

LOUISIANA STATE DOMESTIC ABUSE FATALITY REVIEW (DAFR) PANEL MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

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

In-person Attendees: Dawn Joseph (DAFR Coordinator), Deon Sumer (DAFR Abstractor), Ellen Conner, Kristen Sanderson, Melanie Fields, Ramona Harris, Jill Sessions, Sarah Halphen, Pam Guedry, Anna Watt, Mariah Wineski, Belinda Murphy, Francis Robinson, Jr., Jocelyn Johnson, Mimi Mickel, Leslie Lyons, Jordan Pedalino, Maeve Wallace, Katherine Robillard, Bonney McKneely, Cherrise Picard, Ashley Williams, Robert Hanser.

Zoom Attendees: Robyn Landry, Anjell DeGruy, Victoria Smith, Sara Dickerson

Absent: Jane Killen, Douglas Champlin (sent alternate representative- K. Robillard)

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

The meeting was facilitated by the Domestic Abuse Fatality Review Chairperson, Captain Belinda Murphy, who then proceeded with Roll Call. It was determined a quorum (14 of 20 panel members) was present. The DAFR Coordinator, Abstractor, Panel members, Agents, PAMR Team, and prospective Agents to the Panel introduced themselves. Everyone welcomed first time attendees, Katherine Robillard, Credentialing Coordinator for the Bureau of EMS, Ashley Williams, Assistant Director of Oasis A Safe Haven, Dr. Robert Hanser, Criminal Justice Professor and Program Coordinator for the University of Louisiana Monroe, Robyn Landry, Batterers Intervention Program Manager and Intervention Prevention Advocate for Chez Hope, Inc., Jordan Pedalino, Interim New Orleans Domestic Abuse Fatality Review Team (NODAFR) Coordinator, New Orleans Health Dept., and Sara Dickerson, Maternal and Child Health Coordinator Supervisor, Bureau of Family Health to the meeting.

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

Meeting attendees silently read a copy of the meeting minutes from the DAFR meeting held on 10/18/23. A motion was made by Belinda Murphy to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Ramona Harris and approved by the majority.

Business:

The DAFR Coordinator, Dawn Joseph, briefly explained the purpose of the Louisiana Department of Health's Pregnancy Associated Mortality Review (PAMR) and shared that the Panel and Agents would be reviewing two Pregnancy Associated Mortalities due to domestic violence, thus Anjell DeGruy, PAMR Coordinator, and Sara Dickerson, Maternal and Child Health Coordinator Supervisor joined us to assist with recommendations for those cases.

The Panel then voted to add three new Authorized Agents to the DAFR Panel:

1. Robyn Landry is the Batterers Intervention Program Manager & an Intervention Prevention Advocate for Chez Hope, Inc. Robyn has a 27 year career working in the Department of Corrections and has numerous achievements including serving as Assistant Warden for St. Mary Parish. Her work also received recognition and certification from the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections. As Batterers Intervention Program Manager for Chez Hope, Inc. she works directly with offenders of violence, managing all program participants throughout their enrollment to removal/suspension and/or their program completion.
2. Ashley Chretien Williams is the Assistant Director of Oasis A Safe Haven for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence. Ashley has a 16 year career working with and for victims of domestic violence,

previously working with the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (LCADV) as Public Policy and Children Exposed to Violence Program Coordinator. She has expertise in prevention programming, safety planning and educating children on the dynamics of domestic violence. She has served on many community boards and works to implement violence prevention initiatives in local schools.

3. Dr. Robert Hanser is a Professor and Coordinator of the Criminal Justice Program at the University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM). During his 21 year career at ULM, Dr. Hanser has focused his research and publication activity on evaluative research related to offender treatment programs, domestic violence response, and mental health issues. Robert also continues to work with offender rehabilitation and treatment programs that include substance abuse and offender reentry. He is the Regional Reentry Center Director with the LA Dept. of Corrections and is an external evaluator for domestic violence prevention with the HOPE program that provides trauma-informed services addressing the needs of children exposed to violence. Dr. Hanser is the Director of Northeast LA Batterers Intervention Program, has worked as a shelter advocate, and is certified to work with both male and female domestic abuse offenders. Dr. Hanser currently serves as the board president for LCADV.

After each candidate's biography was shared, Capt. Belinda Murphy then made a motion to add Robyn Landry, Ashley Williams, and Robert Hanser as Authorized Agents to the DAFR Panel. The motion was seconded by Mariah Wineski and approved by the majority. The newly appointed Authorized Agents then signed Authorized Agent and Confidentiality Agreements.

Following a congratulatory round of applause, Capt. Murphy then reviewed the Panel's Guiding Principles, Functions, and Confidentiality Requirements. With no members of the public present, panel members, agents, and the PAMR Team took a brief break and prepared for case review. Captain Murphy asked meeting attendees to take a moment of silence in honor of the victims and survivors of domestic violence in Louisiana. After a brief moment of silence, the Panel, Agents and PAMR Team reviewed a total of two pregnancy-associated mortality cases and five homicide-suicides due to domestic violence. They also 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

Because DAFR/PAMR Case LA-R2-2022-00033P_LA2022-9987 is currently open, panel member, Melanie Fields recused herself and exited the conference room. Following case review, Dawn gave a quick update on the 2023 DAFR Annual Report. Currently, the report is still going through the approval process, before it can be published for public viewing. It contains a data summary from all 30 cases reviewed by the Panel and Agents for the years 2020 and 2021. We reviewed a total of 11 pregnancy-associated mortalities, 13 homicide-suicides, and 6 fully adjudicated fatal cases due to domestic abuse. Cases reviewed were from eight of the nine LDH Administrative Regions and 14 of the state's 64 parishes. Dawn also did a quick review of the Summary of Recommendations included in the report. Lastly, Dawn shared that she'd like to host a 1-day training for the Panel and Agents. Possible training topics include:

- Domestic Violence 101
- Domestic Violence Intervention Strategies
- Impact of Domestic Violence on Children
- Teen Dating Violence
- Mental Wellness & Substance Use Issues
- Domestic Violence in LGBTQIA+ Relationships
- Trauma-Informed Care

- Criminalization of Domestic Violence Survivors
- Domestic Violence & Homelessness
- Improving Systemic Responses to Domestic Violence
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review

Dawn then told everyone she'd send out a survey to determine everyone's availability and training topics of interest. She congratulated everyone once again for successfully completing one full year of case review and thanked Captain Murphy and her team for lending the Panel meeting space, equipment, and supplies. She then asked if anyone had any final comments or thoughts. With none, she thanked the panel, agents, and abstractor for their time, expertise, and dedication. The Panel also thanked her for the work she's done to coordinate the Panel and its work.

Dawn Joseph, DAFR Coordinator, adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.

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