

Arizona Coalition for Victim Services (ACVS) Operational Guidelines

PURPOSE

The Arizona Coalition for Victim Services (hereafter "Coalition") is an unincorporated network of agencies, which provide services to crime victims. The stated purpose of the Coalition is to:

- Facilitate communication between those agencies that provide services to crime victims;
- Improve the quality of services provided to crime victims through programs including but not limited to, education, training and advocacy;
- Educate and advocate on all governmental levels regarding issues that affect victims and providers of victim services.

These operating principles and guidelines will provide the Coalition an operational structure to further the mission and purpose of the organization.

1. Programming

The Coalition provides a number of services to Victim Service Providers throughout the state. The programming may include the following items. Program Committees will be formed to address the needs of and planning for the various programs:

- A. Education/Training:** Offering periodic, timely and appropriate educational and training workshops to improve and increase the knowledge of victim service professionals. This includes offering a full-scale accredited training academy that will award certifications to those who successfully complete coursework and classroom training. The Coalition's training and education offerings will be provided in various locations throughout Arizona to promote geographic convenience, diversity and respect among members. Coalition Members will receive discounted rates for all ACVS sponsored training and education programming.
- B. Best Practices/Standards:** Drafting recommended standards to be utilized by victim service providers in assisting and advocating for crime victims.
- C. Legislative Monitoring:** Monitoring legislation being proposed and/or voted on which will impact crime victims and service providers and informing the members of the Coalition and victim service providers statewide.
- D. ACVS Conference:** Planning and implementing a training conference for service providers and community leaders designed to educate all on victim issues.
- E. Arizona Crisis Response Team:** Maintaining the ACRT structure currently in place. Developing continued training opportunities to maintain ACRT member readiness, maintaining ACRT member call out list, developing statewide regional commanders

and investigate equipment needs, etc. Working with the finance committee to develop a funding source for purchasing supplies and promotional literature.

- F. Rural Issues: Providing opportunities for coalition members located in rural communities to network with each other and bring issues pertinent to their regions to the attention of the Coalition.
- G. Relocation: Working with the Coalition and individual victim service providers to process relocation applications submitted by victims of crime requesting assistance in relocating to a place of safety.

2. Fiscal Management

The Coalition manages funding through the Treasurer of the Executive Committee. These procedures govern the current fiscal management processes:

- A. Fiscal Year: The Coalition's fiscal year is July 1st to June 30th, each year.
- B. Budget Development and Management: Each year, the Treasurer will create and present a fiscal budget at the March Executive Committee for approval and the budget will be ratified by the Membership at the May meeting.
- C. Banking: The Coalition's bank accounts will be held at a federally insured banking institution. The Treasurer is responsible for depositing all checks and maintaining balanced accounting practices.
- D. Accounting Systems: The Coalition's accounting functions and documentation are maintained by the Treasurer at his/her business office until such time as a central repository is established for the Coalition.
- E. Audit: The Coalition's financial records are periodically reviewed by State and Federal granting agencies. Funding amounts currently do not require an A-133 Audit but as the organization grows or upon a meeting quorum request, a more formal audit may be performed. In addition, the Coalition will ensure the financial records are open for inspection by the Membership.
- F. Check Signing: A check request is provided to the Treasurer. The Treasurer obtains approval and verification for the request from another Executive Committee Member and then the check is processed. This approval process can be approved electronically via e-mail, fax, etc. with the hard copy back up documentation being forwarded to the Treasurer. Program Committee Chairs and the Treasurer will be authorized to approve check requests without a second Executive Committee Member approval as long as the amount is in keeping with the previously approved budgeted amounts. Formal reporting to the Executive Committee will occur on a monthly basis.
- G. Financial Reporting: The Treasurer shall provide a written report to the Membership each meeting.
- H. Government Reporting: The Treasurer leads the process for all governmental reporting with assistance from the Accountant and other Coalition members or employees, as needed.

- I. Record Maintenance: The Coalition records currently reside within the business offices of the Executive Committee members. Executive Committee members will ensure that upon conclusion of their term of office and the selection of a new officer, records are transferred to the new officer within 45 calendar days.
- J. Budget Modifications: A Program Committee needing a specialized budget for an event or programming will be required to develop this budget working with the Treasurer to do so. The budget will then be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. The Program Committee will be required to stay within the budgeted amount presented to the Executive Committee unless a deviation request is submitted and approved by the Executive Committee. In the event that the request for a modification of the budgeted amount exceeds the amount previously voted on by the Membership, the approval for such a modification will require the majority vote of the quorum present at a regular meeting.

3. Coalition Membership

The Coalition's membership is based upon bringing professionals from the victim services field together to share information, educate governmental leaders and increase education and training opportunities for the victim services field. In order to function as an education and advocacy group, it is imperative that direct service providers are given a voice to determine system changes and service upgrades for victims of crimes. ACVS does not have a membership category for state and federal funding sources that provide monies to fund a continuum of victim services. These entities are critical external partners in developing advocacy and educational platforms for ACVS and will be considered a valuable source of technical assistance and support to the work of the Coalition. Direct service provider programs housed within a state/federal funding source, functioning as a separate program, may apply to be an ACVS member.

- A. Categories of ACVS Membership: There shall be two categories of membership which support the purpose of ACVS. The membership categories, voting rights and membership dues are as follows:
 1. Agency Membership: This category shall be open to agencies that provide direct victim assistance, mandated victim notification or victim compensation services to crime victims. In order to qualify as a direct service provider, an agency must provide a minimum of one of the following core victim services:
 - i. 24 hour hotline for crime victims.
 - ii. 24 hour shelter or safe house for crime victims.
 - iii. Legal, medical, financial or housing advocacy referrals and/or services for victims and their families.
 - iv. Crisis intervention and/or counseling for adult or child victims.

- v. Community education and/or prevention services directed at issues on domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, DUI, and/or hate crimes.
- vi. Court escort or accompaniment services for misdemeanor/felony crime victims.
- vii. Mandated victim notification.

Agencies applying for membership must complete an ACVS membership application and pay their dues annually. Organizations that support ACVS's purpose, but do not meet the above criteria, may still apply for membership. The organization will need to indicate why they want to be a member and their membership application will need to be approved by the majority of the quorum at any meeting.

Agency membership dues are \$150 per year and each member agency/organization director or his/her designee has one vote.

2. Individual Membership: Individual membership shall be open to individuals (not more than one person per membership) who provide direct services to crime victims, survivors of crime and lawful representatives of crime victims as defined by Arizona Revised Statutes §13-4401.

In order to qualify for membership as an individual direct service provider, the individual provider must deliver one of the core victim services (i-vii) listed under agency membership. The applicant must complete an ACVS membership application and pay their dues annually. Individuals who support ACVS's purpose, but who do not meet the above criteria, may still apply for membership. The individual will need to indicate why he or she wants to be a member and their membership application will need to be approved by the majority of the quorum at any meeting.

Individual membership dues are \$50 per year and each individual member has one vote.

- B. Voting on Memberships: The Membership Committee will process all requests for membership by agencies and individuals that do not meet the criteria outlined in Section A.1 and A.2, verify qualifications are met and/or request additional information from the agency or individual, as necessary. Notice to the membership needs to occur prior to a vote for membership. The Membership Committee Chair will need to inform the Chair that a request for membership action item needs to be placed on the regular membership meeting agenda. Notice to the Chair needs to occur at least 2 weeks prior to the next regular scheduled meeting.

- C. Benefits: Coalition Members will receive discounted rates for training and education events sponsored by ACVS. Other benefits, such as communications discounts, office product bulk buying, travel benefits and other value-added benefits will be made available as new relationships are formed in the business community.
- D. Dues: Dues will be collected yearly as of July 1. Notices for dues will be sent to the membership from the Vice-Chair on or about June 1st and this process will be utilized each year thereafter. All dues must be received by July 31st. If dues notification for extension or request for reduced dues are not received by July 31st, membership services and benefits will cease until dues are received. Mid-year Memberships can be made available at a prorated amount after January 1. The Executive Committee will be responsible for approving and setting the prorated fee amount. On request of a Program Committee Chair, and with a majority quorum vote, up to \$50 of each agency membership in a membership year, may be allocated for a specific program need.
1. Sliding Scale Dues: Direct service providers and Individual Members can request a sliding scale membership fee by writing a letter to the ACVS Membership Committee. This letter must include specific information about the circumstances that are impeding paying set dues. In addition, the individual must indicate a specific sliding dues amount that can be paid for membership. The Membership Committee will forward this request to the Executive Committee who will vote on the final adjusted fee for the agency or individual member. The ACVS Secretary will write a letter to the requesting agency/individual advising of the decision. If an adjustment is approved the letter will outline the required adjusted dues amount. The requesting agency/individual has 45 calendar days to respond in writing to the proposed adjusted dues required for membership. Once this letter is received, the membership request will move forward to the ACVS general membership for new members, not sustaining members. If the 45 days passes with no response from the applicant, the membership request will be withdrawn.

The Executive Committee may request further clarification and/or documentation from an applicant, as necessary.

4. Organizational Leadership

- A. Nominating Process: Each year the Chair advises the membership of open officer positions for election and any member wishing to be on the ballot should contact an Executive Committee Member.
- B. Elections: A Notice of the slate of officers will be provided to the membership. Each candidate will provide a statement to the Executive Committee outlining their qualifications and attributes. These statements will be provided to the

membership prior to the election. Nominations from the floor will be accepted on the day of the election. Individuals can nominate themselves or someone else, providing that person accepts the nomination. Votes will be conducted by written or electronic ballot.

C. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee consists of a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer and will serve as the leadership team for the Coalition. The immediate past Chair may be a part of the Executive Committee. This Committee can be empowered with specific decision-making on behalf of the Coalition upon quorum agreement during a membership meeting.

D. Standing Committees: The Standing Committees may include:

1. Executive – defined above with duties outlined in the By-Laws.
2. By-Laws/Operations – charged with revising and maintaining organizational By-Laws and Operational Guidelines.
3. Academy – responsible for the planning and implementation of the Arizona Victim Assistance Academy utilized to train victim service providers. Committee members will work with the Fundraising Committee in developing a funding source for continuation of the project.
4. Fundraising – responsible for working with Program Committee members and the Executive Committee in developing Coalition needs, funding requirements and proposing fundraising sources.
5. Membership – responsible for designing a membership packet, recruiting agencies and individuals for membership, working with them to complete membership request letters, and forward information to the Executive Committee for a vote. Will track membership renewals and draft and send renewal letters to members.
6. Website – responsible for designing the content and function of the ACVS website.

E. Ad Hoc Committees: Action related committees on critical issues will be created as needs arise.

5. Coalition and Committee Meetings

The business of the Coalition shall take place during meetings of Coalition Members. Membership meetings and Executive Committee Meetings are governed by the guidelines set forth in the By-Laws. All other meetings shall follow a standard meeting format that includes: agenda to guide discussion, open comment, sharing of information and professional interaction by all in attendance.

- A. Quorum: A quorum shall be the number of voting members present at a particular meeting.

6. Personnel

The Coalition currently has two paid part-time staff, the Project Director of the Arizona Victim Assistance Academy and an assistant. The positions are grant funded that will continue as long as funding for such is maintained. Coalition resources currently do not allow for other full time staff. At such time that the Coalition is prepared to hire personnel, the procedures to do so are:

- A. Dedicated Staff: Upon defining a need and identifying resources to hire staff, an ad hoc search committee will be convened and will create a job description and compensation package through researching similar organizations. The Executive Committee will be empowered to hire the staff person and notify the Membership. Any staff hired will report to the Executive Committee and/or their designee. At such time as a Project Director is hired, all staff members will report to that Project Director and the Project Director will report to the Executive Committee.
- B. Contract Consultants/Staff: Upon defining a scope of work, the Executive Committee may hire a consultant to perform needed projects. The membership will be informed of the hiring of consultant and the specific scope of work by e-mail updates.

ACVS maintain Policies and Procedures relating to the operation of the organization which are reviewed and implemented by the Executive Committee. Modifications to the Policies and Procedures Manual, initiated by an Executive Committee member or at the request of the ACVS accounting agency, will be completed by the Executive Committee at a regularly scheduled committee meeting. The ACVS Policies and Procedures Manual will be available for inspection by the Membership.

7. Fund Development

In order to sustain a solid and value-added membership organization, there will be times when outside funding will need to be secured. To guide the organization in funding plans, the following areas will be utilized:

- A. Grants: In determining whether to seek/accept outside funding for projects, ACVS should consider the following criteria: The project should contribute to the purpose of ACVS. The project should serve the membership. The project should have the potential to be of use or interest statewide. Participation in the project should support or enhance ACVS reputation as a statewide professional body. Participation in the project should not detract from ACVS

ability to fulfill its ongoing institutional responsibilities to its membership. ACVS should be uniquely qualified to do the project, due to its not-for-profit nature, and its ability to offer expertise and leadership.

In most instances, members and other stakeholders invited to participate in externally funded projects will be asked to volunteer their time and effort. However, if more than a nominal time commitment is required, ACVS may offer compensation. In such cases, the compensated positions will be filled through open competition.

- B. Fundraising: ACVS will not seek funding through capital campaigns or planned giving due to the potential conflicts in competition with community-based services and programs.

8. Public Relations

The Coalition will host and attend information forums, conferences, meetings and other events to raise issues supporting increased services for victims of crime. Brochures, newsletters and a website may be utilized to forward the purpose of the organization.

9. Advocacy

The Coalition will lead and facilitate education and advocacy efforts for the betterment of services for victims of crime. From time to time, this will entail contacting elected public officials via written form and testifying during hearings.

10. Confidentiality

The Coalition believes that all victim service professionals have an important ethical and legal duty to guard and respect the confidential nature of the personal information conveyed during encounters with crime victims. Through the operations of the Coalition, all members implicitly promise to preserve confidentiality, a promise that in turn promotes autonomy, privacy, and trust.

11. Conflict of Interest

ACVS sponsored educational and advocacy efforts may pose a potential conflict of interest between an individual or organizational member. Such activities include, but are not limited to: selection of recipients of awards; legislative policies; vendor, staff and/or contractor selection or other areas. Coalition members should use professional, ethical judgment to avoid any real or apparent conflicts of interest because they damage the credibility of the organization.

If a member determines that he or she should not participate in a decision because of a conflict of interest, the determination not to act should be accompanied by a public disclosure of that interest. In the case of a voting body, this determination and disclosure should be made part of the official record of the body and the member should abstain from action in the matter(s) in conflict. In the case of a committee appointment, the disclosure should be made in writing to the appropriate appointing officer. A candidate for elective office should include a disclosure of any potential conflict of interest. The conflict can be disclosed in the biographic statement submitted for the ballot. Any member who is unsure of his or her responsibilities in this area may request assistance from the Executive Committee.

If a member fails to identify a conflict of interest that may reflect negatively on the actions of ACVS, the Executive Committee may, by a majority decision, remove the member or remedy the situation through alternative measure.

12. Periodic Review

ACVS will review By-Laws, accounting practices and operating guidelines on a periodic basis to ensure all are modern, streamlined and in the best interest of the membership. Accounting practices and By-Laws will be reviewed, revised and approved through a majority of quorum at any meeting, with two weeks' notice of the proposed amendments to the Membership. Operating Guidelines can be reviewed, modified and implemented through Executive Committee authorization or at the request of any Coalition member.

Revised and Adopted by Voting Membership November 16, 2022