Executive.

Section 3. Copies of these bylaws and a list of current members shall be provided to all Coordinating Council members and will be posted on the Coordinating Council webpage. The bylaws and the membership list are public records.

ARTICLE XIV. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

All questions on parliamentary procedure not covered by these bylaws shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE XV. ADVOCACY

Section 1: Advocacy as an Entity. The Coordinating Council as an entity may not engage in any advocacy efforts at the local, State, or federal levels unless these efforts are approved by a majority of the members.

Section 2: Individual Advocacy. Individual members or represented agencies and organizations may engage in advocacy independent of, and unaffiliated with, the Coordinating Council.

ARTICLE XVI. REPORTING

The Coordinating Council may make reports and recommendations to the County Executive and County Council from time to time as the Coordinating Council finds appropriate but must report annually.