

## Mobile County Domestic Violence Fatality Review

### Mission Statement:

The purpose of this committee is to review domestic violence fatalities and to identify any indicators that might prevent future fatalities.

### Goals and Objectives:

Review current procedures to reduce and eliminate domestic violence thereby averting future domestic violence fatalities.

Enhance communication and coordination between agencies.

Promote education for the criminal justice system, social services providers and the community.

Review community services currently available to children and families affected by domestic violence and the community at large.

To identify under served populations including surviving minor children.

To remove barriers to service.

To explore funding sources available for services to meet the diverse needs of domestic violence victims and their families.

To recognize racial and ethnic diversity of the county demographic population

To identify lethality factors.

### Philosophy:

The team philosophy is accountability of the “system” without blame. The Mobile County team considers itself to be process and task oriented. Cases are reviewed in-depth and several meetings may be spent on each case. The team will consider the emotional well-being of the team itself when conducting reviews and make appropriate conditions for a safe and non-traumatic environment.

### Eligible Cases for Review:

Closed cases in which the perpetrator has been tried and sentenced. Applicable cases from each year starting with 2000 will be reviewed. Only when one year's cases have been reviewed will the Team begin the following year's cases: Only Domestic violence fatalities occurring with intimate partners will be reviewed.

## Team Membership:

The membership of the team shall include the following:

- Law enforcement agencies
- District Attorney's Office
- Physicians
- Certified domestic violence centers
- Department of Human Resources
- Mental Health Providers
- Victim services program
- Child death review teams

Other members may be needed as deemed necessary by the team. The expertise of community representatives will be utilized as needed.

When a team member is no longer able to serve, they shall give notice to the team and assist in the replacement of similarly trained individual. An orientation will be prepared and provided to new team members, including copies of all pertinent handouts given to team members. The team member who invited the new team member shall assist with the orientation process and make sure that they have been provided with all materials and information.

## Meeting Structure

The team meets the third Friday of each month. The meetings are structured and task oriented. The agenda consists of business first followed by case review. Cases will be closed before new ones are presented. The meetings will end with an open discussion for team members to process their response to the case review.

### Case Review Information:

When a new case is introduced for review, each team member may go back to their respective offices and determine whether their agency had any involvement with the case. If so, that team member may provide the pertinent information by entering the information on the applicable pages of the case review instrument. Any hard copied of the information may also be brought to the review. This paperwork shall be returned to the agency immediately following the review. Public records may be copied and distributed to all team members. Extra copies of public documents shall be shredded at the end of each review meeting.

## Confidentiality:

Each team member and or invited guests will be required to sign a confidentiality form

## Contacting Family Members:

The team may contact surviving family members to inform them that their loved one's death is being reviewed. Family members may be invited to contact the Team with any information about the life or death of their loved one that they choose to share. The Team may also contact the surviving family member with a follow up phone call when doing so would assist or benefit the review process. A team member will be designated as a family contact. The family member may speak to the contact over the phone, through a personal interview, or by attending a portion of the review. The appearance of the family at a review will be at their discretion and will consist of sharing their information. Family members will not be permitted to participate in the full review process. Team members will place the privacy and rights of surviving family members above obtaining information.

## Findings

An annual report containing findings will be issued to Mobile County Domestic violence Task Force.