

**Mission:**

The mission of the Violence Prevention & Response Team (VPART) is to address, reduce and prevent crime within and against the LGBT community in the District of Columbia. We achieve this by creating a strong partnership between the community and the government which enables us to focus on coordinating a community response to violence. Through this partnership, we are able to: effectively respond to instances of violence; create awareness and educate the community about violent crimes and available resources; leverage resources to provide training; and work to improve and enhance response to crimes.

Vision:

We envision a District of Columbia that is safe and welcoming for all LGBT residents and visitors, where individuals can live their lives free from fear and violence.

Structure & Membership:

VPART is coordinated and led by elected Co-Facilitators, comprised of one community representative and one government representative. Elections are held annually at the beginning of the calendar year with one-year terms of service, which can be renewed. Co-Facilitators are selected by a majority vote of the membership present at the time of elections. The election date and time must be publicized to the members at least one month in advance. During the annual election, VPART will select, by a majority vote, a minimum of two areas of work to focus on for that year that are solicited from the members (such as training, community outreach, systems reform, etc). These priority issues will guide the overarching work of VPART for the year. Each member organization will receive one vote and online voting will be permitted with the polls closing after 5 business days. The work of VPART is logistically coordinated through the use of a Google Group, administered by the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs. VPART meets monthly. Additionally, the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs serves as the moderator and facilitator for VPART. The Metropolitan Police Department is prohibited by their own policies from participating in any vote.

Membership in VPART is limited to organizations whose primary focus is on the District of Columbia and whose mission includes addressing violence within or among the LGBT community. Input and technical assistance may at times be sought from nationally-focused organizations; however, they are precluded from membership. Each member organization may designate up to two individuals as their primary representatives (with the exception of MPD). This is done to encourage active participation and continuity of knowledge and resources to VPART.

New members may be added by a majority vote of the existing members. Organizations may express their interest in joining by contacting a member organization who will direct them to the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs, which will facilitate the application process, and by completing the Membership Application Form.

Current Membership includes:

- Metropolitan Police Department, Gay & Lesbian Liaison Unit (MPD GLLU) (nonvoting)
- Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs (GLBT Affairs)
- Gays & Lesbians Opposing Violence (GLOV)
- DC Trans Coalition (DCTC)

- Rainbow Response Coalition
- Supporting & Mentoring Youth Advocates & Leaders (SMYAL)
- Helping Individual People Survive (HIPS)

Membership Agreements:

Existing members agree to the following:

1. Actively participate in the VPART by regular meeting attendance, as evidenced by attending 75% (9 meetings) of the meetings/year.
2. Keep all information discussed and disseminated to VPART confidential unless otherwise stated.
3. Members agree to send courtesy notifications to VPART members prior to taking any public actions as appropriate.
4. Communicate any criticism of the government members to GLBT Affairs as soon as is practicable.
5. Commit to the mission and vision of VPART.
6. MPD will provide monthly crime updates.
7. The Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs and MPD will arrange two meetings/year between VPART members and MPD leadership to discuss issues of importance.