

Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

One Baldwin Street • Montpelier, VT 05633-5701 • (802) 828-2295 • Fax: (802) 828-2483

FISCAL NOTE

Date: March 20, 2019

Prepared by: Nolan Langweil

S. 146 - An act relating to substance misuse prevention

As passed by the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/BILLS/S-0146/S-0146%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

The bill proposes to establish a Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council to replace the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council. It also proposes establishing two new positions within the Agency of Human Services for the purposes of directing and coordinating substance misuse prevention strategies across State government and in collaboration with community partners.

Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council

Sec. 5 creates the Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council (SMPAC) that would replace the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (ADAC). The SMPAC will have a membership of 10 people, of which 7 members are expected to be non-state employees eligible to receive per diem compensation for up to 6 meetings under this bill. The ADAC currently has the same number of members eligible to receive per diems. As such, this section is anticipated to be budget neutral.

The bill also appropriates up to \$400,000 from the Evidence-Based Education & Advertising Fund to the Department of Health (VDH) for the purpose of funding the prevention of prescription drug misuse efforts undertaken by the Substance Misuse Prevention Council.

Fiscal Impact:

- SMPC Stipends = Budget Neutral
- \$400,000 appropriation from Evidence-Based Education & Advertising Fund to VDH

Director & Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention

Sec. 5 also creates two new permanent positions:

- Director of Substance Misuse Prevention – created within the Office of the Secretary in the Agency of Human Services (AHS) for the purpose of directing and coordinating systemic trauma-informed prevention strategies across State government and in collaboration with community partners.
- Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention – Created within the Department of Health for the purpose of coordinating the work of the SMPAC, coordinating strategic regional plans, and serving as a liaison to the Director of Substance Misuse Prevention.

According to AHS, no new positions need to be created since positions already exist within AHS (related to the Opioid Coordination Council) that can be reconstituted for the purposes laid out in this bill. The positions are currently filled but could be adapted to reflect the intent of S.146.

Current Position	New Position under S.146	FY 2020 Total Budgeted
		Salary & Benefits
Director of Drug Prevention Policy (AHS)	Director of Substance Misuse Prevention (AHS)	\$137,658
Community Engagement Liaison (AHS)	Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention (VDH)	\$131,108

While these two positions are not currently funded in the Governor’s proposed FY 2020 budget, AHS planned to fund the existing positions with carryforward funds appropriated in Act 11 of the 2018 Special Session for the purpose of supporting substance use disorder activities.¹

Fiscal Impacts:

- Two Positions = Potentially Budget Neutral

Further Considerations:

Legislators might consider amending the language that creates new positions, instead directing the Secretary for the Agency of Human Services to restructure the existing positions to mirror the job responsibilities as envisioned in Sec. 5.

¹ Sec. C.1000(a)(14) appropriated \$7.1 million to AHS to maintain critical health care services that have lost federal funding and to support substance use disorder activities including needle exchange programs, active case management of opioid addicted persons and the distribution of naloxone.