

DVHS STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Findings &
Recommendations

January 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Violence/Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC) engaged the Florence Aliese Advancement Network, LLC (FAAN) to facilitate a collaborative strategic planning process to solicit the ideas of DVHSC membership, clarify questions on its strategic direction, identify additional partnerships, and develop a sustainable funding model to support the coalition's work.

Specific areas inquired included:

- Explore the feasibility of expanding DVHSC into a statewide coalition.
- Co-design a collaborative structure model centered on supporting survivor needs that can be integrated into programs with a focus on permanent housing solutions.
- Advance relations between homeless service providers and domestic violence organizations to continue to streamline processes to better meet the needs of survivors when they experience homelessness.
- Identify funding opportunities that may create a sustainable financial plan for the coalition including leveraging new state and federal resources dedicated to homelessness.
- Create a meeting process centered on equity to sustain coalition meetings as inclusive and welcoming space

METHODOLOGY

The Domestic Violence – Homeless Services (DVHS) Coalition engaged Florence Aliese Advancement Network, LLC (FAAN) to facilitate a strategic planning process centered on engagement from its members and allies.

The following data collection methods were established to engage and receive diverse perspectives and experiences:

1. Reviewed existing DVHSC literature;
2. Established a DVHSC Strategic Planning Advisory Board;
3. Hosted a visioning session with members of the DVHSC Core Team; and
4. Surveyed members through an online survey.

The data was collected between July and November 2022. Nearly 50 members participated in the strategic planning process and contributed to the data collection process.



RESULTS

EMERGENT THEMES



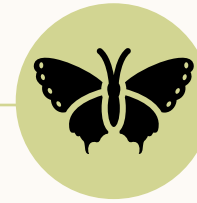
CODESIGN HOUSING STABILITY

Mitigate collective anxiety over future housing instability through increased understanding and co-design of sustainable rehousing options inclusive of ownership opportunities and ongoing communal supportive services



REIMAGINE SURVIVOR SERVICES

Reimagine underpinning philosophical approaches to the design, implementation, staffing and offerings of services experienced by survivors across sectors including housing, legal, homelessness services, and domestic violence.



CENTER SURVIVOR VISIBILITY

Cocreate financially stabilizing and life-affirming social spaces that invite survivor narratives; expertise and leadership; advocacy/activism; and being, that are safe from all forms of violence, as a disrupter to collective cultural silence and ignorance of all forms of gender-based violence.

HOW WE GOT HERE



LITERATURE REVIEW

Reviewed key documents and past reports.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Facilitated input & feedback from a six-member advisory committee.



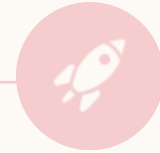
VISIONING SESSION

Invited Core Team Members to share their hopes, desires, concerns.



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Distributed a trauma-informed online survey to all members.



MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Walked through the online survey with members to increase participation.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOPES & DESIRES

The Advisory Committee was composed of survivors and service providers. They expressed their hopes and desires for the Coalition and the broader homelessness and domestic violence sectors in Los Angeles.

- Celebrate the Coalition's wins.
- Create an inclusive understanding of domestic violence that acknowledges intersecting experiences of gender-based violence including human trafficking and sexual assault.
- Support language access and ensure materials reflect diverse communities being served.
- Research and identify community and cultural community practices.
- Honor reasons for distrust of current system and providers by persons fleeing DV and/or partners experiencing homelessness.
- Recognize contributions of informal services and trusted community relations as part of the domestic violence/homelessness services delivery system.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOPE & DESIRES (CONT.)

- Continue dialogue between homeless service providers and DV providers.
- Keep focus on Los Angeles, there is more work to do.
- Acknowledge frontline staff's experiences of significant grief and loss from COVID and impacts of these times (rise in racial consciousness).
- Validate high service needs of survivors seeking services and ensure proper training of staff at all levels of the system to meet their needs with consistency and dignity.
- Sustain innovation spurred by the local COVID response including allocation of resources to empower survivors (e.g., FreeForm).
- Observe the need for organizations to heal as they raise their own consciousness on issues of equity and past harm and develop ways to support their healing journeys and cultural shifts.

VISIONING SESSION WITH CORE TEAM

In a group setting and two post-group interviews by members who were not available, members of the Core Team were asked the following questions:

Question #1

How has your participation in DVHSC supported your personal professional growth?

Question #2

How has your participation in DVHSC supported system change within your organization, community, or advocacy work?

Question #3

What was your expectation in joining DVHSC? Has your participation met those initial expectations? Why or why not?

Question #4

What is one of the Coalition's achievements that brings you pride?

Question #5

What is one activity or initiative or advocacy area that you wish DVHSC would pursue that it hasn't yet?

Question #6

In 2027, what is the one thing you hope the Coalition has accomplished?

VISIONING SESSION FINDINGS

The Coalition adds significant value to its members and system changes across Los Angeles' homelessness and domestic violence sectors, particularly in the following areas:

Education & Awareness

- Learning Space (increase knowledge on DV & Homelessness)
- DV Awareness & Advocacy
- System Coordination
- System Change
- Memorialize Coalition's Progress

Regenerative Social Space for Sector Leaders

- Enriched professional network
- Sustains optimism in the work
- Leadership development
- A sense of belonging
- Support for Advocates

Building System Capacity

- Service Design & Expansion
- Funding Opportunities & Sustainability
- Participatory Engagement
- Affordable Housing for Survivors
- Long-Term Engagement

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Question #1

1. What is your BIGGEST dream?
2. How is it currently being supported?
3. What additional resources do you need to make it manifest?

Question #2

1. What does safety mean to you?
2. What resources currently support your feeling of safety?
3. What additional resources are still needed?

Question #3

1. What are the things that matter to you?
2. How are you able to access what matters to you?
3. What supports are desired?
4. What is offered as support but may cause harm?

Question #4

1. Once rehoused, what supports are offered to survivors to reintegrate back into community?
2. Are these supports helpful in building new relationships?
3. What supports are available to sustain a survivor's well-being and progress?

Question #5

1. What is your boldest idea for the types of community supports that could decrease the number of survivors who experience homelessness over the course of their lifetime?

Question #6

1. How important is it to have representation by survivors in leadership positions across the field including the DVHS Coalition, service providers, and public agencies?
2. How well is the DVHS field advancing survivors of color to leadership positions to represent underserved demographics?
3. How well is the DVHS field advancing survivors from other historically disadvantage communities (e.g., LGBTQ, Trans Woman, Trans Men, Gender Non-Conforming, People with Disabilities)?
4. What could the field do differently to improve the social & economic lives of survivor advocates, peer supports, staff, and leaders?



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Members were invited to participate in an online trauma-informed survey designed with significant input by the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee.

In addition to an email distribution, members were guided through the questions during the fall membership meeting, and at least one member participated in a one-on-one guided process with the consultant.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY FINDINGS

Participants were asked 6 questions, some with multiple sub-questions. Each question was therefore considered a “series.” Responses to each survey question series was first synthesized for general themes within the question area. The following are the common themes for each question series.

The themes that emerged within each question series were then cross-walked across all the questions to identify common themes to contribute to the final analysis.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY FINDINGS

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Question #1: What is your BIGGEST dream?

- Housing stability including a range of options and access to life-long services.
- Desire for support and recognition of journey and personal growth and development.
- Shifting culture of DVHS organizations to be more life affirming, supportive, and sustainable with well-paid staff.

Question #2: What does safety mean to you?

- Desire to "be", to be free from violence with support, and opportunity to grow.
- Creation/transformation of service spaces to be life affirming and trauma-informed for staff and program participants.
- Immediate access to resources and financial assistance to mitigate crisis and support self-initiated advancement opportunities.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Question #3: What are the things that matter to you?

- Opportunities to activate inner-driven desires for community contributions to create a sense of purpose and offer service provision.
- Establish and sustain healthy, authentic, and stable relationships with self, 'family', community, and providers.
- A sense of being seen as whole being, understood, cared for, and financially secured.

Question #4: Once rehoused, what supports are offered to survivors to reintegrate back into community?

- Housing supports should be participant driven, flexible, and long-lasting as needed.
- Supports should be accessible, trauma-informed, culturally reflective of participants, and include persons with lived experience.
- Recognition that placement into housing can be an isolating experience and a call to increase empathy and understanding to support (re)building of healthy relationships.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

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Question #5: What is your boldest idea for the types of community supports?

- E(i)mpower survivors with information on rights in housing and the workplace, access to economic opportunities including advance educational pathways, and affordable housing programs.
- Disrupt the socialization of violence and its form at the center DV/IPV experiences within households through proactive and culturally relevant parenting programs, and broader community outreach and intervention programs.
- Create interim healing, trauma-informed, and restorative spaces for survivors who desire a pause before moving into housing of their own.

Question #6: How important is it to have representation by survivors in leadership?

- Validate the richness of lived experience/expertise through opening authentic engagement opportunities and deep listening with unlearning informed by lived experience knowledge contributions.
- Survivors represent intersectional and diverse identities that requires a wider-cast to ensure representation reflects the various identity experiences to build trust, inform decisions, and drive cultural change.
- Shift the relationship power between service providers and workers through co-creation of sustainable and life-affirming career pathways that call forth the wisdom of diverse lived experiences and eliminate financial securities.

COMMON THEMES

The findings from each of the data collection methods were synthesized to identify common themes that emerged across all forms of input. The common themes then informed the offering of the preliminary recommendations.

COMMON THEMES

- The Coalition is a valued social space for networking, problem-solving, education, system coordination, leadership development, and celebrating advocacy wins.
- The collective voice and representation of Coalition members in various decision-making spaces has amplified domestic violence awareness that has led to various degrees of system change across public agencies.
- Coalition members have contributed towards and would like to see continued expansion of services, engagement, leadership development, and affordable permanent housing opportunities for and centered on the needs of Survivors; accessible through domestic violence AND homelessness services.
- There is a desire to increase visibility, engagement, leadership representation, and service access for survivors of diverse gender, language, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and gender-based violence experiences across the sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS



CIRCLE OF LEARNING

Create intentional learning space to increase members' knowledge of DV, housing, and homelessness systems.



PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

Facilitate networking opportunities to build relationships & trust across organizations & sectors.



COMMUNITY TRAINING

Deliver proprietary trainings & content to deepen understanding of survivor needs and create a funding stream for the Coalition.



ADVANCING ADVOCACY

Develop a strategic annual advocacy agenda & create opportunity for members to contribute and participate.



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Promote sustainable economic opportunities: competitive compensation, advancement opportunities, access to housing & life-affirming organizational cultures.

SUMMARY

Since its founding, the Coalition has established a credible voice within the Los Angeles region and beyond. It has successfully applied collective education, relationship building, and advocacy action to address service gaps that were found in the domestic violence, housing and homelessness sectors. Due to its efforts, policymakers now outreach to the Coalition in the design of new programs and services. The Coalition has also been a space to cultivate leadership among organizational and individual members, in particularly Survivor Advocates. As the Coalition moves forward, it may want to consider the preliminary recommendations to further strengthen its role as a convener, advocate, system transformer, and regenerator of Survivors, allies, and staff dedicated to the delivery of homelessness, housing, and domestic violence services.

THANK YOU