



STATE OF WISCONSIN

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC ABUSE**

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**Policies and Procedures of the Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse**

**Approved 4/9/2025**

**Updated 7/8/2026**

**General**

1. The officers of the Council shall be two (2) Co-Chairs. One shall be elected for a two-year term in October of even numbered years, and the other in October of odd numbered years.
2. A quorum of the Council shall be a majority - any number that is more than one-half of the number of actual appointees (excluding vacant seats).
3. The Council generally meets four times per year. Additional meetings may be called by the officers of the Council.
4. Meetings of the Council are open in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes. At meetings, members of the audience shall be allowed to speak at the discretion of the Co-Chair after Council members who wish to speak have spoken. Participation of the audience may be limited by the Co-Chair or by decisions of the Council.
5. Each meeting shall include a time for public comment.
6. There shall be working committees designated annually by the Council, to include:
  - a. Access
  - b. Budget, Finance, and Sustainability
  - c. Legislative, Policy and System Collaboration
  - d. Other committees may be designated as appropriate.
7. Council Co-Chairs shall make appointments of committee Co-Chairs annually at the October meeting.
8. Committee Co-Chairs determine the membership of such committees and report a list of Committee members to the Council annually at the October meeting.
9. Council members will notify staff by noon of the Monday preceding a Council meeting if they are not going to attend. If it is apparent that a quorum will not be present, the meeting may be canceled.
10. Council members who are absent for three meetings in a calendar year will be contacted by a Council Co-Chair and asked to assess their continued ability to serve.
11. Council meetings may be held in person or virtually.
12. Council meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order.
13. Council approved documents and information are located on the Governor's Council webpage. Posted documents and materials follow the document retention policies of the Department of Children and

Families and will be removed after 7 years. <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/domesticabuse/council>

14. Policies and procedures can be reviewed and revised by the Council Co-Chairs and shared with the full Council at the next meeting.

### **Council Meetings**

As a governmental body the Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse must follow open meeting requirements.

Council members will be provided with open meetings training every two years.

The Council or Committees may establish project based and time-limited workgroups from time to time to develop recommendations.

### **Communication and Public Representation**

All correspondence from the Council and its committees should be sent on Council letterhead with prior approval by the majority of the Council. The Council may delegate signature authority to Council Co-Chairs. Individual Council members should not send correspondence in the name of the Council without approval by the majority of the Council. Correspondence shall be sent on Council letterhead and signed by Co-Chairs.

All activities undertaken by committees should be included in the Committee Chair's report to the Council at regular Council meetings.

Individual Council members should not take public positions or engage in lobbying in the name of the Council without the approval of the majority of the Council.

Council members may include membership on the Council when providing a list of credentials or experience, e.g., on a resume, biographical statement, or in an introduction for an educational event.

### **Council and Committee Membership**

Standing Committee membership shall include at least one Council member, two or more provider representatives, and at least one at-large representatives from a statewide organization or an organization with expertise in the topics being addressed at the committee.

The Council encourages and will work to achieve a diverse representation in Council and Committee appointments. Diversity shall include racial/ethnic diversity, geographic location, and role within the domestic violence movement. Survivor membership is encouraged on committees.

Committees are responsible for identifying and recruiting new members.

Council members will be assigned to committees based on their preference whenever possible. No committee shall have more than a quorum of the Council as voting members.

Each committee is encouraged to have Co-Chairs consisting of a Council member and a community member. Any community member denied confirmation by the Senate is prohibited from serving as a Co-Chair of a committee. One Co-Chair from each committee should be present at a Council meeting to give committee report and answer questions. If neither Co-Chair can attend the Council meeting, it is their joint responsibility to find another committee member to give the report.

If a committee member cannot attend the committee meeting, they are asked to let Council staff or the Committee Co-Chair know in advance. If a committee member misses three meetings in a calendar year, they will be contacted by the Committee Co-Chair or staff and asked to reevaluate their ability and willingness to serve on the committee.

Committees may be assigned projects by Council Co-Chairs or may develop them on their own.

Quorums for Council meetings must be a majority of the members.

### **Recognition of Council Members**

The Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse will recognize the contributions of persons who serve on the Council. When a Council member resigns from service, he/she shall be recognized as follows:

- for service of one year to five years, he/she shall receive a letter of appreciation from the Council, recognizing the specific contributions the person has made to the Council;
- for service of over five years to ten years, a letter of appreciation from the Council, recognizing the specific contributions the person has made to the Council, along with a certificate commemorating his/her Council service;
- for service of ten years or more, a letter of appreciation from the Council recognizing the specific contributions the person has made to the Council, along with a commendation plaque from the Governor's Office.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All recommendations or decisions made by the Council will be done in the spirit of fairness and equity to all providers of domestic abuse services in the State and to all victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their children. Council members will strive to avoid any actual or perceived bias, favoritism, or conflict of interest in any action they take as a member of the Council.

Council members shall follow the guidelines issued by the Wisconsin Ethics Board, "Mitigating conflicting interests: private interest vs. public responsibility".

### **Nomination of Co-Chairs**

In electing Co-Chairs, the Council shall be committed to:

- Openness and transparency in the nominating and electing process
- Promoting diversity of leadership
- Sharing of leadership

#### Procedures:

Elections for Co-Chair of the Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse will take place at the October meeting. Persons nominating a Council member for Co-Chair will be asked to give a brief rationale or statement as to why that member should be Co-Chair.

Council members may self-nominate and will provide a brief statement as to why they believe they will be a good Co-Chair and how they will approach their role.

A Co-chair will automatically be considered for re-election for a second two-year term unless he/she asks to withdraw.

A Co-Chair may serve two consecutive terms as Co-Chair. After two terms, he/she should sit out a two-year period before running for Co-Chair again.

### **Orientation to Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse**

Upon appointment, each new member shall review background materials included on the Governor's Council website, including: Council policies and procedures; Council and committee member lists; minutes from last year of Council meetings; meeting dates; committee descriptions and projects; any relevant Council correspondence from the last year.

Council Co-Chairs, in consultation with staff, will hold an orientation session for the new members. The orientation shall include, at a minimum:

- Council history
- Council policies and procedures
- Expectations for Council members
- Council goals and activities
- Committee structure and projects
- Overview of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) Domestic Abuse Program
- Future directions for the Council

Annually, a review or refresher session on major Council issues and directions may be offered at a Council meeting. The content of the refresher session will be determined by Council Co-Chairs in consultation with staff. Council staff will provide an annual update on the status, successes, and challenges of the DCF Domestic Abuse Program.

### **Role of Council in DCF Procurement**

Wis. Stat. 49.165(3) reads, "The council on domestic abuse shall, (a) Review applications for grants under this section and advise the secretary as to whether the applications should be approved or denied."

*As reflected in the February 11, 2026 Council minutes, the following motion was passed:*

Motion by Barry that the Council meet its statutory obligation regarding review of grant proposals by continuing its current process of having Council members participate as members of a review team for each competitive DCF RFP process; that the Council receive a report from Procurement after the process is completed, that includes information about the grant, which programs applied and which programs were funded and who the reviewers were; and that this motion be reviewed for re-adoption annually. Second by Sippel. All aye. Motion carried.