



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Executive Department

Executive Directive 9 (2016)

ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM ON OPIOID ABUSE AND ADDICTION

Importance of the Initiative

In September 2014, I established the Task Force on Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse to provide advice and make recommendations in the areas of 1) education, 2) treatment, 3) data and monitoring, 4) drug storage and disposal, and 5) enforcement. Over the course of its existence, the Task Force made over 50 recommendations for action by the General Assembly, the courts, and the Executive Branch. Many of those recommendations have been implemented. However, Virginia's efforts in combatting this epidemic are far from complete. The ever changing nature of the opioids coming into the Commonwealth –e.g., heroin, fentanyl, carfentanyl, and other prescription and synthetic drugs; the shifting patterns of drug use and addiction; as well as the development of improved response approaches for law enforcement and treatment providers, all require our Commonwealth to not simply implement current recommendations but to oversee an ongoing and dynamic response to this complex issue facing our communities.

Establishment of the Executive Leadership Team on Opioid Abuse and Addiction

I am, therefore, directing the establishment of an Executive Leadership Team to coordinate Executive Branch efforts in response to this continuing problem. This Team will be led by the Secretaries of Public Safety and Homeland Security and Health and Human Resources. In addition, the team shall be comprised of designated leadership from the following state agencies:

- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
- Department of Health Professions
- Department of Medical Assistance Services
- Department of Health
- Department of Social Services
- State Council on Higher Education
- Department of Education
- Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Department of Forensic Science
- Virginia State Police
- Department of Veterans Services

Key Objectives

The Executive Leadership Team shall

1. Provide guidance and assistance in the implementation and oversight of the Task Force recommendations.
2. Identify and support implementation of new initiatives in the areas of public safety and health response to the shifting nature of Virginia's opioid and addiction epidemic.
3. Collaborate with local entities, task forces and agencies to develop a coordinated and consistent state, regional and local responses.
4. Work with Federal, state and private entities to leverage existing resources, identify grant opportunities that will support and improve Virginia's response to the complex public safety and health challenges of licit and illicit opioid and drug addiction problems in the Commonwealth.
5. Integrate and analyze data from healthcare, law enforcement, and other sources to increase understanding of and improve response to this dynamic challenge.

The Executive Leadership Team shall convene as necessary to accomplish these objectives and shall host semi-annual meetings with stakeholders to present developments and gather feedback. Additionally, the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources and Public Safety and Homeland Security will actively maintain communication with the Governor regarding the work of the Executive Leadership Team.

Staffing

The Executive Leadership Team shall be staffed by existing staff in the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources.

Effective Date

This Executive Directive shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 12th day of December, 2016.

Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor

Attest:

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth