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S.186

An act relating to the systemic evaluation of recovery residences and recovery communities

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

Sec. 1. RECOMMENDATION; RECOVERY RESIDENCE

CERTIFICATION

(a) The Department of Health, in consultation with State agencies and community partners, shall develop and recommend a certification program for recovery residences operating in the State. The certification program shall incorporate those elements of the existing certification program operated by the Vermont Alliance of Recovery Residences. The recommended certification program shall also:

- (1) identify an organization to serve as the certifying body for recovery residences in the State;
- (2) propose certification fees for recovery residences;
- (3) establish a grievance and review process for complaints pertaining to certified recovery residences;
- (4) identify certification levels, which may include distinct staffing or administrative requirements, or both, to enable a recovery residence to provide more intensive or extensive services;

1 (5) identify eligibility requirements for each level of recovery residence
2 certification, including:

3 (A) staff and administrative requirements for recovery residences,
4 including staff training and supervision;

5 (B) compliance with industry best practices that support a safe,
6 healthy, and effective recovery requirement; and

7 (C) data collection requirements related to resident outcomes; and

8 (6) establish the required policies and procedures regarding the
9 provision of services by recovery residences, including policies and procedures
10 related to:

11 (A) resident rights;

12 (B) resident use of legally prescribed medications; and

13 (C) promoting quality and positive outcomes for residents.

14 (b) In developing the certification program recommendations required
15 pursuant to this section, the Department shall consider:

16 (1) available funding streams to sustainably expand recovery residence
17 services throughout the State;

18 (2) how to eliminate barriers that limit the availability of recovery
19 residences; and

20 (3) recovery residence models used in other states and their applicability
21 to Vermont.

1 (c) On or before October 15, 2024, the Department shall submit a written
2 report describing its recommended recovery residence certification program
3 and containing corresponding draft legislation to the House Committee on
4 Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

5 (d) As used in this section, “recovery residence” means a shared living
6 residence supporting persons recovering from a substance use disorder that:

7 (1) provides tenants with peer support and assistance accessing support
8 services and community resources available to persons recovering from
9 substance use disorders; and

10 (2) is certified by an organization approved by the Department of Health
11 and that is either a Vermont affiliate of the National Alliance for Recovery
12 Residences or another approved organization or is pending such certification.

13 Sec. 2. ASSESSMENT; GROWTH AND EVALUATION OF RECOVERY

14 RESIDENCES

15 (a) The Department of Health shall complete an assessment of recovery
16 residences in the State. In conducting the assessment, it shall obtain technical
17 assistance for the purposes of:

18 (1) creating a comprehensive inventory of all recovery residences in
19 Vermont, including assessments of proximity to employment, recovery, and
20 other community resources;

1 (2) assessing the current capacity, knowledge, and ability of recovery
2 residences to inform data collection and improve outcomes for residents;

3 (3) assessing recovery residences' potential for future data collection
4 capacity;

5 (4) assessing the types of data systems currently in use in Vermont's
6 recovery residences and defining the minimum core components of a data
7 system;

8 (5) assisting to develop a framework of critical components and
9 measurable outcomes for recovery residences and other recovery communities;

10 (6) assisting with capacity building and sustaining alternative payment
11 models for recovery residences; and

12 (7) building sustainable funding with a focus on developing fee
13 structures.

14 (b) On or before October 15, 2024, the Department shall submit the results
15 of the assessment required pursuant to this section and any recommendations
16 for legislative action to the House Committee on Human Services and to the
17 Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

18 (c) As used in this section, "recovery residence" means a shared living
19 residence supporting persons recovering from a substance use disorder that:

1 (1) provides tenants with peer support and assistance accessing support
2 services and community resources available to persons recovering from
3 substance use disorders; and

4 (2) is certified by an organization approved by the Department of Health
5 and that is either a Vermont affiliate of the National Alliance for Recovery
6 Residences or another approved organization or is pending such certification.

7 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

8 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.