



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER**

**Violence Fatality Review Committee**

**Meeting Minutes  
August 24, 2023  
1 pm – 3 pm**

The Violence Fatality Review Committee (VFRC) convened its virtual WebEx meeting on Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 1:03 PM. The meeting was led by co-chair Kenyatta Hazlewood. The VFRC was able to achieve quorum and there were fourteen (14) attendees present:

**Committee Members**

Kenyatta Hazlewood (HUH)  
Juanita Price (Hillcrest)  
Dr. Joseph Richardson (TRAVAIL)  
David Gorman (USAODC)  
Jennifer Porter (OVSJG)  
Asst. Chief Carlos Heraud (MPD)  
Dr. Richard Bebout (DBH)  
Dr. Erin Hall (Medstar WHC)  
Elizabeth Wieser (OAG)

**Invited Guests**

Myles Davenport (OCME)  
Lisa Geller (JHU-CGVS)

**Fatality Review Staff**

Dr. Renee Spraggins (OCME)  
Enisa Boardwine (OCME)  
Jenna Bebee-Aryee (OCME)

## **Open Meeting**

### **I. Welcome**

VFRC co-chair Kenyatta Hazlewood welcomed the attendees to the meeting. Roll call was taken by a member of the Fatality Review Division staff..

### **II. Opportunity for the public to address the committee**

There were no members of the public present to address the committee.

### **III. Meeting Agenda for Open Portion of Meeting**

The agenda for the open portion of today’s meeting was voted upon and accepted by the VFRC.

### **IV. Review of Minutes for the Open Portion of the June 22, 2023 Meeting**

With no questions, concerns or issues about the minutes from the open portion of the June 22, 2023 meeting, it was voted upon and the minutes were accepted as written.

### **V. PRESENTATION**

**Lisa Geller**, State Affairs Advisor, from Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions and Co-lead, ERPO Training and Technical Assistance Center, presented on “Emergency Response Protective Orders (ERPOs): What You Need To Know.”

The speaker provided an overview of the ERPO Training and Technical Center. The center’s training hub was designed to support states so ERPO funding received is effectively used. The center was established in 2023, with Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, Department of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. To fully grasp the scope of the problem, she provided data: Nationally, 48,117 lives were lost to gun violence in 2022. Of this, the majority were from suicides (26,993), compared to 19,592 lives lost by homicide. This is not the case for Washington, DC. The District has more homicides than suicides. The issue in the District is an illegal gun and homicide problem.

ERPOs are civil orders modeled closely after domestic violence protective orders. They can be filed by law enforcement, family members, and healthcare professionals. Unlike domestic violence protective orders, ERPOs are solely used to address access to firearms. Currently, twenty-one (21) states and the District of Columbia have ERPO laws. The latest states to enact ERPO laws (Minnesota and Michigan) have not gone into effect yet. They will be active in 2024.

The District enacted ERPO on January 30, 2019. The goal is not to criminalize people, but to remove guns and get persons the help and services they need. Factors in considering ERPO may include: threats, history of violence, evidence of mental health crisis, criminal history, controlled substance use and court order violations. Nationally most ERPO petitioners are law enforcement (98%); except in Maryland where the number of law enforcement officers and healthcare practitioners were 50-50. Lisa was not sure why Maryland was such an outlier. It was noted that use of ERPO does vary by state. Most respondents of ERPOs tend to be white men. When asked why that might be the case, Lisa reminded the committee that ERPOs are used to prevent suicides and interpersonal violence. With that in mind, most suicide victims tend to be white males and they tend to have the highest rates of gun ownership.

VFRC members were provided links to Johns Hopkin's Center for Gun Violence Solutions latest report on "Black Youth Suicide", an August 22, 2023 Washington Post article on "DC's 'red flag' gun seizures are low. Officials hope to change that" and an evaluation on the training/ presentation.

VI. **Vote to close the meeting to the public for remaining business**

A vote to close the open portion of the meeting for remaining committee business was conducted and accepted. The following statement was read aloud: **"This meeting will hereby be closed to the public for the following reasons- Open Meetings Act section B- 12 & 14; and § 5-1431.05."** Members were asked to exit the open portion and sign onto a new WebEx session using the closed meeting invitation.

The open portion ended at 1:51 PM.