



STATE OF WISCONSIN

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC ABUSE**

P.O. BOX 1185 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701 • TELEPHONE (608) 266-0700

(PLEASE SUBMIT COMPLETED MINUTES TO COUNCIL STAFF WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE MEETING TO ENSURE PROPER POSTING CAN BE COMPLETED IN COMPLIANCE WITH WISCONSIN'S OPEN MEETING LAW)

Please submit to [DCFGovernorsCouncilonDomesticAbuse@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFGovernorsCouncilonDomesticAbuse@wisconsin.gov)

**Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse  
LEGISLATIVE & POLICY COMMITTEE  
Workgroup Meeting: Domestic Abuse Treatment Standards Review Workgroup**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March, 27, 2025**

**2:00 PM – 3:00 PM**

**Meeting was held virtually**

**Council Members Present:** None

**Committee Members Present:** Gary Zajc, Bennie Higgins, Jolynn Woehrer, Marlys Howe, Darald Hanusa, Courtney Olson

**DCF/Governor's Council Staff Present:** Michelle Rawlings, Rachel Nili

**Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

**Presentation by the Hawaii Domestic Violence Intervention Program Standards team**

Hawaii presenters: Dayna Miyasaki, Angela Mercado, and Caelan O'Meara

The Hawaii team presented on their values-based process of revising domestic violence (DV) standards for the state of Hawaii, which began in 2019, and answered work group participant questions.

Key points included their commitment to:

- being informed by subject matter experts,
- being inclusive of diverse stakeholders and perspectives, and
- sustaining the work through funding that supported technical assistance and implementation of program standards. This was made possible through OWA STOP, VAWA, and FVPSA grants.

Throughout the process, they worked with the Center for Justice Innovation, which provided guiding questions and prompts to help stakeholders articulate beliefs, identify values, and reflect on the needs of survivors and of those who cause harm. These prompts also addressed barriers faced by those who respond to harm and examined the role of DV interventions.

These reflections helped define the core values guiding Hawaii's DV standards, which include:

- Aloha spirit (as the central value)
- Centering survivors
- Compassion
- Flexibility

- Accountability
- Community engagement
- Gender equity & Social Justice

Hawaii's framework was intentionally designed to be non-prescriptive and adaptable, allowing flexibility to meet the unique needs of specific communities. It emphasized relationship-building among the judiciary, DV providers, and other stakeholders to collaboratively determine what works best for their communities.

In terms of staffing, qualifications for DVI providers included recognizing lived experience as a form of professional experience.

The standards revision process also emphasized gender inclusivity, acknowledging that men and LGBTQ+ individuals can also be victims. Cultural humility was identified as essential to honoring the diversity of Hawaii's communities and recognizing cultural foundations as strengths.

All feedback received during the revision process was transparently reviewed and incorporated, with the team reading through and adjusting the standards line by line. Definitions of domestic violence were expanded beyond statutory language to reflect what DV looks like in Hawaiian communities, including alignment with CDC definitions.

The term "batterer" was replaced to person who caused harm.

The benefits of having a shared standard include helping determine whether programs are meeting expectations and where to refer clients, even in the absence of a formal certification process in Hawaii. The procurement process—how programs are funded—takes into account how well a program upholds these core values.

An example of centering survivors is DVI programs actively collaborating with DV advocacy organizations, providing cross-training, and maintaining connections to community-based services.

The team tied their social justice values to a recognition of the impacts of colonialism and anti-Black racism, especially in understanding how these forces have shaped DV in Hawaii and impact the disproportionate fatalities among Native Hawaiian and Filipino women.

**Other Business:** Next Meeting: Thursday, April 24th at 2pm

**Adjourn**