

SEN. SETH BONGARTZ, VICE CHAIR
SEN. SCOTT BECK
SEN. ROBERT PLUNKETT
SEN. DAVID WEEKS



REP. TREVOR SQUIRRELL, CHAIR
REP. MARK HIGLEY
REP. CAROL ODE
REP. LARRY SATCOWITZ

STATE OF VERMONT

Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR)

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

MINUTES

July 23, 2026

The Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules met on Thursday, July 23, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in Room 10 of the State House Building in Montpelier, Vermont.

The following members were present:

Sen. Seth Bongartz, Vice Chair
Sen. Scott Beck
Sen. Robert Plunkett
Sen. David Weeks

Rep. Trevor Squirrell, Chair
Rep. Mark Higley
Rep. Carol Ode
Rep. Larry Satcowitz

Staff present:

Bradley Showman
Lindsey Schreier

Committee Counsel
Committee Assistant

Approval of Prior Minutes

On motion of Rep. Ode, the Committee approved the June 18, 2026, minutes.

Review of Rules

The Committee reviewed the following rules:

26-P004 - Refugee Medical Assistance Rule Update. Gabriel Epstein, Staff Attorney for the Agency of Human Services, and Samara Anderson, Technical Compliance Advisor for the Department for Children and Families, Economic Services Division, explained the rule and answered questions from the Committee.

The amended rule updates eligibility criteria and processes for Refugee Medical Assistance. These updates are technical in nature and adopt federal standards as required for implementing the Agency's upcoming eligibility and enrollment technology system.

On motion of Sen. Beck, the Committee approved the rule with the changes proposed in the Agency's memo dated July 20, 2026.

26-P001 - Brain Injury Program Rule. Stuart Schurr, General Counsel, and Heather Blair, Brain Injury Program Coordinator for the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, explained the rule and answered questions from the Committee.

This new rule establishes eligibility, service, and termination rules for the Brain Injury Program, which is part of Vermont's Medicaid program. Previously, the Brain Injury Program has operated without being formalized in rule. This rule modernizes definitions, sets clinical eligibility standards, incorporates required Medicaid policy and federal Electronic Visit Verification, and updates the case management definition and rules.

On motion of Sen. Bongartz, the Committee approved the rule.

26-E01 - Vermont Entry Restrictions for New World Screwworm. Kaitlynn Levine, State Veterinarian for the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, explained the rule and answered questions from the Committee.

This new emergency rule is meant to limit the spread of the New World screwworm in domestic animals. This rule adds dogs and cats to the definition of domestic animal for purposes of this rule. This rule provides a framework for movement restrictions for domestic animals that originate within New World screwworm–infested zones or travel through states containing infested zones. This rule shortens the time between veterinary exams and importing domestic animals into Vermont and may require veterinary treatment, including prophylactic treatment, for domestic animals based on the animal's origin and where it traveled through before coming to Vermont.

On motion of Sen. Bongartz, the Committee approved the rule.

25-P040 - Vermont Wetland Rules – Discussion of the Agency of Natural Resources'

Response to Objection Memo. On May 21, the Committee sent the Agency of Natural Resources an objection memo to this proposed rule. On June 4, the Agency sent the Committee its response. The Agency initially disagreed with the Committee's objections, but at the June 18 meeting, Chair Squirrell noted that the Agency requested additional time to work with stakeholders to address concerns with the rule. On July 14, the Agency submitted proposed changes to the rule.

Catherine Gjessing, General Counsel, and Kevin Burke, Director of the Watershed Management Division for the Agency of Natural Resources, explained the proposed changes and answered questions from the Committee.

Michael O'Grady, Deputy Chief Counsel for the Office of Legislative Counsel, testified on a memo dated July 20, 2026, the Office of Legislative Counsel drafted that explained concerns with the proposed changes to the rule and possible grounds for objection. Attorney O'Grady

testified to correct the memo and clarified that the proposed rule does not permit construction of residential housing in a Class II significant wetland.

The Agency of Natural Resources submitted a response to the Committee's objection to this rule on June 4. The Committee discussed the Agency's response. The Committee noted that after the Agency of Natural Resources submitted its response, the Agency requested time to make further changes to this rule in response to public comment.

On motion of Sen. Bongartz, the Committee voted 5-3 in favor of objecting to the rule as modified by the proposed changes as outlined in the memo dated July 20, 2026, drafted by the Office of Legislative Counsel, except for the first paragraph on page three and the first sentence of the third paragraph on page three of the memo. Sen. Beck, Sen. Weeks, and Rep. Higley voted against objecting to the rule.

Adjournment and Next Meeting

The Committee adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for August 6, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in Room 10 of the State House Building in Montpelier, Vermont.

Respectfully submitted,

Bradley Showman
Committee Counsel

cc: APA Clerk, Secretary of State
ICAR, Agency of Administration