

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL OF MONTEREY COUNTY

## Meeting Minutes

DATE: June 23, 2021

TIME: 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5646607570>

Dial-in: 1 669 900 6833

**Members Attended:** Linda McGlone, Pamela Patterson, Kelsey Hansen, Jillian Santillanez, Heriberto Estrada, Lee Garland, Zoe Carter, Kenya Burton, Herendida Delena, Joan Crenshaw, Karlette Anderson, Lauren DaSilva, Kathleen Palazzolo, Becky Pimentel, Christine Duncan

**Others Attended:** Marlene Ramirez, Timothy Ryan, Jillian Santillanez, Elaine McCleaf, Peggy Hill, Leonela Jara

**Excused:** Sheree Goldman, Dr. Ernesto Vela, Deneen Guss, Mariela Arreola, Deacon Warren Hoy

**Unexcused:** Priscilla Ortega

### 1. Opening

3:30 – 4:00

- a) Call to order and Introductions – 3:36
- b) Quorum is 9 members, with 16 seated members – Met
- c) Motion: DVCC meetings will continue on Zoom till August Moved by: Lauren DaSilva, Second: Lee Garland – Motion passed
- d) Minutes Approval for May 26, 2021 – Moved to accept by: Kelsey Hansen, 2nd, Heriberto Estrada Minutes approved
- e) Treasurer's Report – Kelsey Hansen, CHS – No report in June. Will have a report at the July meeting. Motion: Executive Committee agrees that 2 signatures will be required for writing checks under \$200. Over \$200 would require a vote by a quorum of the council. Moved by: Lee Garland. Second: Kelsey Hansen Motion passed
- f) Public comments and oral communications – None

**2. Updates and Announcements** – YWCA wants to set up a female identified group to help design programming. Contact Christina Duncan to help.

Lauren DaSilva provided information for MCRCC's Summer Sexual Assault Counselor Training coming up in August. It is intended for MCRCC volunteers/staff, but others who would like to attend as a professional development training are welcome. Their applications should indicate that they are a community partner.



# Summer Session

## ADVOCATE TRAINING

AUGUST

2-10

Join our cause.  
Become a volunteer!

Apply to become a Sexual Assault Counselor and:

- Support survivors on the helpline
- Accompany survivors to forensic exams
- Represent MCRCC at community events
- Gain trauma-informed crisis support skills
- Learn about community resources

Will be held over Zoom!

Apply and learn more at  
[mtryrapecrisis.org](http://mtryrapecrisis.org)

831-373-3955

Other Incentives include:

- Volunteer Experience
- Internship & Employment Opportunities
- Workshop & Professional Development Opportunities



### 3. Education and Information

4:00 - 4:45

Peggy Hill, Self-Help Center of the Superior Court of California, Monterey Division and Leonela Jara, Lead Legal Advocate, YWCA Monterey County made a presentation on accessing legal services.

The Self-Help Center will open new offices soon. Appointments are needed for client services. Domestic Violence packets are available. In addition, the center helps clients with filling out the

many forms necessary for their extensive services. Assistance for securing restraining orders is also provided.

A suggestion was presented by Linda McGlone that the Council send letters to local attorneys to ask for legal help.

Peggy Hill offered that the Self-Help Center provides information regarding divorce assistance, as does the YWCA.

Questions from Marlene Ramirez, noted by Pam Patterson, with responses from Peggy Hill in an earlier email:

1. Forms we give out: The DV packets are as pared down as they can be, and at the Self-Help Center we don't give people a lot of extra forms. (We have recently managed to get the court to delete the Restraining Order After Hearing from the initial packet, which saves a lot of pages to complete. We are still trying to get the clerk's office to *consistently* take out the order after hearing.)
2. There is a DV packet with children (to request custody & visitation orders) and one without. The custody orders include a couple of forms that may not be required, depending on what they are requesting for custody and visitation. It is simpler to give it to them up front and then take it out than it is to have them go through the whole packet and then add some on later. They have to know the forms are an option and then decide whether to use them.
3. Assistance with forms: We do not have sufficient staff to help people on a walk-in basis. They can make an appointment, and we try to have an appointment made for Domestic Violence cases within 48 hours. The people who have been handed the forms from our desk have been offered an appointment and have chosen to take the forms and fill them out themselves. We also let them know about the services at the YWCA and the Monterey College of Law, but both of those places will take a few days, as well. I do not know of any service provider who can or will help on a walk-in basis. These appointments take at least 90 minutes. We have been on very skeletal staff during the Covid emergency, and assisting customers remotely whenever possible.
4. We have bi-lingual (English/Spanish) clerks and paralegals who assist Spanish speaking customers in completing the forms (by appointment only). Our state court website has a wealth of information about Domestic Violence and Family Law Cases that is given in English, Spanish, and some other languages. ([www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov)). Many of the forms are also available in Spanish to help the customers understand what information is being requested: (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/dv105s.pdf>)  
However, it has been our experience that for those people who require assistance with completion of forms, the availability of the forms in Spanish is not all that helpful, because they still have to complete the form in English. Many self-help litigants have a hard time reading Spanish, as well as English.

5. Self-Help Staff will review completed DV request forms prior to the forms being submitted to the clerk's office on a walk-in basis. These need to come to our office by 3:00 pm in order to have time to review, correct, and then submit to the clerk's window by 4:00 pm.
6. Advice to litigants: The Self-Help Center can offer more procedural advice than the clerk's office, but no employee of the court can give advice about what is in a party's best interests. Parties often want to be told whether they should file a restraining order or what to ask for on their restraining order, and we cannot give them that kind of advice.
7. The Family Status Conference review forms are prepared by Self-Help Center Staff. When parties initially file their divorce paperwork, they are given a form FL-107 (available in English or Spanish; see form at: <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/fl107info.pdf>), which has all of the steps to finalize the dissolution. Litigants can contact the Self-Help Center and be given the same information that they get on the status conference form to finalize their divorce at any time. When they first file their case, litigants are also given a "Notice of Status Conference," which contains the following information:

**Parties without an attorney may contact the Self-Help Center for the following information:**

- A list of local resources.
- Written information outlining the divorce/legal separation, nullity, or parentage action process.
- The Family Law Facilitator and the Self-Help Center services.

You must keep the court informed of your current address, phone number and email address. You can do this by filing a **Notice of Change of Address or Other Contact Information** (form MC-040) with the court. This form is available at the Self-Help Center or on-line at: [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov)

You may request a Status Conference (SC) or a Case Resolution Conference (CRC) earlier than or in addition to any SC/ CRC scheduled by the court. You can do this by filing a Request for Status Conference or Case Resolution Conference (local form CI-140). This form is available at the Self-Help Center or on-line at: <http://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov>.

*The purpose of family centered case resolution is to benefit the parties by providing judicial assistance and management to the parties in Family Law actions for the purpose of expediting the processing of the case, reducing the expense of litigation, and focusing on early resolution by settlement. Family centered case resolution is a tool to allow the courts to better assist families.*

8. How Self-Help Center works now is very different than how it worked before March 17, 2020. We have discontinued our group workshops and any one-on-one lengthy appointments in the Center itself. We have replaced that model with remote services (phone or email) and brief in-person services. We had to close our Salinas office and are about to re-open on a limited basis. The state's budget negatively affected the court's budget, and all staff was required to furlough 18 days from June to June, and we lost a staff member.
9. Soon after the Covid emergency started, the court developed a simplified form completion program that is available on our local court website (<https://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov/forms>) to assist litigants in completing the DV paperwork, and we also refer customers to that. There is another form completion program that customers can use ("Guide and File", available on our local court website as "File@Home") which we also refer customers to. This program is accessible on our local

court website. The “File@Home” section on the website also has programs to help complete divorce, name change, civil harassment, and other forms.

10. The state court website now has a “step by step” guide to the steps for getting a divorce, and it is also available in Spanish. [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov).

**-We are still reacting and responding to our new reality and change seems constant**

-We are now offering drop-in services once per month in King City

-Re-opening our Salinas office two days per week for walk-in (Mondays and Wednesdays, starting week of July 6).

Please feel free to contact me with other questions or problems you get reported from litigants. Thanks for having me at the DVCC meeting and it was wonderful to meet all of you remotely, at least.

-Peggy Hill, Family Law Facilitator/Self-Help Manager

[Peggy.hill@monterey.courts.ca.gov](mailto:Peggy.hill@monterey.courts.ca.gov).

The council expressed deep thanks for the hard work being done by both the Self-Help Center and the YWCA.

Future Presentations: Lauren DaSilva will ask Monterey College of Law for possible presentation in July. Kathleen Palazzolo will see if there is someone from law enforcement who would make a presentation in August. Heriberto Estrada offered education in September regarding Child Advocacy. Jimmy Panetta is also a possibility.

**4. New Business**

4:45 – 4:40

- a. Funding for domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and teen dating violence in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Several council members indicated that they were not able to apply for this – the time constraints were too restrictive.
- b. By-laws revision: Update on the role of the Treasurer
- c. Vote to centralize all DVCC financial accounts to the Action Council – This will be tabled to July meeting.

**6. Old Business**

4:54 – 4:56

The Resource Guide will be sent out for member approval. When approved it will be published on the DVCC website

**7. Adjourn**

4:56

Next Meeting is scheduled for **JULY 28, 2021 through Zoom** at 3:30 p.m.

**FYI: Quorum:** Fifty (50%) plus one of the seated Council members, in attendance, shall constitute a quorum, but in no case shall a legally constituted meeting be held without a quorum.

**Missing meetings:** Three unexcused absences within a twelve-month period will constitute an automatic resignation.

Minutes submitted June 28, 2021 – Lee Garland