

## **FLORIDA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW E-NEWSLETTER**

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### ➤ **Florida Attorney General Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team**

After attending a two day training institute in January 2010 facilitated by Dr. Neil Websdale and Matthew Dale, national experts on domestic violence fatality review, the Attorney General Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team convened three times to conduct a fatality review of a 2009 Florida domestic violence homicide/suicide, and to develop a uniform data collection tool for use by the local teams to submit data to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Local teams have started using the data collection tool and DCF is in the process of analyzing data submitted. At the June 3, 2010, meeting, the Statewide Team heard presentations from the local domestic violence fatality review teams from Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco counties on trends these teams have identified and local actions taken to prevent domestic violence homicides.

On June 17, 2010, the Statewide Team will hold a community forum in Orlando to obtain feedback from domestic violence advocates, law enforcement, and other members of the Orange County community and surrounding areas about their needs, as their communities have experienced a high number of domestic violence fatalities over the past year. The forum will be held from 8:30 – 11:30 am at the **Sonesta Hotel Orlando Downtown**, 60 South Ivanhoe Blvd., Orlando

### ➤ **2010 Legislative Wrap Up**

The 2010 Florida legislature passed two bills relating to domestic violence fatality review and in May, Governor Crist signed the bills into law. These new laws provide important protections for domestic violence fatality review teams to enable them to effectively conduct fatality reviews.

**HB 1291, effective July 1, 2010, amends Section 741.316(4), Fla. Stat., as follows (changes underlined):**

All information and records acquired by a domestic violence fatality review team are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in any civil or criminal action or administrative or disciplinary proceeding by any department or employing agency if the information or records arose out of matters that are the subject of evaluation and review by the domestic violence fatality review team. However, information, documents, and records otherwise available from other sources are not immune from discovery or introduction into evidence solely because the information, documents, or records were presented to or reviewed by such a team. A person who has attended a meeting of a domestic violence fatality review team may not testify in any civil, criminal, administrative, or disciplinary

proceedings as to any records or information produced or presented to the team during meetings or other activities authorized by this section. This subsection does not preclude any person who testifies before a team or who is a member of a team from testifying as to matters otherwise within his or her knowledge.

**HB 7165, effective October 1, 2010, reenacts the public records exemption for records created by a domestic violence fatality review team, as well as the exemption from public meetings requirements for specified meetings of a domestic violence fatality review team.** These exemptions were scheduled to sunset in October 2010 if not reenacted.

➤ **National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative**

In October, 2009, the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) returned to Northern Arizona University under the direction of Dr. Neil Websdale. **NDVFRI is hosting a two day national training: New Directions in Domestic Violence Fatality Review on August 16-17, 2010 in Phoenix.** The NDFVRI Bulletin and information about the training are available at:

[http://www.mnadv.org/NDVFRI\\_Spring\\_2010\\_Newsletter%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.mnadv.org/NDVFRI_Spring_2010_Newsletter%5B1%5D.pdf)

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