
This act summary is provided for the convenience of the public and members of the General Assembly. It is intended to provide a general summary of the act and may not be exhaustive. It has been prepared by the staff of the Office of Legislative Counsel without input from members of the General Assembly. It is not intended to aid in the interpretation of legislation or to serve as a source of legislative intent.

Act No. 156 (H.611). Human services; Older Vermonters Act; Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living; adult protective Services; self-neglect; Vermont Action Plan for Aging Well

An act relating to the Older Vermonters Act

This act creates a new statutory chapter entitled the “Older Vermonters Act.” The new chapter includes principles for a comprehensive and coordinated system of services and supports for older Vermonters and addresses the role and duties of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) and of the area agencies on aging. The new chapter requires DAIL to adopt a State Plan on Aging (also required under the federal Older Americans Act) at least once every four years describing a comprehensive and coordinated system of services and supports for older Vermonters and stating the nature, extent, allocation, anticipated funding, and timing of services for older Vermonters.

The act requires DAIL to report to the legislative committees of jurisdiction annually its adult protective services activities, including numbers of reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult; data on types of maltreatment; timeliness of investigations; and information on substantiations and appeals. The act also requires the Secretary of Administration, in collaboration with the Commissioner of DAIL and the Commissioner of Health, to propose a process for developing the Vermont Action Plan for Aging Well to be implemented across State and local government, private sector, and philanthropies. The act describes the Vermont Action Plan for Aging Well as helping to promote aging with health, choice, and dignity in order to establish and maintain an age-friendly State for all Vermonters and as including a review of the Medicaid reimbursement rates paid to providers of home- and community-based services. The act requires the Secretary to engage with interested stakeholders and to provide the proposed process for developing the Action Plan to the legislative committees of jurisdiction by May 1, 2021. The act also establishes a 16-member Self-Neglect Working Group to consider issues relating to adults who, due to physical or mental impairment or diminished capacity, are unable to perform essential self-care tasks; the Self-Neglect Working Group’s recommendations are due to the legislative committees of jurisdiction by July 1, 2022.

Multiple effective dates, beginning on November 1, 2020