



22nd Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Family Violence Coordinating Councils (FVCC), at both the state and local/circuit level, is to establish a forum to improve the institutional, professional and community response to family violence including child abuse, domestic abuse, and elder abuse; to engage in education and prevention; coordination of intervention and services for victims and perpetrators; and, to contribute to the improvement of the legal system and the administration of justice.

Council Chair

The Honorable Michael J. Sullivan, Chief Judge, 22nd Judicial Circuit

Coordinator Contact Information

Bev Thomas bthomas@mchenry.edu
McHenry County College, Shah Center
4100 West Shamrock Lane.
McHenry, IL 60050
815-479-7792

Description of Committee Structure and Membership of the Council

The 22nd Judicial Circuit's FVCC is made up of four committees: Steering, Education, Court/Law Enforcement and Faith Committees. The Steering Committee, meeting quarterly, is chaired by Chief Judge Sullivan, and is made up of Executive Directors, Committee Chairs, Ministers, Judges, the States' Attorney, elected officials and others in leadership roles who have the ability to make decisions within their respective organizations.

The Education, Court/Law Enforcement and Faith Committees, each with their own chair-person, meet monthly. Membership is drawn from domestic violence, sexual assault, partner abuse and elder abuse agencies, law enforcement, the State's Attorney's office, schools, hospitals, DCFS, the Child Advocacy Center, CASA, probation, ministers, social service agencies, McHenry County Crisis Services and McHenry County College.

Accomplishments of the Council

The 22nd Judicial Circuit was formed in December 2006 and successfully began operations within the judicial circuit in April 2007 with the hiring of the first Local Coordinator. All committees were initiated from that point and are all actively meeting and working on goals for the Council. In addition, the Council has hosted four annual Fall Symposiums, including a very successful event with presentations provided by the National Child Protection Training Center with more than 200 participants. We are also pleased to report that our partnerships have included Child Advocacy Center, Turning Point, Senior Service Associates, VOICE Sexual Assault, McHenry County State's Attorney's Office, Centegra Health System and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan. Our cooperative efforts have resulted in well-attended and informative training opportunities.

The Education Committee has developed and distributed a Key Indicators Sheet, in English and Spanish that will be used by emergency response and medical personnel, schools, social workers and others in identifying abuse and providing emergency referrals. The FVCC presented additional and more extensive training in partnership with McHenry County schools in September 2009 with the Schools Respond to Family Violence Program. Continuing plans have been made for co-sponsoring additional seminars on elder abuse with Senior Service Associates. The Faith Committee has held two faith-based presentations on recognizing family violence for clergy, church personnel and lay leaders. Additional training will be provided with "In Her Shoes", an exercise that allows participants to experience the life and challenges of a victim of domestic violence. The Court/Law Enforcement Committee has already streamlined the procedures regarding Orders of Protection between the States's Attorney's Office, probation and the domestic violence agency in the county. Protocol trainings have been well-received at Law Enforcement and Fire Department roll calls and will continue into 2011, along with a Mock Trial presenting a strangulation case. The annual Candlelight Vigil took place this past October on the Woodstock Square, with live music and personal stories while we remembered those whose lives have been touched by domestic violence.

The FVCC for the 22nd Judicial Circuit has an active and frequently updated website, which can be found at www.co.mchenry.il.us/familyviolencecouncil.