

ORDINANCE NO. 18,055, 1996

Introduced by Councilman Kersting

AN ORDINANCE

AMENDING CHAPTER 111, TITLE I SLCRO 1974 AS AMENDED, "JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION," BY ENACTING AND ADDING THERETO ONE NEW SECTION ESTABLISHING A DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNCIL.

WHEREAS, domestic and family violence is a pervasive and frequently lethal problem that challenges society at every level and devastates its victims physically, emotionally, spiritually and financially even though it is often hidden from view; and

WHEREAS, domestic and family violence threatens the stability of the family and negatively impacts on all family members, especially the children who learn from it that violence is an acceptable way to cope with stress or problems or to gain control over another person; and

WHEREAS, domestic and family violence violates our communities' safety, health, welfare and economics by draining millions of dollars annually in social costs such as medical expenses, psychological problems, lost productivity and intergenerational violence, and must be reduced and prevented; and

WHEREAS, we must intervene effectively, and our best hope to do so requires strong public policy against domestic and family violence and begins with the creation of a collaborative and systematic plan to that end; with leadership, communication and coordination being critical among government administrators, law enforcement officers, courts, attorneys, legislators, service providers, victim advocates, educators, the health care community and citizen volunteers; and

WHEREAS, domestic and family violence is a wrong that needs righting in every community in the county, with the key being a commitment to recognize, address and prevent such violence, and a Domestic and Family Violence Council would provide a strong public policy statement of that commitment and a framework for abating the ravages of violence in families;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 111, Title I SLCRO 1974 as amended, "Judicial Administration," is amended by enacting and adding thereto one new section as follows:

111.220 Domestic and Family Violence Council.-- 1. There is hereby established the St. Louis County Domestic and Family Violence Council, the mission of which shall be to build a collaborative community process to increase the awareness and understanding of domestic and family violence and its consequences and to reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence.

2. The Council shall establish for itself such duties as will further the accomplishment of the following goals:

- (a) To effectuate communication and coordination between organizations, agencies, departments and the courts that address domestic and family violence issues;
- (b) To promote effective prevention, intervention, and treatment strategies, plans and resources;
- (c) To improve the timeliness and effectiveness of response to domestic and family violence by the entire community;
- (d) To examine and make recommendations relative to domestic or family violence legislation;
- (e) To promote public education regarding domestic and family violence;
- (f) To promote effective training of all persons involved with the prevention, intervention and treatment of domestic and family violence victims and perpetrators;
- (g) To facilitate the development of comprehensive and uniform data collection concerning domestic and family violence for courts, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, health care practitioners and other agencies in a manner that protects the identity of victims of domestic and family violence;
- (h) To facilitate the development and implementation of uniform protocols and procedures.

3. The Council shall consist of the Administrative Judge of the Family Court of St. Louis County; the St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney; the Director of the Domestic Violence Unit of the St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney's Office; the St. Louis County Counselor; the St. Louis County Circuit Clerk; the St. Louis County Division of Family Services Children's Services Director; a representative from the Missouri Division of Aging, St. Louis County Area; a representative from the Cooperating School Districts Organization; and twenty-one (21) members who shall be appointed to three-year terms by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council, except that of the twenty-

one original appointees seven (7) shall be appointed to one-year terms and seven (7) to two-year terms. The twenty-one members shall consist of: one representative from a service provider which offers services to victims of domestic and family violence in St. Louis County; one representative from the St. Louis County battered women's shelter; one advocate from St. Louis County for abused women who is a member of the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence; one representative of the St. Louis County Police Department; one police chief from St. Louis County who is recommended by the Board of Governors; one St. Louis County Circuit Judge who hears criminal cases; one municipal court judge from a St. Louis County municipality; one St. Louis County Associate Circuit Judge who hears domestic violence criminal cases; one St. Louis County Family Court Judge who hears adult abuse and order of protection cases; one private practice attorney who primarily practices family law and who is a member of the St. Louis County Bar Association Family Law Committee; one St. Louis County criminal defense attorney; one health care professional who serves St. Louis County victims of domestic or family violence; one representative of Missouri State Probation and Parole who oversees batterers programs; one representative from a batterers treatment program which treats St. Louis County batterers; a representative of an agency providing free legal services to victims of domestic and family violence; and six members of the public at large. The composition of the Council shall be multicultural and shall include minority representation.

4. A Chairperson shall be designated annually from among the Council members by the County Executive, and the Chairperson shall call meetings from time to time as necessary to effectuate the goals of the Council. Members shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for mileage costs incurred in performing their duties, and shall be assisted in their duties by staff members of the Family Court and such other staff as may become available, at the direction of the chairperson with the advice and consent of the Administrative Judge of the Family Court.

5. In order to give the Council a direct link to policy makers and people involved in preparing legislation, the Chairperson of the Domestic and Family Violence Council may from time to time convene an Advisory Board consisting of the St. Louis County Executive, the Chairman of the St. Louis County Council, the President of the Municipal League, and six other members who shall be appointed by the County Executive with the approval of the County Council. The six members shall consist of one Democrat and one Republican member from the Missouri House of Representatives and one Democrat and one Republican member from the Missouri Senate, from districts within St. Louis County; and two members of the public at large.

ADOPTED: June 13, 1996

DEBORAH KERSTING

CHAIRMAN, COUNTY COUNCIL

APPROVED: June 17, 1996

BUZZ WESTFALL

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ATTEST: JEANETTE O. HOOK

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR