

Act 136 – my subheadings and emphasis added

Sec. 8. ADDRESSING COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH DISPARITIES

**Specific to ELC funds**

(a)(1) The Department of Health shall utilize its Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Enhanced Detection Grant to the greatest extent allowable to provide subgrants to community organizations to engage with specific populations most likely to experience adverse outcomes from COVID19 based on factors such as race or ethnicity, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, and geographic location.

Subgrantees shall work directly with affected populations and conduct outreach to isolated individuals at high risk of adverse outcomes from COVID19 to assess and identify their needs during the COVID-19 public health

emergency in order to help them protect themselves and others from the disease, such as by providing education and resources regarding prevention of COVID-19 in languages and formats appropriate to the population, assisting with access to COVID-19 testing and treatment, and identifying and addressing difficulties in safely meeting essential needs, including food, shelter, health care, and emotional support, during the public health emergency.

**Specific to CFR Funds from our work**

(2) The sum of \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2021 to provide monies *to the community organizations awarded subgrants* in accordance with ***subdivision (1) of this subsection to assist them in meeting essential needs for food, shelter, health care, and emotional support identified pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection that are not eligible expenses under the ELC grant.***

(3) To the extent feasible, the Department shall select community organizations for subgrants based on prior demonstrated work with the affected population, membership as part of the affected population, and ability to rapidly implement programming in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(b) On or before August 18, 2020, the Department shall report to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Health Care, and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare regarding:

(1) the community subgrants awarded through the ELC grant in accordance with subsection (a) of this section;

(2) any additional resources made available for the purposes set forth in subsection (a) of this section through the Coronavirus Relief Fund allocation plan approved by the Joint Fiscal Committee on May 11, 2020; and

(3) any recommendations for using additional monies from the Coronavirus Relief Fund for the purposes set forth in subsection (a) of this section through legislative appropriation or additional Joint Fiscal Committee allocation.

(c) The Department shall seek insights and recommendations from the community organizations awarded grants pursuant to this section to inform the Department's future efforts to address health disparities in Vermont. The Department shall incorporate these insights and recommendations along with the recommendations from the Governor's Racial Equity Task Force expected on or before August 15, 2020 to enhance and expand upon the Department's previous work in addressing health disparities in Vermont and shall consider

ways to continue involving members of the affected populations in the Department's health equity planning processes and action plans going forward.