



**NOTES FOR THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL (DVC)**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 140 A & B
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

Friday, December 6, 2025, 10:15AM – 12:00PM

DVC MISSION

The Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Council (DVC) provides leadership in the creation and support of a victim/survivor-centered, countywide, and coordinated approach to educate, prevent, and respond to domestic/intimate partner violence.

DVC Chair

Lan Pham, DVC Executive Director

DVC Staff

Ashley Phillips, DVC Sr Health Program Analyst
Miranda Le Claire, DVC Pathways Intern

Board of Supervisor Representatives

Carley Towne, 2nd District Intern

Angelica Ayala, 3rd District Senior Health Deputy

Vianca Campos-Serna, 4th District Supervisor's Staff Assistant Children and Human Services

Meeting Registrants and Attendees:

Katy Alamshaw (SAHARA), Bryon Alvarez (St. John's Community Health Legal Services Program), Carolina Alvarez (LA City – Mayor's Office of Public Safety), Pat Bell (House of Ruth), Stephanie Bailiff (Harriett Buhai Center), Nikki Brown (Community Legal Aid SoCal), Paloma Bustos (Loyola Law School), Teresa Cevallos (Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles), Cristina Cortes (Downtown Women's Center), LaTisha Davis (Valley Oasis Domestic Council), Melissa De Leon (East LA Women's Center), Nancy Diaz (St. Joseph Center), Escarlett Escalante (Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter), Clara Garcia (Valley Oasis), Karen Garcia (Para Los Ninos), Rafael Guirado (Para Los Ninos), Andrewa Gutierrez (Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles), Hannah Hartung (University of La Verne), Maria Hernandez (Rainbow Services), Michael Hildalgo (City of LA DVA), Ana Interiano (YWCA SGV), Dachele Kendrick (YWCA SGV), Brenda Magid (Rainbow Services), Giovanna Martinez (WCCS), Alyson Messenger (Jenesse Center Inc.), Clara Mora (Legal Aid Foundation of LA), Marilyn Moreno (Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter), Amanda Mueller (Harriett Buhai Center), Nicolle Perras (DPH-SAC), Rosanna Piccini (1736 Family Crisis Center), Jaye Prado (LGBTQ Center Long Beach), Tina Rios (Reimagine Child Safety), Mariela Rivera (Foothill Family), Ruth Rivera (East LA Women's Center), Edie Rojas (DPH-OVP), Elizabeth Sahagun (Su Casa Ending DV), Johanna Sanchez (Community Legal Aid SoCal), Pablo Schlueter-Corey (Community Legal Aid SoCal), Adam Seiden (All for Kids), Minty Siu-Kootnikoff (Sojourn), Brittany Stewart (New Hope), Latia Suttle (Reimagine Child Safety), Pablo Schlueter-Corey (Community Legal Aid SoCal), Adrianna Tadem (YWCA SGV), Elvia Torres (SPIRITT Family Services), Samantha Vanegas (St. John's Community Health), Nancy Volpert (Progress Advisors), Bernita Walker (Project Peacemakers, Inc.), Cecelia Walker (Angel Step Inn), and Krysta Warfield (Haven Hills).

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lan Pham provided welcoming remarks. Attendees self-introduced (name, pronouns, title/role, and agency affiliation). Lan reviewed DVC meeting protocol and agenda.

II. DVC Bylaws

Lan provided background to the DVC Bylaw update process (see presentation slides).

III. Public Comment – DPH DVC Listening Session

Ashley Phillips facilitated public comments. Questions posed for group: "We would like to hear your thoughts on the 'Updated Commission' and 'Coalition' structures. Which option would you recommend for the DVC and why?"

Below are comments/responses from attendees:

- *[I'm] on board with a commission [model] as it appears that there would be less barriers as a commission as opposed to a coalition. It might be good to have a commission that can partner with existing coalitions to do the work.*
- *I tend to agree with the commission structure. I would like to see DVC make more recommendations to the BOS and be more active. The benefit [of the commission structure] is the direct relationship with the BOS. But to take advantage of this benefit we must make it more intentional. I like the idea of a coalition but think the benefit having a commission and being able to make recommendations to the BOS outweigh the benefits of having a coalition.*
- *A coalition is a much more robust structure for the DVC. I think having a broader membership and to be able to participate remotely is meaningful. We found during COVID that being able to conduct our meetings remotely increased participation. Not having the requirement of posting physical agendas and meeting physically in person allowed more participation especially from folks in the furthest points of the County. Where you meet in person determines who shows up in the room, and the flexibility of a coalition allows us to not limit members, so we would have a much more representative body. I think the question of intentionality and engagement with our Board friends, is something we can do with intentionality whether we're a coalition or a commission. If [the recommendations/concerns] are a priority for us and we've had conversations, we can make that happen regardless of the structure and I would rather be more inclusive in the way a coalition allows.*
- *I agree [with what was just said]. [Coalition model allows for] more participation, because with 2-minute comment, can't get the understanding of certain things. There are DV survivors who they have children taken away and have come to court in LA even if [they don't] live in LA, but they are actively involved in changing the way things are going for domestic violence victims and make things safer for women and children. [A coalition] is just more inclusive like she said. With Reimagine Child Safety (another coalition), they've built rapport with some BOS members and the Director of DCFS and other people where our voices are being heard.*
- *I am sitting on the fence. When thinking of a commission, I am concerned with who will be voted in and the subject matter expertise that will or will not be at the table. Historically in the DVC, we have tried to work at various intersections and have various community groups represented, such as the LGBTQ community, the shelter director's community and so on. So having that voice with specific representatives of a commission would be very important for me. I think of the limitation. When I think of us a coalition. At one point, the DV movement in LA County came together with a group of people to ask for money from Measure H which created the DV Homelessness coalition that we now have. The power that we have of people and a community should not be discounted. I'm willing to hear more, just want to be sure we don't discount our voices and how much we ourselves as a community have moved forward things here in LA County.*
- *Ask the ppl attending remotely [in this meeting]. If ppl joining remotely [would attend in person]. I am recovering from surgery. Commission will not work as I would not be able to participate.*
- *I appreciate the coalition idea. I have noticed especially when it comes to the [City of Los Angeles Domestic Violence Alliance] DVA, that requiring in person meetings really hinders our attendance and having something virtual makes it a lot easier to attend. Today myself, to answer the question [about attending in person meetings], I would not be able to attend. I'm also injured and not mobile so being able to attend these meetings virtually keeps that spirit of inclusivity.*
- *I agree with [what was said]. I am not mobile to the point of having to come to meeting. I must have special parking, which is not always available. I prefer moving to coalition. I would not be here if it were not for that. It's a big deal for me. I think the Brown Act is old [from] 1953 when we had no cell phone or tech to connect.*
- *The time of travel would be more difficult. I would not want to exclude folks who can't attend in person.*

- *Would the committees stay intact regardless of which model we go with? How does [the change] impact the committees and how does it impact [DVC] staffing?*

Lan let attendees know that change in structure should not change DPH-DVC staffing support, and that current DVC Standing Committees would need to be re-evaluated either way. If the DVC will be a commission of 25, the 25 commissioners would decide and confirm on Standing Committees. This is similar for a coalition model. Eligibility, focus of Standing Committees will be determined by the coalition.

- *[I would] not be able to attend in person [if hybrid was not offered].*
- *I would not be able to attend in person given the location. Challenging to represent the voice of the field with smaller group of people.*
- *The Commission gives people the responsibility to communicate with the Board, however, we should strive for equal opportunity of representation and leadership, so all groups are represented. I do think that it would be challenging to represent the LA DV field with a smaller commission. The question is what would [the Commission] do to continue to gather input and how would it sustain total field participation if only 25 people meet.*
- *Is it possible to have both? Yes, in theory, both would need to be carefully designed to ensure Brown Act is not being violated, e.g. not discussing commission business outside the commission.*
- *Would like to hear the difference of recommendation to the Board with a commission vs a coalition. I believe we have strong leaders and would trust the 25 leaders who commit to be in person to meet and strategize how to best raise all our voices through BOS by way of recommendation. If being a commission carries power if that makes sense. I don't imagine the 25 would close their ears to the rest of us in the field.*
- *I'm concerned with the effect that will have on the community regarding the commission structure. I am leaning more on coalition structure.*
- *I feel torn, there is benefit to the commission and coalition. If there was a way, we could create something that was a bit of both, because I don't like the Brown Act. I remember back in the day when we had certain folks who would attend based on the agenda and behave in certain ways, so there are things that have occurred that have caused me to question the Brown Act, but also to [the earlier] point, I'm concerned that if we do move towards a coalition what that would look like. If we move toward commission, there are right people and expertise at the table. How do we find that balance?*
- *The right lived expertise. It sounds like the Brown Act is a barrier to a lot of people. And it's old.*
- *I agree with earlier recommendations and contributing thoughts amongst others, that the Brown Act is outdated and creating barriers, I am leaning toward coalition structure.*
- *We are unique. We are working on eliminating as much IPV as possible. We want as many people at the table as possible. I want clarification, when we talk about the 25, whose close ears will be for the field. Are we speaking about 25 individuals or 25 agencies that will have representatives?*

Ashley clarified that the commission structure would include 25 individuals, not agencies, and that the goal would be to obtain an inclusive representation of LA County communities.

- *If you have Commission structures. Board Appointees would take at least 5 spots, the new CEO would likely take spot, how would those other 20 be appointed?*

Lan let attendees know that specifics related to eligibility of commissioners and makeup of the 25 individuals would be chosen later and that "nothing is set in stone" at this time.

- *Would love to talk about doing both, maybe a pilot? What does the Board want? Do they have any ideas? Do they want a coalition? I'm curious as to their thoughts. Do we know what the Board wants?*

Lan responded that the purpose for the meeting was to provide recommendations to DPH and Board of Supervisors. Angelica Ayala added that BOS District 3 is present at the meeting to hear from the community as to "what makes the most sense". She expressed that, in her experience, "commissions are more regulated, but don't necessarily have more power than coalitions. They are different in terms of structure, but in terms of power they are the same."

- *[I] couldn't say certain things when [I was a] part of the commission.*
- *As committee member, the 20 commissioners if they wanted would have committees, there's no guarantee that current committees would continue. As a coalition could we reimagine those things? I'm leaning toward coalition, there's so much that we do together [outside the DVC] that we need the flexibility of a coalition.*
- *Reimagine Child Safety Coalition came up with a lot of demands. Most of them were taken up by the BOS. How they were taken up evolved into what the community was ready for. Regarding, my concern with the power. I'm leaning toward coalition now [vs initially supported commission model]. I see benefit to modernizing the DVC. I can see benefits of having a coalition because Reimagine Child Safety.*
- *I'm in favor of the coalition structure because of the inclusivity which is a term I keep hearing most people say. And the flexibility offered versus the commission structure.*
- *What are the next steps from here after gathering the public comment? We would make working groups that would focus on seeing the recommendations go through. I think I'm leaning toward coalition now [changing from initial proposal of commission].*
- *Studies show coalitions increase success by pooling resources, increasing political power, broadening perspectives, and enhancing visibility for shared goals like public health or policy change.*
- *I vote for Coalition.*
- *Commission – how to ensure that different groups are represented (i.e. 1 seat for shelter, 1 seat legal)? Would the remaining seats be subject to election? Or would there be a structure to ensure all different types of providers who meet have a voice for example one seat for DV shelters, one for legal aid?*

Ashley let attendees know that the intention would be to have either structure be representative of the diversity of LA County.

- *It's unfortunate that we would risk losing voices with either model if not carefully considered and designed? I'm leaning toward the coalition – no cap on the number of voices [members].*
- *As far as Commission is concerned, I am a victim/survivor. I know what I want. I want to feel safe, that you have my best interest. I would rather a coalition. There's power in numbers. A more collective approach as far as this is concerned. Coming with lived experience, [I] don't want to be under a small member body.*
- *The reality that we are facing, the politics that are going on around us. The equity and number of us. This is the time when we need to bind together and come together the most. Bring as much*

voices as possible when the opposite is happening. We are already facing a number of barriers. Coalition is the most that can do.

- *The DVSS quarterly meeting can come up as Brown Act violation.*
- *Any event in October is a Brown Act violation [if we stay as a commission since many of us attend the same DV events].*
- *With Coalition, we make sure that we have lived experience, is the experience that we look to when we make decision. That would work well with coalition that we don't work in silos as providers. Sometimes we think things are happening a certain way, but when talking with folks with lived experience they have a different view. I would recommend building into bylaws as coalition to start there.*

Lan observed that the group was “leaning toward a coalition structure” and asked if there were folks who would like to advocate for a commission structure. There was no reply.

- *Trust and safety are key factors to me.*
- *[I am moving my recommendation] to Coalition. [It needs] to be intentional. Where are there gaps currently? Once Commissions are formed, it's the duty that the Commissioners to reach out to the community. Appointing a group to lift – there is a working group with Bills. DVC has many strong cooks but needs to be a part of the infrastructure.*
- *We're talking about lives. Thank you all for sharing your experience and thoughts.*
- *All of us know here, personally, that the Brown Act truly defeats our intention of being most inclusive*
- *What is the difference in taking recommendation [coalition vs commission]?*

Ashley let attendees know that the mechanisms are different, but both can offer recommendations which can be considered/taken by the BOS.

- *It's not about the in person. It's about inclusivity. I believe having 50 voices contributing commentary about legislation is better than less than 10. For me, the coalition feels familiar in that what we are trying to do without flexibility to fully do it.*
- *It's ironic, the Brown Act came from a desire for inclusivity but no longer works in this context.*
- *It feels like we are decolonizing the DVC. Are there any parts of the Brown Act that we want to see in our coalition?*

Lan informed that, as a coalition, members can still adopt elements of Brown Act which may support productive and inclusive meetings such as having a detailed agenda, maintaining notes, and post meeting notices in advance of each meeting.

- *Keeping the heart of the idea of the Brown Act (public access) while removing the restricted access would be great.*
- *Because of the change of the criminal aspect of DV (the DA's office) to Public Health I thought that we had already moved into a more flexible space?*

Ashley responded that the DVC is a Brown Act body and is subject to Brown Act requirements.

IV. CLOSING

Ashley observed that the consensus is to move towards a coalition structure for the DVC. She mentioned that next steps will include compiling comments and providing recommendations to DPH and the BOS.

Lan thanked presenters and attendees and provided reminder that the next meeting will be March 5, 2026.

Meeting adjourned at 11:46am.