

1 S.197

2 Introduced by Senator Lyons

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Health; mental health; crisis response

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the

7 Coordinated Mental Health Crisis Response Working Group.

8 An act relating to the Coordinated Mental Health Crisis Response Working  
9 Group

10 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

11 Sec. 1. COORDINATED MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE

12 WORKING GROUP

13 (a) Creation. There is created the Coordinated Mental Health Crisis  
14 Response Working Group for the purpose of developing and articulating a  
15 predictable and coordinated system of response to mental health crises among  
16 law enforcement, emergency medical service providers, emergency  
17 departments, health care providers, and community mental health service  
18 providers.

19 (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following  
20 members:

1           (1) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee, who shall serve as

2           Chair;

3           (2) the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee;

4           (3) the Director of the Office of Emergency Medical Services or

5           designee;

6           (4) the Chief Superior Judge;

7           (5) a representative of hospital emergency departments, appointed by

8           the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems;

9           (6) a representative of designated and specialized service agencies,

10          appointed by Vermont Care Partners;

11          (7) an individual who has previously experienced a mental health crisis,

12          appointed by Vermont Psychiatric Survivors; and

13          (8) the family member of an individual who has previously experienced

14          a mental health crisis, appointed by the Vermont chapter of the National

15          Alliance on Mental Illness.

16          (c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall explore the existing

17          response to mental health crises in Vermont and develop a predictable,

18          coordinated response plan across public safety and health care sectors. The

19          Working Group shall determine a process for:

20          (1) educating individuals who respond to mental health crises about the

21          plan developed pursuant to this subsection;

1           (2) communicating with the public regarding the best way to access  
2           mental health crisis services; and

3           (3) ensuring individuals experiencing a mental health crisis are  
4           connected to therapeutic services in a safe environment once the initial  
5           response has concluded.

6           (d) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,  
7           technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Mental Health.

8           (e) Report. On or before December 1, 2022, the Working Group shall  
9           submit a written report to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate  
10           Committee on Health and Welfare with its findings and any recommendations  
11           for legislative action.

12           (f) Meetings.

13           (1) The Commissioner of Mental Health or designee shall call the first  
14           meeting of the Working Group to occur on or before August 1, 2022.

15           (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

16           (3) The Working Group shall cease to exist on December 1, 2022.

17           (g) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Working Group  
18           shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as  
19           permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than four meetings. These  
20           payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department of  
21           Mental Health

1       Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

2       This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.