



LIZ MURRILL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
P.O. BOX 94005
BATON ROUGE, LA
70804-9005

Louisiana Sexual Assault Oversight Commission Minutes
March 7, 2024

1:00pm

Louisiana Department of Justice
Office of Attorney General Liz Murrill
1885 N. Third St. – Livingston Building
First Floor – Clermont Conference Room
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Board Members/Designees: PRESENT - John Sinquefield, Heidi Martin, Tammy Vincent, Michelle Jackson, Senator Beth Mizell, Morgan Lamandre, Erica Sparacino, Monica Taylor, Wanjennia Atkins, Shannon Dirmann, and Dr. Randall Brown, Rafael de Castro and Bob Wertz. Other members or their designees were absent.

Other Attendees: Olivia Boudreaux, Kim Wall, Tammy Smith, Danielle Lax, Jason Eastin, Natasha Poe, Ginesse Barnett, Margo Mikeska, Kim Thomas, Claudia Bruce, Maci Lapeyrouse, Brandy Sheely, Carie Whittington, Bridget Depew, Mendy Escudie, Dominique Burns, Katie Leleux, Jarrod Matherne, Trey Lottinger, Bobbie O'Bryan, Andy Mahoney and Frank Young

- **Call to Order and Roll Call**

- Kim Wall called the meeting to order, made roll call and confirmed a quorum of members.

- **Chairman's Report**

- Chairman John Sinquefield reported that he has been reappointed by Attorney General Liz Murrill

- **Approval of the Minutes**

- Minutes of the November 30, 2023 meeting were unanimously adopted.

- **Topics of Discussion**

- Kit Tracking Update
 - Captain Chad Guidry reported that testing starts next, they have an online training system, everything is on track for 7/1/2024, and kits have been purchased and are waiting to be shipped.
- Discussion of Members on Reporting of Pregnancies in Females Under the Age of Consent
 - Department of Health reported that there were 72 pregnancies in females 14 and under last year (2023).
 - Pregnancies in age 13 and under is defined as 1st degree rape and reporting is mandatory. Age 13 and older – investigation as to age gap of parties.
 - It is unclear if DCFS knows about resources and they may need training as to resource availability and training on reporting.

- Discussion of Members on Legislative Issues (Sexual Assault Bill of Rights)
 - o Changes in Bill
 - Concerned about contact requirement – victims should keep contact info current or entity should be able to use last known contact.
 - Victim v. Survivor
 - Bill/law is not consistent
 - Some people still like victim or may not consider themselves to be survivors
 - May need definition of survivor
 - Current nomenclature is survivor
 - 20-year retention stems from federal law. Federal law is 20 years or statute of limitations, whichever is shorter. In Louisiana, there is no prescriptive period for 1st degree rape – so 20 years is shorter of that.
 - Defendant standing language is similar to other states.
 - o Potential bill issues
 - Bill does not distinguish between reported and unreported kits.
 - Hospitals have concerns about being the holders of the kits.
 - There is concern about storing things for 20 years. There may not be room to store everything for 20 years. Things may need to be removed from boxes/kits and then return of the kit. However, boxes hold up better over time and they may not be able to be stored any other way. May need assessment of current numbers regarding how long evidence is being held. Getting a sense of how long people are holding things now may not be that big of an adjustment.
 - May need additional funding for storage but funding may be needed for other issues.
 - Discussion on whether kits from people out of state will need to be kept.
 - Need something that clarifies that onus is on law enforcement to collect kits from secure area (as opposed to hospital having to maintain chain of custody). Need law enforcement to collect them in reasonable amount of time. It has been interpreted that hospital has to do all this but the hospital does not have space to secure kits. Have been having trouble getting law enforcement to come collect kits.
 - Campus police should not receive kits with identifying information – under title 9 they are then required to contact person.
 - o Public comment was received from a police officer.
 - Things don't work as well in rural areas.
 - Collection is law enforcement responsibility – should go to law enforcement.
 - May be possible to use law enforcement commission to disseminate information/education.
 - Law enforcement agency where kit is done should be the enforcement that collects the kit.
- Discussion of Members on Other Legislative Issues
 - o New legislation regarding domestic violence.
 - o SB 107 – prohibition on child like sex dolls.
- Discussion of Members on Desert of Sexual Assault Centers (Continuation of Discussion)
 - o STAR is a level 3 center which means it provides 24/7 hotline, legal program, crisis intervention. Only guaranteed funding is from VOCA, SASP, and STOP
 - o STAR is applying for rural grant, which would pay for training and for law enforcement to attend training.

- Centers are not getting state funding. Funding is being funneled to DV centers and law enforcement.
- VOCA funding is declining (in LA and in other states). Other states are filling the gap with state funds.
- The Governor's Office is aware of funding issue and is looking for ways to fund.

- **Public Comment**

- Public comment was invited and was received.
- LSU Medical Coordinator and Jefferson Parish SANE stated that LSU has a program but the nurses can do 300 hours of practicum and never do an exam. There was also public comment about funding issues and shortages.

- **Votes**

- No votes were taken

- **Assign Tasks & Schedule Next Meeting**

- Chairman John Sinquefield asked Commission Members to send suggested topics for next meeting.
- Chairman John Sinquefield requested and received permission of the commission to set the next meeting for July 18, 2024 at 1:00pm in the Claremont Conference Room.

- **Adjourned**