
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. 81 (H. 171). An act relating to adult protective services and emergency housing transition

Subjects: Human services; vulnerable adults; adult protective services

Secs. 1–4 of this act pertain to adult protective services rendered as the result of a substantiated report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult submitted to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living. Secs. 1 and 2 of this act amend the existing subchapters 1 and 2 of 33 V.S.A. chapter 69 to modernize the State’s adult protective services program and to bring the program into alignment with best practices utilized in other states. This modernization includes the addition of and amendment to multiple definitions, including “abuse,” “neglect,” “exploitation,” and “vulnerable adult.” Sec. 3 of this act makes a conforming change in Title 18 related to who may file a petition for review of an advance directive with the Superior Court. Sec. 4 of this act requires the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Regulation and representatives of financial institutions, to submit a report to the General Assembly proposing legislative changes to protect vulnerable adults from financial abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Secs. 5–10 of this act address the conclusion of Vermont’s pandemic-era General Assistance Emergency Housing Program on June 30, 2023, and establish the parameters of the emergency housing transition benefit for individuals who were participating in the Program on that date. Sec. 6 of this act directs that, not later than April 1, 2024, the Agency of Human Services, directly or through its community partners, must assist in finding or offer an alternative housing placement to each household that was housed in a hotel or motel provided through the Program on June 30, 2023, unless the household secures its own housing. The Agency must continue providing temporary housing in a hotel or motel until the household secures housing or receives an alternative housing placement, but in no event beyond April 1, 2024. This section outlines the conditions that a household must meet to receive the emergency housing transition benefit, including participating in coordinated entry and case management processes and contributing 30 percent of gross income toward the cost of the hotel or motel housing that the household occupies. Sec. 6 of this act also requires the Agency of Human Services and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide monthly reports to various committees of the General Assembly on the status of the emergency housing transition benefit and the expansion of Vermont’s housing capacity. The section also requires the Agency of Human Services to submit a one-time report to the General Assembly in April 2024 detailing how many households who received the emergency housing transition benefit were not successfully placed in alternative housing and why such placements did not occur.

Sec. 7 of this act directs that the balance remaining in the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and

Essential Investments, after the completion of all other transactions authorized from that subaccount by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, be used to implement Secs. 5–10 of this act. Sec. 7 of this act also requires reporting in July 2023 on the amount of the balance made available to the Agency of Human Services and requires reporting as part of the Agency’s fiscal year 2024 budget adjustment presentation on the amount of any unobligated funds remaining, if any, after Secs. 5–10 of this act are implemented. Sec. 8 of this act directs the Agency of Human Services to hold in reserve as much funding as possible from the Agency’s fiscal year 2023 closeout process as carryforward for potential investment in assisting households to transition from the pandemic-era General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. Sec. 8 of this act specifies that the reserved funds are not to be used unless the funding described in Sec. 7 of this act is first exhausted.

Sec. 9 of this act specifies that, of the \$40 million appropriated to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78 for production and preservation of affordable housing units, \$10 million is to be used to provide support and enhance capacity, availability, and utilization of manufactured homes; \$4 million is to be granted to the Vermont State Housing Authority for the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program; and \$5 million is to be granted to the Department of Housing and Community Development to support the Vermont Housing Improvement Program. This section also directs the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to increase the amount of its “Homeless Unit” set aside for housing projects seeking funding from 15 to 30 percent.

Sec. 10 of this act moves up the effective date of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 2, which amends statutory provisions governing municipal zoning laws, from December 1, 2024, to July 1, 2023.

Effective Date: Multiple effective dates, beginning on June 29, 2023