

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

## CHAPTER 193

*An Act to amend and reenact §§ 9.1-116.2 and 9.1-116.3 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence; membership; duties.*

[H 2317]

Approved March 18, 2021

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 9.1-116.2 and 9.1-116.3 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 9.1-116.2. Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence; membership; terms; compensation and expenses; duties.**

A. The Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence (the Advisory Committee) is established as an advisory committee in the executive branch of state government. The Advisory Committee shall have the responsibility for advising and assisting the Board, the Department, all agencies, departments, boards, and institutions of the Commonwealth, and units of local government, or combinations thereof, on matters related to the prevention and reduction of sexual and domestic violence in the Commonwealth, and to promote the efficient administration of grant funds to state and local programs that work in these areas.

The Advisory Committee shall have a total of ~~15~~ 19 members consisting of the following, or their designees: the Commissioner of Social Services; the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services; the Commissioner of Health; the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development; the Executive Director of the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition; *the Executive Director of the Virginia Victim Assistance Network*; one member of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; one member of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; the Chairman of the Virginia State Crime Commission; and the Attorney General. The membership shall also consist of ~~six~~ nine nonlegislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of a crime victims' organization or a victim of sexual or domestic violence, ~~one of whom shall be a member of the board of the Virginia Victim Assistance Network~~, and ~~four~~ eight of whom shall be ~~directors~~ representatives of local sexual and domestic violence programs, ~~of whom one shall be a director of a program that concentrates solely on domestic violence, one shall be a director of a program that concentrates solely on sexual violence, and two shall be directors of programs that work in both sexual and domestic violence.~~ The appointments of the ~~four~~ *nonlegislative citizen members shall include racial and ethnic diversity and shall be* representative of regional and geographic locations of the Commonwealth.

Legislative members and the agency directors shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. All other members shall be citizens of the Commonwealth and shall serve a term of four years. However, no member shall serve beyond the time when he holds the office or employment by reason of which he was initially eligible for appointment.

The Advisory Committee shall elect its chairman and vice-chairman from among its members.

B. No member of the Advisory Committee appointed by the Governor shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive full terms. ~~A term of three or more years within a four-year period shall be deemed a full term. Any vacancy on the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment, but for the unexpired term.~~

C. A majority of the members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Advisory Committee shall hold no less than four regular meetings a year. Subject to the requirements of this subsection, the chairman shall fix the times and places of meetings, either on his own motion or upon written request of any five members of the Advisory Committee.

D. The Advisory Committee may adopt bylaws for its operation.

E. Members of the Advisory Committee shall not receive compensation, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in § 2.2-2825. Funding for the costs of the expenses shall be provided from federal *or state* funds received for such purposes by the Department.

F. The Advisory Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. ~~Provide guidance on appropriate standards for the accreditation of sexual and domestic violence programs; Promote appropriate and effective responses, services, and prevention for sexual assault and domestic violence across the Commonwealth; and~~

2. ~~Review statewide plans, conduct studies, and make recommendations on needs and priorities for the development and improvement of local services to victims of sexual and domestic violence in the Commonwealth;~~

3. ~~Advise on all matters related to federal funds received by the Commonwealth for crime prevention~~

and crime victim assistance related to sexual and domestic violence and recommend such actions on behalf of the Commonwealth as may seem desirable to secure benefits of these federal programs;

4. Promote coordination among state agencies and local service providers to improve the Commonwealth's identification of and response to sexual and domestic violence, including the effective implementation of trauma-informed services, evidence-based homicide reduction strategies, and evidence-based prevention strategies;

5. Develop a comprehensive plan for data collection on sexual and domestic violence;

6. Review statewide reports and conduct studies to identify service demands and gaps and make funding recommendations that ensure adequate funding and improve the administration of both state and federal funds to local sexual and domestic violence programs; and

7. Make recommendations on improving efficiencies in the administration of grants of both state and federal funds to local sexual and domestic violence programs *Promote strong communication, coordination, and strategy at state, regional, and local levels.*

G. The Department shall provide staff support to the Advisory Committee. Upon request, each administrative entity or collegial body within the executive branch of the state government shall cooperate with the Advisory Committee as it carries out its responsibilities.

### **§ 9.1-116.3. Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee.**

A. The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee (the Committee) shall establish voluntary accreditation standards and ~~procedures~~ *measures* by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically ~~measured~~ and evaluated with a peer-reviewed process. The Committee may adopt bylaws for its operation, ~~membership terms~~, fees, and other items as necessary. Fees for accreditation shall be used to support any administrative costs of the Department. Upon request of the Committee, the Department and the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition may provide accreditation assistance and training and resource material that will assist the local programs in obtaining or retaining accreditation. *The Department shall provide staff support to the Committee.*

The Committee shall consist of the following: ~~six directors of local sexual and domestic violence programs appointed by the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence, six directors of local sexual and domestic violence programs appointed by the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition, one nonvoting member appointed by the Department, and one nonvoting member appointed by the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition. The appointments made by the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence and the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition shall both adhere to the following requirements: appointments shall be representative of regional and geographic locations and types of local sexual and domestic violence programs and shall include a director of a program concentrating solely on sexual violence, a director of a program concentrating solely on domestic violence, and four directors of programs concentrating on both sexual and domestic violence. A chairman and vice-chairman, who shall be voting members, shall be elected annually, and each position shall alternate between a director who is appointed by the Advisory Committee and a director who is appointed by the coalition; if the chairman is a director appointed by the Advisory Committee, the vice-chairman shall be a person appointed by the coalition, and vice versa one nonvoting member representing the Department of Criminal Justice Services; one nonvoting member appointed by and representative of the Department of Social Services; one nonvoting member appointed by and representative of the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition; and 12 nonlegislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, who shall be leadership staff of local sexual and domestic violence programs. The nonlegislative citizen members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of four years, provided that no voting member shall serve beyond the time when he holds the office or employment by reason of which he was initially eligible for appointment. Members appointed by the Governor shall not be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive terms. The appointment of members shall take into consideration racial and ethnic diversity and shall be representative of regional and geographic locations of the Commonwealth.~~

*The Committee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its members.*

B. A majority of the voting members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

C. Members of the Committee shall not receive compensation but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in § 2.2-2825.

D. The Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Establish voluntary accreditation standards and *measures* by which local and domestic violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process;

2. Review and vote on accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs;

3. Establish a subcommittee as needed to address appeals from applicant programs; and

4. Periodically evaluate and revise accreditation standards and measures.

E. The Department shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Establish accreditation procedures by which local sexual and domestic violence programs can be systematically evaluated with a peer-reviewed process;

2. *Assist local programs in obtaining or retaining accreditation;*
3. *Review and evaluate applications for accreditation; and*
4. *Determine accreditation status recommendations for applicant programs and present such recommendations to the Committee.*