

HOUSE MEMORIAL 34
Statewide Task Force to Study Gaps in
Legal Services for Domestic Violence Victims

Hon. Tina Garcia (ret.)
Chair

AGENDA

September 19, 2025
9:00 – 10:30 am

Virtual meeting via Google Meet:
<https://meet.google.com/qvc-aofu-tid>
Or dial: (US) +1 641-569-8492 PIN: 581 972 199#

- I. Introductions of appointed members
- II. Presentations
 - a. New Mexico Legal Aid – Jennifer Kletter
 - b. Modest Means Helpline – Kasey Daniel
- III. Goals of Task Force

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 30th 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE SUPREME COURT TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY
3 THE GAPS IN LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
4 AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION
5 OF COST-EFFECTIVE LEGAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THOSE GAPS.

6
7 WHEREAS, the center for court innovation has found that
8 providing a combination of resources to victims of domestic
9 violence, from full legal representation and limited-scope
10 legal services to non-legal advice and assistance, is most
11 effective in meeting the wide array of domestic violence
12 victims' needs; and

13 WHEREAS, the United States department of justice's
14 office of justice programs has found that a victim of
15 domestic violence who is able to obtain a permanent
16 protection order is eighty percent less likely to be a victim
17 of a future instance of domestic violence; and

18 WHEREAS, access to targeted legal services increases a
19 victim's ability to obtain permanent protection orders; and

20 WHEREAS, the center for court innovation has determined
21 that legal support at various key stages of a court case,
22 including for post-issuance modification and enforcement of
23 orders, can make a tremendous difference in the ultimate
24 outcome of family court cases involving domestic violence;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, a cross-system collaboration among many
2 stakeholders, judicial officers, court personnel, community-
3 based attorneys and advocates and culturally specific
4 community-based organizations is most effective in designing
5 programs that meet the legal needs of specific communities;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, in order to reduce domestic violence across the
8 state, it is key to identify gaps in systems designed to
9 protect victims of domestic violence;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
11 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the supreme
12 court be requested to convene a statewide task force to:

13 A. assess the current legal services available to
14 victims of domestic violence in New Mexico;

15 B. identify gaps in the available services,
16 especially for victims of domestic violence who are indigent;
17 and

18 C. make recommendations for the design and
19 implementation of cost-effective legal programs to address
20 those gaps; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide task force be
22 composed of a diverse group of members that includes a member
23 from:

24 A. the New Mexico coalition against domestic
25 violence;

1 B. New Mexico legal aid;
2 C. the supreme court's access to justice
3 commission;
4 D. enlace comunitario;
5 E. the university of New Mexico school of law;
6 F. the house of representatives;
7 G. the senate;
8 H. a rural area who is a family court judge; and
9 I. a city with a population greater than fifty
10 thousand people who is a family court judge; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested
12 to submit a report of the task force's findings and
13 recommendations to the interim committee dealing with courts,
14 corrections and justice issues and the governor by November
15 1, 2025; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
17 transmitted to the New Mexico coalition against domestic
18 violence, New Mexico legal aid, the supreme court, enlace
19 comunitario, the university of New Mexico school of law and
20 the state bar of New Mexico.



IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO

August 20, 2025

S-1-AP-2025-00049

**IN THE MATTER OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW
MEXICO STATEWIDE TASK FORCE
TO STUDY GAPS IN LEGAL SERVICES
FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

ORDER

WHEREAS, the New Mexico House of Representatives' Memorial 34 (HM34) requests the New Mexico Supreme Court to convene a statewide task force to accomplish the following:

“A. assess the current legal services available to victims of domestic violence in New Mexico;

B. identify gaps in the available services, especially for victims of domestic violence who are indigent; and

C. make recommendations for the design and implementation of cost effective legal programs to address those gaps”;

WHEREAS, HM34 further requests that the taskforce be composed of a family court judge from a rural area, a family court judge from a city with a population greater than 50,000, and a member from each of the following groups or organizations:

1. New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence;
2. New Mexico Legal Aid;
3. New Mexico Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission;
4. Enlace Comunitario;
5. University of New Mexico School of Law;

1 6. New Mexico House of Representatives; and

2 7. New Mexico Senate;

3 WHEREAS, HM34 additionally requests that the taskforce submit a report of
4 its findings and recommendations to the interim committee dealing with courts,
5 corrections, and justice and to the Governor by November 1, 2025;

6 WHEREAS, the Court having considered the foregoing and being sufficiently
7 advised, Chief Justice David K. Thomson, Justice Michael E. Vigil, Justice C.
8 Shannon Bacon, Justice Julie J. Vargas, and Justice Briana H. Zamora concurring;

9 NOW THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED that the New Mexico Statewide Task
10 Force to Study Gaps in Legal Services for Domestic Violence Victims is hereby
11 ESTABLISHED;

12 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the New Mexico Statewide Task Force to
13 Study Gaps in Legal Services for Domestic Violence Victims is charged with
14 assessing the legal services currently available to victims of domestic violence,
15 identifying gaps in those services, and making cost-effective recommendations to
16 address the gaps identified;

17 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the statewide task force shall submit the
18 final report of its findings and recommendations to the Court, the Governor, and to
19 the interim committee dealing with courts, corrections, and justice issues **on or**
20 **before November 1, 2025;** and

21 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the following persons are appointed to
22 serve as members of the task force:

23 1. Hon. Tina Garcia, Magistrate Judge (Ret.), General Member;

24 2. Mary Ellen Garcia, Director of the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic
25 Violence;

3. Jennifer Kletter, Staff Attorney, New Mexico Legal Aid;
4. Rebecca O'Gawa, Member of the Supreme Court's Access To Justice Commission;
5. Bonnie Escobar, Executive Director, Enlace Comunitario;
6. Professor April Land, University of New Mexico School of Law;
7. Representative Pamelya Herndon, New Mexico House of Representatives;
8. Senator Angel Charley;
9. Hon. Brenna Clani-Washinawatok, Family Court Judge from rural area;
10. Hon. Crystal E. Lees, Family Court Judge from city with a population over 50,000;

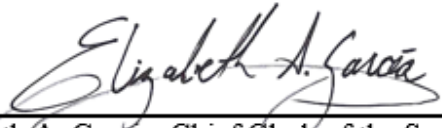
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Hon. Tina Garcia (Ret.) shall serve as chair of the task force; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the task force shall exist and continue its work until such time as a report and recommendation has been submitted, and all terms of appointment shall expire at that time unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



WITNESS, the Honorable David K. Thomson, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New Mexico, and the seal of said Court this 20th day of August, 2025.


Elizabeth A. Garcia, Chief Clerk of the Supreme Court
of the State of New Mexico

I CERTIFY AND ATTEST:
A true copy was served on all parties
or their counsel of record on date filed.
Kristen Edwards
Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court
of the State of New Mexico