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500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-1101 ceo.lacounty.gov**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Fesia A. Davenport

December 8, 2022

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport
Chief Executive Officer

**REPORT BACK ON CREATING A SEXUAL ASSAULT COUNCIL IN LOS ANGELES
COUNTY TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS AND PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (ITEM NO. 28,
AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022)**

The Los Angeles County Commission for Women's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Assault voted on April 11, 2022, to recommend that the Board of Supervisors (Board) establish a Sexual Assault (SA) Council (Council) to coordinate a countywide response for survivors of sexual violence. On September 27, 2022, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Commission for Women, to report back in 30 days with recommendations for the structure, placement, and funding for a new SA Council. This report back addresses the phases and the structure of the SA Council. To adequately establish the SA Council, more planning is required; and therefore, a subsequent report on funding and placement recommendations will be submitted to the Board within 60 days from this report, and a report detailing the recommendations for the mission, vision, and population purview of the SA Council will be submitted to the Board in approximately 150 days.

Background

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Los Angeles (City), and the County of Los Angeles (County), mounted an unprecedented, coordinated response to the unique challenges of those experiencing domestic violence (DV). Since the courts and many agencies were closed to the public for in-person services, rapid implementation of alternate methods was required to provide routine services. Working together, the County and City worked with the DV community to maintain coordinated and effective support for persons seeking services. While there were centralized resources for DV, in contrast, SA agencies noticed that there was no centralized, coordinated



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effort for SA; and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) centers saw a sharp decrease in the number of survivors brought in for support. This alarming realization was addressed by the Commission for Women's Ad Hoc Committee resulting in the recommendations brought forth in this report to establish a centralized body with coordinated efforts to address SA services gaps that continue to persist.

Recommendations

To overcome the obstacles to the DV response during the pandemic, a "boots on the ground," centralized, coordinated response with a sense of urgency and a unified mission was the operating model that proved effective. The Chief Executive Office's (CEO) Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) and the Commission for Women recommend this approach to the SA Council as well as a focus on prevention. WGI is in preliminary discussions with departments on the appropriate placement of the SA Council. It is important to highlight that coordination between prevention, health, and public safety is a high priority. Therefore, it is recommended that this body be structured with two co-chairs: 1) one representing public health; and 2) one representing public safety.

In the initial phase, this SA Council will largely address ground level gaps, nimbly knock down backlogs; marshal resources where appropriate; identify blind spots; and quickly address needs through a coordinated effort with the appropriate disciplines at the table. We recommend that there be two phases for the SA Council, as described below, and that the County act as a key partner to establish credibility; increase influence; provide a stable funding source; and administrative support to maintain continuity.

Phase One

In years one and two, the SA Council would address:

- Partner engagement
- Development of strategic workplan
- Identification of immediate needs/backlogs/blind spots and coordinated actions to address
- Identification of systemic, entrenched barriers, and a plan to approach potential solutions
- The County's scope/depth of authority/purview to address systemic barriers and create a plan to remove them where possible to improve the SA response, increase access to support, and strengthen prevention strategies

By the end of year one, the SA Council will have identified and installed a body of members, advisory groups, workgroups and/or ad hoc committee's where necessary and submit to the Board a mid-phase report on discoveries, outcomes, implementations, statistics on sexual assault, and a status on the strategic workplan.

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By the end of year two, a strategic workplan with key initiatives that align with the vision and mission should be completed for implementation in Phase Two. A final report with concrete recommendations for Phase Two with anticipated outcomes will be submitted to the Board by the SA Council.

Phase Two

The work of Phase Two will largely be shaped by the discoveries made from Phase One and the strategic workplan. We anticipate this phase to extend into year three and beyond. The recommendations for Phase Two include, but are not limited to:

- Advocacy
- Development of a five-year plan to address systemic, entrenched barriers
- A formalized process for developing policy recommendations
- A standardized, coordinated mechanism for data collection/analysis
- Implementation of violence prevention programs and public messaging
- Submission of recommendations to the County that fall under its authority to influence/change

Conclusion

The Board instructed the CEO to consider the design of the Food Equity Roundtable and the DV Council when making recommendations about the structure of the SA Council. The Food Equity Roundtable seemed to best align with the objectives of this Council, and the attachment contains the preliminary SA Member Composition Recommendations, with technical advisory teams, workgroups and function areas to be identified and developed by the SA Council as their first deliverables once established. The WGI will continue to meet with our County partners, community representatives and others to present the Board with subsequent recommendations for placement of the SA Council and available funding.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Chanel Smith, Executive Director of Women and Girls Initiative, at (213) 974-4532 or csmith@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:JFO:CS
AW:acn

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Public Health

Sexual Assault Council Member Composition Recommendations

The following lists the recommended member composition of the Sexual Assault Council (Council). The goals are to establish a formalized Council, improve response, coordinate stakeholders, and spearhead systemic change. The targeted populations of this Council should be determined by the members based on need, urgency, and the opportunities for the greatest impacts.

Leadership Executive Director and Co-chairs

- Executive Director
- Co-Chair – DPH (Prevention)
- Co-Chair – Sheriff, District Attorney, or JCOD (Public Safety)

Council Members

- Define number – Council to define
- Council disciplines – District Attorney's Office, Public Defender, forensic specialists, victim's services, Department of Children and Family Services, the Probation Department, various law enforcement agencies, hospital ER staff, Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) centers

Technical Advisory Teams – As needed, determined by Council

- Disciplines
- Define roles
- Areas of Focus - Academics, research & data, policy, etc.

Workgroups - Limited time on specific topics to be determined by Council

- Define purpose – As determined by Council members

Function Areas

- Define - Areas of focus for the Council (e.g., Communications and Engagement, Data Sharing and Analysis, Policy and Advocacy)

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-1101 ceo.lacounty.gov

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Fesia A. Davenport

January 23, 2023

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport *FAD*
Chief Executive Officer
FAD (Jan 23, 2023 09:49 P 51)

**SECOND REPORT BACK ON CREATING A SEXUAL ASSAULT COUNCIL IN
LOS ANGELES COUNTY TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS AND PREVENT SEXUAL
VIOLENCE (ITEM NO. 28, AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022)**

The Los Angeles County (County) Commission for Women's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Assault (SA) voted on April 11, 2022, to recommend that the Board of Supervisors (Board) establish a Sexual Assault Council (SAC) to coordinate a countywide response for survivors of sexual violence. On September 27, 2022, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Commission for Women, to develop this report back with recommendations outlining the staffing, placement, and potential funding options for a new SAC.

Background

In the first report back, the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) outlined that the SAC will be implemented in two phases over approximately three years. With the initial phase focusing on partner engagement, identifying immediate needs, backlogs, and necessary actions to help remove barriers, increase access to support and strengthen prevention strategies. Phase II will consist of implementing the work outlined in the strategic plan developed in Phase I, such as: enhanced data collection and analysis; policy development and systems coordination; and implementation of violence prevention programming. The County plays a key role in establishing the SAC as a credible leader in creating a uniformed response to SA throughout the County. The SAC will be led by a diverse group of community advocates and survivors, in partnership with County entities, including the District Attorney's Office, the Public



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Defender, forensic specialists, victim's services, Departments of Children and Family Services and Probation, various law enforcement agencies, hospital ER staff, and Sexual Assault Response Team Center members (SART).

Recommendations

WGI has met with the DPH, Justice, Care and Opportunities (JCOD), County Counsel, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) Budget Operations and Management Division, and the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP), to determine the appropriate placement, potential staffing, and sustainable funding options for the SAC as recommended below.

Placement

WGI recommends placement of the SAC within the DPH's Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) because they were established to strengthen coordination, capacity, and partnerships to prevent all forms of violence in the County by addressing the root causes of violence and to promote healing across all County communities using an equity lens. OVP provides the public health framework and internal infrastructure required to coordinate best practices for efforts focused on violence prevention and intervention. This includes a Research and Evaluation Unit spearheaded by a supervising epidemiologist to support data collection and analysis. The SAC will be required to conduct data collection and evaluation and use that data to develop strategic plans and violence prevention programs that address systemic barriers in accessing services. OVP's current infrastructure can support the design and implementation of future SAC evaluation efforts. OVP is governed by a County Leadership Committee and Community Partnership Council, which guide their work and leverages relationships with: DPH, 30 County departments, and community partners, including survivors, to help design, implement and evaluate programs and strategies. The SAC is meant to be a partnership between the County and community-based organizations. OVP's experience establishing and managing multi-disciplinary partnerships with a goal of decreasing community violence will prove beneficial in the development of SA violence prevention programs. Additionally, OVP manages The Trauma Prevention Initiative (TPI) place-based efforts currently funded by Measure B and implemented in nine unincorporated communities with the highest rates of violence. TPI's existing partnerships between the community and hospitals can aid in the development of programs that prevent victimization and support the creation of a uniform countywide response to SA.

Staffing

After an evaluation of similar Councils housed in DPH and OVP's existing infrastructure, and preliminarily pending a more detailed budgetary and personnel analysis, the SAC will require staffing to undertake the following duties: 1) liaise with stakeholders and County departments around planning, implementation, and

evaluation of SA prevention programs; 2) facilitate the strategic planning process and assist departmental leadership with overall SAC development in collaboration with trauma centers and community partners; and 3) provide administrative management support by analyzing data, coordinating key stakeholder meetings, developing reports and other documents that track the effectiveness of the SAC's recommendations on preventing sexual assaults and diverting victims from hospitals to community-based resources. Staff must also provide high-level policy recommendations to management for creating a cohesive response to SA throughout the County. Should the Board direct the establishment of the SAC, the CEO will work with DPH to prepare appropriate staffing recommendations within OVP's current management structure.

Funding

In evaluating the feasibility of philanthropic funding for the SAC, WGI met with CSP, which advised that garnering philanthropic support for this initiative would take significant time and cultivation since the SAC is a new concept to philanthropy and philanthropy is not typically a source of ongoing and sustainable funding. Thus, philanthropy is not an immediate funding option.

Measure B was identified as a potential funding source to staff the SAC given the trauma prevention nexus. Measure B provides funding for the Countywide System of Trauma Centers which incorporate prevention programs. The mission of the SAC is to effectively reduce the overall incidence of sexual violence victimization, which is within Measure B's prevention objective. County Counsel is developing recommendations on how Measure B funding may be evaluated for the SAC where appropriate. DHS has confirmed that there is no ongoing Measure B funding at this time, but should funding become available some functions of the SAC would potentially be eligible under Measure B. OVP currently has ongoing Measure B funding; however, they do not have the funds which are needed to support the operations of a newly established SAC.

Given that no viable funding sources are available at this time, should the Board direct the creation of the SAC, DPH would need to submit an unmet needs request during the budget process.

Next Steps

The WGI is in the process of developing a subsequent and final report detailing the recommendations for the mission, vision, and population purview of the SA Council, which will be submitted to the Board on April 20, 2023.

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Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Chanel Smith, Executive Director of Women and Girls Initiative, at (213) 974-4532 or csmith@ceo.lacounty.gov.

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Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-1101 ceo.lacounty.gov

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Fesia A. Davenport

May 5, 2023

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport *FAD*
Chief Executive Officer
FAD (May 5, 2023 15:05 PDT)

THIRD REPORT BACK ON CREATING A SEXUAL ASSAULT COUNCIL IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS AND PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (ITEM NO. 28, AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022)

The Los Angeles County (County) Commission for Women's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Assault (SA) voted on April 11, 2022, to recommend that the Board of Supervisors (Board) establish a Sexual Assault Council (SAC) to coordinate a countywide response for survivors of sexual violence. On September 27, 2022, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Commission for Women, to develop three separate reports outlining structure (Attachment I), staffing (Attachment II), and recommendations outlining the mission, population purview, and outcomes for a new SAC. This is the third and final report to the Board.

Background

In the second report back, the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) recommended that the SAC be placed within the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention (OVP). Sexual assault is an issue of violence, and the OVP has extensive experience in establishing and managing multi-disciplinary partnerships with a goal of decreasing community violence. Placement of the SAC within OVP facilitates a purposeful partnership between the County and community-based organizations and aligns with the need to develop SA violence prevention programs.



The WGI identified the need for staff to focus on data analysis and strategic planning; program implementation and stakeholder coordination; and administrative management support. After evaluating multiple funding options without success, DPH should submit an unmet needs request during the budget process. The CEO will evaluate the request and make any appropriate staffing and funding recommendations to the Board during the budget process, considering all competing priorities and unmet needs countywide.

Mission of the SAC

The WGI recommends that, within the first two years of formation, the SAC identify current existing services and key stakeholders that service victims of sexual assault in Los Angeles County. While sexual violence occurs across all demographics, the WGI acknowledges that access to resources is not equal, or equitable amongst those who are most vulnerable to victimization. It is our recommendation that while the SAC works to increase access for all victims, there will be a particular focus on those who may be considered "voiceless," which are traditionally populations with unique barriers such as: immigrants; undocumented individuals; limited English speakers; individuals who have a history of victimization; those experiencing homelessness; justice-involved individuals; adult victims of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking; disabled people; industrial, custodial and domestic workers; elderly people in home care/facilities; cisgender males; BIPOC; LGBTQ; and Native Americans.

The SAC should be responsible for examining service accessibility to SA victims, including disparities in service wait times; counseling; healing; and assistance from the justice system in seeking criminal justice for harm. The mission should be unified across all County departments and stakeholders to share universal best practices centered around collaboration, evaluation, and accountability.

After meeting with various County departments, Community-based organizations, and victim service providers, the WGI found that when addressing issues of sexual violence, County and community-based operational systems could benefit from enhanced and strategic collaboration and coordination. It is recommended that collaborative efforts across departments, agencies, and relevant industries are prioritized by the SAC to increase opportunities for innovation and effective outcomes for impacted populations.

Another critical focal point should be centered around policy advocacy in obtaining justice for victims of sexual assault. After meeting with the County Commission for Women's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Assault, the WGI found that victims of sexual assault have provided feedback to care providers explaining that often a forensic exam does not result in a criminal filing against the perpetrator, even when

they are known. The WGI recommends that the SAC establish processes to ensure that the investigative and filing efforts are equitable in providing justice for all SA victims. They will do this by examining existing filing standards within the District Attorney's Office and conduct a comparison analysis of filing standards of similarly situated jurisdictions.

Additionally, the SAC should work with law enforcement agencies and forensic labs to conduct a full analysis examining the efficiency of rape kit processing standards compared to that of other counties and cities. The SAC should coordinate with law enforcement and forensic lab staff to research human resources/personnel policies and procedures that contribute to efficiency and/or systemic barriers related to the following: lack of staffing resources; number of cases; and external wait times, which may also impact ongoing Senate Bill 22 compliance efforts.

We recommend the SAC serve as the central coordinating entity in County government responsible for influencing service delivery outcomes by educating County departments and providers on appropriate trauma-informed approaches and by facilitating data collection and analysis to close service delivery gaps and foster equitable outcomes. The SAC should establish an "evolving education" approach to therapeutic and healing modalities by researching new methods from other entities and advocate for integration into existing practices. The WGI recommends that the SAC partner with County departments and stakeholders to explore ways to include different cultural approaches to healing that are based on cultural norms and responsive to diverse communities.

Tracking Data Related to SA and Prevention

WGI recommends that outcomes are centered around a public health framework based on prevention programs; support for survivors; accountability; and collaboration. This includes the implementation of public awareness campaigns to educate populations on sexual health. Equitable access to client services will be increased by servicing the vulnerable populations identified in this report, resulting in a more uniform approach to services. Implementing these changes will lead to better coordination through increased communication and collaboration, creating an informed approach to SA response throughout the County.

After conducting an examination of SA funding, existing public policies, and areas of legislative advocacy to highlight the structural disparities between similar populations like domestic violence victims, the SAC should report to the Board on strategies for increasing funding sources for SA victims that are not currently available.

The SAC should establish data dashboards for the purpose of identifying gaps where enhanced services are needed. These dashboards must utilize resource mapping to show increases in accessibility to services, and metrics that depict the following: the number of victims by type of sexual crime; the type of services being accessed; and percentage of sexual assaults and prosecutions by geographical region. Data-driven efforts should focus on supporting intervention strategies and enhancing tracking analysis for the following areas: consistent filing standards; timely forensic analysis; and monitoring standards for investigating sexual assault charges.

Recommendations

WGI recommends that the Board:

1. Consider and adopt the recommendations in Attachments I and II.
2. Direct the SAC, once established, to adopt the impacted populations outlined in this report as target demographics.
3. Allocate at least one member position on the SAC with lived experience to amplify the voice of the survivor and add to the healing process and consider compensating members for their participation.
4. Direct the SAC, once established, to report to the Board periodically on suggested outcomes outlined in this report such as: the implementation of prevention programs centered around a public health framework; an examination of SA funding; and the creation of data dashboards that identify gaps where enhanced services are needed.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Chanel Smith, Executive Director Women and Girls Initiative, at (213) 974-4532 or csmith@ceo.lacounty.gov.

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Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
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