

MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2022
VIRTUAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

The Domestic Violence Task Force met virtually on Wednesday, January 19, 2022, with the meeting called to order by Justice Hantz Marconi at 4:02 p.m.

The following members participated:

Justice Anna Barbara Hantz Marconi
Mary Barton
Merrill Beauchamp
Kathy Beebe
Pam Dodge
Steven Endres
Dr. Scott Hampton
Sarah Freeman
Chief David Hobbs
Marcia Hornick
Jean Kilham
Mary Krueger

Patricia LaFrance
Hon. Diane Nicolosi
Betsy Paine
Lynda Ruel
Lyn Schollett
Jon Strasburger
David Vicinanza
Anne Zinkin

Lisa Merrill, Recording Secretary

Justice Hantz Marconi called the meeting to order and welcomed members to the fifth meeting of the Domestic Violence Task Force. She noted that the meeting is being recorded and the proceedings are being livestreamed. She outlined the focus of the meeting under Charge 4: Review and make recommendations concerning court forms related to protection from domestic violence.

Justice Hantz Marconi provided an overview of the documents and materials recently uploaded to the drop box and reminded members that they can access these materials at any time.

The Task Force discussed and considered the following under charge 4:

- Improve petition form to make it more focused, such as using a guided interview model.
- Important to keep the narrative section of the form.
 - Defendants have a right to due process and to notice of all allegations against them, which checking a box does not provide.
- Information on parts of the form are necessary as it relates to data collected by federal and state databases.
- Assisting victims with form completion.
 - NH Legal Assistance **now sees** the forms after they are filed.
 - Resource constraints.
 - Funding issues.
 - Use of information guides.
 - Propose creation of a decision-making tree to walk petitioners through choosing the correct form(s).
 - Volunteers are essential part of solution.
 - Training of advocates, attorneys, and court staff.

- Advocates used to, but no longer assist with preparing petitions as that is seen as providing legal advice for which they are not trained; can there be non-legal type training for advocates to identify abusive behavior and assist with writing?
 - Court staff may not give legal advice but may answer questions on petitions
 - DOVE and NHLA involvement is post-petition, can DOVE expand to provide guidance on petitions; can there be legal counsel available at crisis centers or at court
- Victims need support, safety, and legal help.
- Location and ease of finding forms on the NHJB website.
 - Need to know which court to file in order to locate forms.
 - Work with Brian Eddy to make it easier for victims to locate forms on the website.
- What are other states doing?
 - State of New York has a model where attorneys work with advocates.
- Discussion about posting forms on the Internet because of safety concerns.
 - Being able to complete a form from home is helpful for many victims.
 - Coming to the courthouse to complete the necessary forms can be stressful for the victim, especially with no one to assist them.
- Fillable vs. non-fillable forms.
- Impact on children in domestic violence cases.
 - Judges are mandatory reporters, so any allegations of abuse requires the judge to refer it to DCYF.

Justice Hantz Marconi reminded members to continue to send in materials and information to Anne or Lisa, which will be posted in the drop box.

She reminded members that she is looking for volunteers to work with the working group to produce summary and recommendations.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Domestic Violence Task Force will occur on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. via WebEx and will be live-streamed for the public.

Reminder that the Task Force will hear from members of the public this Friday, January 21, 2022, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the NH Supreme Court.

With no further business to come before the Task Force, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Merrill, Recording Secretary