



STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S ATTORNEYS
VERMONT SHERIFFS' DEPARTMENTS
MEMORANDUM

TO: House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Marc Metayer, SIU Grants Program Manager

DATE: April 16, 2015

SUBJECT: Commentary on S.9 – Sections 15 & 17

Upon review of Section 15, amending 24 VSA § 1940, the proposed language serves to focus the efforts of Special Investigation Units to address criminal offenses presently managed by the units. Since this statutory section establishes the eligibility for SIU Grants Program funding, this proposed change does not negatively impact the established SIU Grants recipients. The distinction between “shall investigate” and “may investigate” recognizes the specialized investigative skills of the SIUs and the need to prioritize the utilization of that skill set. In summation, crimes involving sexual assault (adult & children), sexual abuse and physical abuse of children and vulnerable populations, are precisely the areas which the SIUs were formed to address. SIUs should be considered a resource whenever specialized interviewing skills are required (age and developmentally appropriate), but expansion of “crimes of jurisdiction” should be carefully weighed before adding to the present scope of work, to avoid exceeding the capacity of the units.

Section 17, amending 33 VSA § 4915, paragraph (h). The proposed language creates a duty to report to the appropriate SIU (The Department shall...), any valid allegations of the “shall investigate” category noted in Section 15. This requirement helps to close the gap that has existed with respect to SIU involvement in the crimes, as noted. The two paths of access to SIU resources are law enforcement referrals and DCF referrals. The proposed language ensures that cases that enter through the DCF intake process are properly referred to the locally based SIU when the specified crimes are encountered.

I would like to thank the Committee for its diligence and commitment to resolving this incredibly complex issue.