

LOUISIANA STATE DOMESTIC ABUSE FATALITY REVIEW (DAFR) PANEL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Louisiana State Police Headquarters, 7919 Independence Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806,
Conference Room 3000

In-person Attendees: Dawn Joseph, Kristen Sanderson, Hope Levins, Sara Halphen, Francis Robinson, Melanie Fields, Jemimah “Mimi” Mickel, Annette Arthur, Belinda Murphy, Doug Champlin, Ellen Conner, Jill Sessions, Mariah Wineski, Pam Guedry, Renee Antoine, Cherrise Picard, Robert Starnes, Jr.

Zoom Attendees: Maeve Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

The meeting was facilitated by the Domestic Abuse Fatality Review Coordinator, Dawn Joseph, who then proceeded with Roll Call. It was determined a quorum (12 of 20 panel members) was present.

Meeting attendees silently read a copy of the meeting minutes from the DAFR meeting held on 10/19/22. A motion was made by Mimi Mickel to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded by Melanie Fields and approved by the majority.

Time was allotted for public comment. No comment was made during this time.

Unfinished Business:

Due to the recent resignation of the DAFR Chair, Wanjennia Atkins, on November 8, 2022, the DAFR Coordinator called for nominations for a new chairperson from the floor. Captain Belinda Murphy nominated herself to serve as chair. A motion was made by Mimi Mickel to confirm Captain Murphy as DAFR Panel Chair. The motion was seconded by Annette Arthur and approved by the majority.

After discussion regarding the addition of local and regional DAFR panels, specifically around the New Orleans Domestic Abuse Fatality Review Team (NO DAFRT) established in 2021, housed under the New Orleans Health Department and led by Hope Levins and Jocelyn Pinkerton, the DAFR coordinator explained how the NO DAFRT was essential in assisting with the establishment of state DAFR and it would thus be beneficial to have them on board. A motion was made by Doug Champlin to approve the NO DAFRT as a local panel of the state DAFR, the motion was seconded by Jill Sessions and approved by the majority.

New Business:

The Coordinator went over the DAFR Recommendations Form. Modeled after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Social Ecological Model for Prevention, this form was specifically developed to assist panel members and authorized agents in identifying Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) risk factors and systems and policy gaps to inform recommendations.

With no members of the public present, panel members and agents took a brief break and prepared for case review.

The coordinator briefly reviewed DAFR’s guiding principles and functions and the panel and agents reviewed a total of seven homicide-suicide cases from 2020. They determined:

- Contributing risk factors that were preventable
- Recommendations to prevent deaths from similar causes or circumstances in the future
- Additional information about the fatality that would have been helpful to know

Following case review, the DAFR coordinator asked the panel and agents how they felt about using the recommendations worksheet. The panel confirmed it was helpful and asked to add a community profile to cases being reviewed so they could better respond to the community and societal risk factors of IPV. Specifically requesting that the average household income and number of police and mental health physicians in the area be added to the profile.

The coordinator also asked the panel if a statement concerning the victim's or suspect's medical history from family or friends would serve as confirmation for the medical history section on the case summary form. Both the panel and agents agreed that these statements would qualify as confirmation with or without medical records.

Due to a thorough and intense discussion during the case review and group discussion period that took longer than anticipated, the panel agreed to forgo the self-care activity. The panel thanked the coordinator for her hard work and preparation of the case summaries and the coordinator thanked the panel and agents for their time, expertise, and dedication. Everyone was notified of the date, time and location of the next meeting (April 19, 2023, 9a-3p, La State Police Headquarters).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.