

# Lethality Assessment Workgroup Meeting

Virtual TEAMS Meeting  
July 17, 2024, 2:00 pm (start time)

## Welcome

Deputy Director Melissa Bujeda opened the meeting with statute requirements. She welcomed the Executive Workgroup, made up of statutorily outlined members that include the Department of Children and Families, The Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence, at least two Domestic Violence organizations, and representatives from the Florida Sheriff's Association and the Florida Police Chief's Association.

## Roll Call

Michele Snow conducted a roll call of the Executive Workgroup.

Amanda Price	Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence	Not present (Adrianna Clark)
Tanesha McDonald	Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence	Not present
Jenna White	Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network	Present
Joe Petito	Gabby Petito Foundation	Present
Tammy Taylor	Hubbard House	Present
Jennifer Rodriguez	Department of Children and Families	Not Present
Chief Todd Garrison	North Port PD	Present
Deputy Chief Ruth Cate	Tampa PD	Present
Chief Antoine Sheppard	High Springs PD	Present
Chief Robert Bage	Ft Walton PD	Present
Chief Richard Jones	Gulf Stream PD	Present
Sheriff Bob Gaultieri	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office	Present
Sheriff Vent Crawford	Hardee County Sheriff's Office	Present
Sheriff Bill Prummell	Charlotte County Sheriff's Office	Present
Sheriff Mike Adkinson	Walton County Sheriff's Office	Present

Deputy Director Bujeda advised those in the audience that the meetings of the workgroup are open to the public and that members of the public will be allowed three minutes to speak. FDLE staff then introduced themselves.

## FDLE Staff Present

Deputy Commissioner David Binder, Director Chad Brown, Deputy Director Melissa Bujeda, Bureau Chief Brett Kirkland, Research and Statistics Consultant Zachary Durrett, Office of Criminal Justice Excellence Manager Michele Snow, Post Basic Curriculum Manager Rob Bates, and Basic Curriculum Manager Garrett Riggs sitting in for Bureau Chief Ashley Pennington.

## **Legal Remarks-Sunshine Law and Public Records Briefing**

Audra Thomas-Eth, legal advisor in the Fort Myers Region Operations Center, outlined the Sunshine Laws of public meetings as required by Chapter 119 and Section 286.011, Florida Statutes (F.S.). She explained the three basic requirements for public meetings.

1. The meeting is open to the public.
2. Public notice must be given: the notification for this meeting went out on 7/10/24 through the Florida Administrative Registrar (FAR).
3. Minutes from the meeting must be taken.

Any gathering of two or more members where they foreseeably come together to discuss topics within the scope of this workgroup is a meeting where notice must be given, recorded, and in the Sunshine. This applies to any form of communication, not just virtual, to include text, and sidebar meetings in accordance with s. 286.011, F.S. A violation of the Sunshine Law is a second-degree misdemeanor, non-criminal infraction not to exceed \$500. Audra Thomas-Eth further advised that a provision to the Sunshine Law, under s. 286.011(8), F.S., allows members of the workgroup to confer privately with an in-house attorney to discuss pending litigation to which the workgroup member is presently a party.

Furthermore, it was advised that anything spoken will be recorded, so please do not use victim's names and be aware that minutes are being taken.

Deputy Director Bujeda asked Audra Thomas-Eth if the members of the Executive Workgroup can confer with members of the Office of Criminal Justice Excellence as a resource for research without the need for public notice. Audra Thomas-Eth advised that it was acceptable to utilize FDLE staff for research purposes. FDLE is not a voting member of the group.

Audra Thomas-Eth also made a clarification statement that members may consult with members of their own agency but not with another member of the group outside Sunshine Law requirements.

### **Scope**

Deputy Director Melissa Bujeda advised that the scope of this workgroup has two main parts: to assess the questions outlined in the statute and to make a recommendation as to whether all questions should be included in a statewide lethality assessment instrument and form and to develop policies, procedures, and training necessary for implementation of a statewide evidence-based lethality assessment.

### **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Deputy Director Bujeda then opened the meeting to the Executive Workgroup to select the Chair and Vice Chair. She asked the group if any of them wanted to volunteer or nominate someone to be the Chair of the Workgroup. Adrianna Clark nominated Joe Petito, seconded by Jenna White from Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network. No other names were proffered. The Executive Workgroup voted unanimously to select Joe Petito as Chair.

Deputy Director Bujeda then opened the voting for the Vice Chair position. Joe Petito nominated Amanda Price as Vice Chair. No other names were proffered. Amanda Price was unanimously selected as Vice Chair.

Deputy Director Bujeda explained that all meeting notes can be found on the Criminal Justice Professionalism website: [Lethality Assessment Work Group \(state.fl.us\)](https://state.fl.us).

She explained that with the statutory deadline of **January 1, 2025**, FDLE must adopt a statewide lethality assessment instrument and form. **January 31, 2025**, FDLE shall report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House the results and recommendations of the group to include any proposed statutory changes necessary for the implementation of a statewide assessment.

Deputy Director Bujeda asked the Executive Workgroup about the cadence of the meeting and if the meeting should be held every two weeks or once a month.

The Chair stated he would like to have the meetings once a month.

**The next meeting is set for:**

**Wednesday, August 14, 2024, 2:00 pm, TEAMS**

Deputy Director Bujeda any final business, any public comment.

**No public comments.**

Sheriff Prummell asked about the format of the meeting, the meeting will be via TEAMS.

Motion to Adjourn:

1<sup>st</sup> motion: Sheriff Prummell

2<sup>nd</sup> motion: Chief Sheppard