

Sec. E.333 DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND TRAUMATIC
BRAIN INJURY SERVICES RATE STUDY; REPORT

(a) The Department of Vermont Health Access, in collaboration with the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, shall conduct a rate study of the Medicaid reimbursement rates paid for developmental disability and traumatic brain injury (TBI) related services.

(b) On or before February 15, 2024, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall report the results of its rate study to the House Committees on Human Services and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations.

Sec. E.131 STATE TREASURER'S OFFICE – VCBB ESCROW ACCOUNT

(a) The Treasurer is authorized to use up to \$20,000,000 of the State's cash balance to establish an escrow account for the exclusive benefit of the Vermont Community Broadband Board's Middle Mile Grant Program, only to the extent necessary to secure federal funding.

Sec. E.142 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

(a) ~~This~~ The appropriation in Sec. B.142 of this act is for State payments in lieu of property taxes under 32 V.S.A. § 3701. The payments shall be calculated in addition to and without regard to the appropriations for PILOT for Montpelier and for correctional facilities elsewhere in this act. Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of this section, the payments under this section shall be adjusted so that the total payments made under Secs. E.142, E.143, and E.144 of this act do not exceed 100 percent of the assessed value of State buildings as defined by 32 V.S.A § 3701(2).

Sec. XX 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 9 (Special Session), Sec. 8 is amended to read:

Sec. 8. REPEAL

~~On June 30, 2024:~~

~~(1) Sec. 3 of this act (creating the Executive Director of Racial Equity and Racial Equity Advisory Panel in 3 V.S.A. chapter 68) is repealed and the Executive Director position and Panel shall cease to exist; and~~

~~(2) Sec. 4 of this act (authorization for the Executive Director of Racial Equity position) is repealed. [Repealed].~~

Sec. XX

In fiscal year 2024, \$700,000 in general funds reserved per 2022 Act and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.107.2(b) are unreserved and available for appropriation.

Sec. E. XXX NURSING HOME RATE SETTING

The Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living and the Department of Vermont Health Access shall report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations no later than December 15, 2023, on the budgetary impact of: eliminating the minimum occupancy threshold in the nursing home rate setting process and reducing the minimum occupancy threshold to no more than 80 percent in the nursing home rate setting process. The report shall include a recommendation on whether to eliminate or reduce the minimum occupancy requirement, timeline and next steps for implementing the recommendation, and anticipated impact on sustainability of Vermont nursing homes.

Sec. E.111.1 TAX COMPUTER SYSTEM MODERNIZATION FUND

32 V.S.A. § 3209 is added as follows:

§ 3209. Tax Computer System Modernization Fund

(a) The Tax Computer System Modernization Fund is established in the State Treasury as a special fund to support information technology improvements and initiatives of the Department of Taxes. Balances in the Fund shall be administered by the Department of Taxes and used exclusively for the purposes prescribed in subsection (c). Balances in the Fund at the end of each fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain part of the Fund. Interest earned by the Fund shall be deposited into the Fund.

(b) The Fund shall receive an annual transfer from the General Fund in an amount not to exceed 0.21 percent of total revenue collected in the prior fiscal year by the Department of Taxes. The fund may receive other receipts as directed or authorized by the General Assembly.

(c) The Fund shall be used for the development, implementation, enhancement, and maintenance of information technology systems and services for the administration of taxes and programs administered by the Department. This shall include requests for proposal, business requirements, analysis, implementation of new tax types, enhancements to existing systems, and payments due to vendors of information technology systems and services.

(d) The Commissioner of Taxes shall submit an annual report on the receipts, expenditures, and balances in the Tax Computer System Modernization Fund to the Joint Fiscal Committee each year at or prior to the Committee's November meeting each year.

Sec. E.133 VERMONT RETIREMENT SYSTEMS AND VERMONT PENSION
INVESTMENT COMMISSION; SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) The funds appropriated from the pension systems for administrative costs in Secs. B.133, B.134, and B.514.1 of this act are intended to provide spending authority needed to cover the operating costs of the State's pensions systems, including transferring funds from the State's pension systems to the Treasurers Retirement Admin Costs Fund (21520) and to the Vermont Pension Investment Commission Special Fund (21521) to cover the portion of the Treasurer's budget attributable to the State's pension systems and the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget.

(1) Of the \$2,857,679 appropriated in Section B.133 of this act, \$1,937,839 constitutes the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and \$919,840 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

(2) Of the \$1,650,789 appropriated in Section B.134 of this act, \$1,309,958 constitutes the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and \$340,831 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

(3) Of the \$3,299,987 appropriated in Section B.514.1 of this act, \$2,309,460 constitutes the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System operating budget, and \$990,527 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System.

Sec. B.1101 FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME SPECIAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(6) Technology Modernization Fund #21951

(A) \$7,500,000 to the Agency of Digital Services to be used as follows:

(i) \$5,000,000 for Network & Security Infrastructure Modernization for the planning and design and for the replacement of legacy infrastructure (hardware and software) platforms underlying the network and security architecture.

(I) The Agency of Digital Services shall select a vendor through a competitive bid process. The Agency of Digital Services shall both consider bids with options to buy or lease equipment. Per 3 V.S.A. § 3303, any project with a total cost of \$1,000,000.00 or greater shall be subject to an expert independent review. The review shall include an analysis of all options, although the Agency of Digital Services is limited to the bids that it receives. The Agency of Digital Services may also purchase or lease equipment through a separate competitive bid process.

(II) Once a vendor has been selected and an independent review completed, the Agency of Digital Services shall issue a verbal or written report to the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee.

(iii) \$2,500,000 for IT investments to modernize existing IT systems or automate manual processes by adding IT solutions. A portion of the funds shall be used to complete a security risk assessment and for monitoring tools in support of the new statewide network.

(I) Any project with a total cost of \$1,000,000 shall be subject to an expert independent review per 3 V.S.A. § 3303. Vendors shall be selected through a competitive bid process.

Sec. E.3XX CORRECTIONAL SERVICES; OUT OF STATE BEDS

(a) To the extent that the General Fund is reduced in the Correctional Services – out-of-state beds appropriation under Sec. B.339 of this Act, the corresponding amount of General Fund is budgeted in the Correctional Services Justice Reinvestment II appropriation under Sec. B.338.1 of this Act in a net-neutral manner. As a result of this neutral reallocation of General Fund among the two appropriations, any unexpended appropriations remaining in Correctional Services – out-of-state beds appropriation on June 30th of any fiscal year shall revert pursuant to 32 VSA Sec. 703.

C.XXX DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2022 OUT OF STATE
BEDS CARRYFORWARD FUNDS AND JUSTICE REINVESTMENT II
FUNDING

Notwithstanding 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.335, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 62, and by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.111, \$1,000,000 of Department of Corrections Out of State Bed General Fund appropriation carried forward from fiscal year 2022 shall revert to the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 for appropriation to Justice Reinvestment II in fiscal year 2023.

(a) \$250,000 to Community Justice Centers to be distributed as follows:

(1) \$95,640 for a 3% COLA increase for FY 2024

(2) \$154,360 in grants to be distributed equally to the 17 Community Justice Centers to be used for program development and implementation, technology upgrades, and staff and volunteer recruitment.

(b) \$250,000 for re-Entry Services to support the re-entry services for incarcerated women at Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility as provided by the Lund, Mercy Connections, Vermont Works for Women, and the DIVAS program

(c) \$500,000 to the Department of Corrections for the development and implementation of the Offender Management System (OMS) intelligence layer.

Sec. X. 13 V.S.A. § 7282 is amended to read:

§ 7282. SURCHARGE

(a) In addition to any penalty or fine imposed by the court or ~~Judicial Bureau~~ for a criminal offense or any civil penalty imposed by the Judicial Bureau for a traffic violation, including any violation of a fish and wildlife statute or regulation, violation of a motor vehicle statute, or violation of any local ordinance relating to the operation of a motor vehicle, except violations relating to seat belts and child restraints and ordinances relating to parking violations, the clerk of the court or Judicial Bureau shall levy an additional surcharge of:

* * *

(8)(A) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2006, but before July 1, 2008, \$26.00, of which \$18.75 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund.

(B) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2008, but before July 1, 2009, \$36.00, of which \$28.75 shall be deposited in the Victims' Compensation Special Fund.

(C) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2009, but before July 1, 2013, \$41.00, of which ~~\$23.75~~ \$27.50 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund created by section 5359 of this title, and of which ~~\$10.00~~ \$13.50 shall be deposited in the Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund created by section 5360 of this title.

(D) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2013, \$47.00, of which ~~\$29.75~~ \$33.50 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund

created by section 5359 of this title, and of which ~~\$10.00~~ \$13.50 shall be deposited in the Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund created by section 5360 of this title.

* * *

(c) ~~SUI~~ SIU surcharge. In addition to any penalty or fine imposed by the court or Judicial Bureau for a criminal offense committed after July 1, 2009, the clerk of the court or Judicial Bureau shall levy an additional surcharge of \$100.00 to be deposited in the General Fund, in support of the Specialized Investigative Unit Grants Board created in 24 V.S.A. § 1940(c), and used to pay for the costs of Specialized Investigative Units.

Sec. E.338.XX 13 V.S.A. § 7554b is amended to read:

§ 7554b. HOME DETENTION PROGRAM

(a) Definition. As used in this section, “home detention” means a program of confinement and supervision that restricts a defendant to a preapproved residence continuously, except for authorized absences, and is enforced by appropriate means of surveillance and electronic monitoring by the Department of Corrections, including the use of passive electronic monitoring. The court may authorize scheduled absences such as for work, school, or treatment. Any changes in the schedule shall be solely at the discretion of the Department of Corrections. A defendant who is on home detention shall remain in the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections with conditions set by the court.

* * *

Sec. E.338.XX HOME DETENTION PROGRAM; REVIEW; REPORT

(a) The Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee shall review the Home Detention Program under 13 V.S.A. § 7554b, including its historical and current use, defendant eligibility criteria, and any potential changes to the types of crimes for which it can be used.

(b) On or before November 15, 2023, the Committee shall submit any findings resulting from its review in the form of proposed legislation to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions.

Sec. E.338.XX REPEALS

(a) 13 V.S.A. § 7554(a)(1)(G) is repealed.

(b) 13 V.S.A. § 7554(a)(2)(F) is repealed.

(c) 13 V.S.A. § 7554b is repealed on July 1, 2025.

(b) 13 V.S.A. § 7554d is repealed.

Sec. E.338.XX 28 V.S.A. chapter 11 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 11. SUPERVISION OF ADULT INMATES AT
THE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

* * *

Subchapter 1A. Offender Reintegration

* * *

§ 722. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) “Absconding” means:

(A) the offender has not met supervision requirements, cannot be located with reasonable efforts, and has not made contact with Department staff within three days if convicted of a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7) or seven days if convicted of an unlisted crime;

(B) the offender flees from Department staff or law enforcement; or

(C) the offender left the State without Department authorization.

(2) “Conditional reentry” means the process by which a sentenced offender is released into a community for supervision while participating in programs that assist the reintegration process. The offender’s ability to remain in the community under supervision is conditioned on the offender’s progress in reentry programs.

~~(2)~~(3) “Listed crime” means any offense identified in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7).

(4) “Technical violation” means a violation of conditions of furlough that does not constitute a new crime.

~~(3)~~(5) “Total effective sentence” means the sentence imposed under 13 V.S.A. §§ 7031 and 7032 as calculated by the Department in the offender’s records.

~~(4)~~(6) “Unlisted crime” means any offense that is a crime under Vermont law, but is not identified in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7).

* * *

§ 724. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF COMMUNITY SUPERVISION FURLOUGH

* * *

(d) Technical violations.

~~(1) As used in this section, “technical violation” means a violation of conditions of furlough that does not constitute a new crime.~~

~~(2)~~ It shall be abuse of the Department’s discretion to revoke furlough or interrupt furlough status for 90 days or longer for a technical violation, unless:

~~(A)~~(1) The offender’s risk to reoffend can no longer be adequately controlled in the community, and no other method to control noncompliance is suitable.

~~(B)~~(2) The violation or pattern of violations indicate the offender poses a danger to others.

~~(C)~~(3) The offender’s violation is absconding from community supervision furlough. ~~As used in this subdivision, “absconding” means:~~

~~(i) the offender has not met supervision requirements, cannot be located with reasonable efforts, and has not made contact with Department staff within three days if~~

~~convicted of a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7) or seven days if convicted of a crime not listed in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7);~~

~~(ii) the offender flees from Department staff or law enforcement; or~~

~~(iii) the offender left the State without Department authorization.~~

* * *

§ 808e. ABSCONDING FROM FURLOUGH; WARRANT

(a) “Absconded” has the same meaning as “absconding” as defined in subdivision 722(1)(A) of this title.

(b) The Commissioner of Corrections may issue a warrant for the arrest of a person who has absconded from furlough status in violation of subsection 808(a) or section 723 or 808a, ~~808b~~, or ~~808e~~ of this title, requiring the person to be returned to a correctional facility. A law enforcement officer who is provided with a warrant issued pursuant to this section shall execute the warrant and return the person who has absconded from furlough to the Department of Corrections.

~~(b)(c)~~ (c) A person for whom an arrest warrant is issued pursuant to this section shall not earn credit toward service of ~~his or her~~ the person’s sentence for any days that the warrant is outstanding.

* * *

Sec. ____ 3 V.S.A. § 479 is amended to read:

§ 479. GROUP INSURANCE

(a)(1) As provided under Sec. 631 of this title, a member who is insured by the respective group insurance plans immediately preceding the member's effective date of retirement shall be entitled to continuation of group insurance as follows:

~~(A)~~(i) coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees; or

~~(B)~~(ii) for a Group F and Group G plan member first included in the membership of the system on or after July 1, 2008, coverage in the group medical benefit plan offered by the State of Vermont for active State employees and pursuant to the following, provided:

~~(i)~~(I) a member who has completed five years and less than 10 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay the full cost of the premium;

~~(ii)~~(II) a member who has completed 10 years and less than 15 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay 60 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iii)~~(III) a member who has completed 15 years and less than 20 years of creditable service at his or her retirement shall pay 40 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iv)~~(IV) a member who has completed 20 years or more of creditable service at his or her retirement shall pay 20 percent of the cost of the premium; and

~~(2)~~(B) members who have completed 20 years of creditable service at their effective date of retirement shall be entitled to the continuation of life insurance in the amount of \$10,000.00.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (1)(A)(i) or (ii) of this subsection to the contrary, a member may be offered health coverage other than coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees if the following conditions are met:

(A) the alternative health coverage is substantially equivalent to the coverage offered through the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees; and

(B) the alternative health coverage is mutually agreeable to:

(i) the State;

(ii) the Vermont State Employees' Association;

(iii) the Vermont Troopers' Association; and

(iv) the Vermont Retired State Employees' Association.

(b) As of July 1, 2007, members of the Group C plan who separate from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who have at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to participate in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to section 631 of this title.

(c) Premiums for coverage of retired members of the Group C plan and their dependents in the group medical benefit plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be prorated on the same basis as is

provided for active employees by the current collective bargaining agreement for the nonmanagement unit. The amounts designated as the State's share of premium for the medical benefit plan and the total premium for group life insurance provided under subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be paid by the Fund as an operating expense in accordance with subsection 473(d) of this title.

(d) After January 1, 2007, the State Treasurer may offer and administer a dental benefit plan for retired members, beneficiaries, eligible dependents, and eligible retirees of special affiliated groups and the dependents of members of those groups who are eligible for coverage in the State Employee Group Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. The Plan shall be separate and apart from any dental benefit plan offered to Vermont State employees. The original plan of benefits, and any changes thereto, shall be determined by the State Treasurer with due consideration of recommendations from the Retired Employees' Committee on Insurance established in section 636 of this title.

* * *

(3) Dependent eligibility shall be determined in the manner applied to determinations for coverage in the State Employee Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

(4) [Repealed.]

(e) As of January 1, 2007, and thereafter, upon retirement, members entitled to prorated group medical benefit plan premium payments from the Retirement System under the terms of this section shall have a one-time option to reduce the percentage of premium payments from the Retirement System during the member's life, with the

provision that the Fund shall continue making an equal percentage of premium payments after the member's death for the life of the dependent beneficiary nominated by the member under section 468 of this title, should such dependent beneficiary survive the member. The Retirement Board, after consultation with its actuary, shall establish reduced premium payment percentages that are as cost neutral to the Fund as possible.

(f) [Repealed.]

(g) A member of the Group F or Group G plan who is first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who separates from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who has at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to reinstate the same level of coverage, in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, that existed at the date of separation from service. Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to subsection 479(a) of this title.

* * *

Sec. __. 3 V.S.A. § 925 is amended to read:

§ 925. MEDIATION; FACT FINDING

* * *

(i)(1) In the case of the Vermont State Colleges or the University of Vermont, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and

recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board. The Board shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

(2) In the case of the State of Vermont or the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board, or upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator. A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired State employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title. The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

* * *

Sec. ____ 3 V.S.A. § 1018 is amended to read:

§ 1018. MEDIATION; FACT-FINDING; LAST BEST OFFER

* * *

(i)(1) If the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations or within a period of time mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit to the Board or, upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties its last best offer on all disputed issues as a single package. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator.

(2) Each party's last best offer shall be:

(A) filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal;

(B) certified to the Board or the arbitrator by the fact finder; and

(C) unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator.

(3) A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title.

(4) The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings and consider the recommendations of the fact finder.

~~(4)~~(5)(A) Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment, and shall determine its cost.

* * *

~~(5)~~(6) The Board or the arbitrator shall not issue an order under this subsection that is in conflict with any law or rule or that relates to an issue that is not bargainable.

~~(6)~~(7) The decision of the Board or the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties.

Sec.XXX. HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

(a) On or before September 1, 2023, the Agency of Human Services shall convene a working group, including individuals with lived experience of homelessness, local and statewide representatives of the Continuums of Care Program, representatives of housing- and homelessness-related organizations, a member from the House Committees on General and Housing, a member from the House Committee on Human Services, a member from the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs, and a member from the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare to review, develop, and provide recommendations on Vermont's homelessness response and prevention programs and governance system, including any measures of success that incorporate recent and relevant assessments and statewide plans.

(b)(1) On or before January 15, 2024, the working group established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall submit its initial findings and recommendations to the House Committees on Human Services and on General and Housing and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to align with the federal goal to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by 2025, in accordance with the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, including strategies to:

(A) address racial and other disparities, as well as the multiplier effects of two or more concurrent risk factors, among people experiencing homelessness;

(B) justify State and local action through research of quantitative and qualitative data, including the perspectives of individuals who have or are currently experiencing homelessness;

(C) eliminate the silos between State and local governments and organizations; public, private, and philanthropic sectors; and individuals who have or are currently experiencing homelessness;

(D) increase the supply of and access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing and tailored supports for individuals at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness;

(E) improve response systems to meet the urgent crisis of homelessness, especially unsheltered homelessness; and

(F) reduce the risk of housing instability for households most likely to experience homelessness.

(2) On or before January 1, 2024, the working group shall submit an interim report on its work pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) to the House Committees on Human Services and on General and Housing and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

(3) On or before January 1, 2025, the working group convened in subsection (a) of this section shall submit a final report on its work pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) to the House Committees on Human Services and on General and Housing

and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Economic Development,
Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. X. ADULT DAY PROGRAMS; RATE STUDY

(a) The Department of Vermont Health Access, in collaboration with the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, and the Vermont Association of Adult Day Services shall propose payment methodologies that encourage increased enrollment or attendance or both and predictable funding levels for adult day programs.

(b) On or before February 15, 2024, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall submit the report to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare.

Sec. X. DESIGNATED AND SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES; INCREASE

It is the intent of the General Assembly that it will be incumbent upon the designated and specialized service agencies to focus any new funds on recruitment and retention of their direct service staff. In fiscal year 2024, the Agency of Human Services shall increase funding to the designated and specialized service agencies in such a manner so as to support a four percent fund increase that furthers improved transparency, accountability and equity for Vermonters.

Sec. X. ASSISTIVE COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

Beginning in fiscal year 2025, the Agency of Human Services shall move the appropriation for assistive community care services from the Department of Vermont Health Access to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living.

Sec. E.318.XX. PARENT CHILD CENTERS NETWORK; EMPLOYEE SALARIES
AND BENEFITS

It is the intent of the General Assembly increased funding appropriated in fiscal year 2024 to the parent child centers shall be used to increase employee salaries and benefits, and not for new or expanded programming.

Sec. E 323.7 REACH AHEAD PILOT PROGRAM

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in 33 V.S.A. chapter 12, funds appropriated to the Department for Children and Families for the Reach Ahead Pilot Program in fiscal year 2024 shall be used to:

(1) enroll families that have left the Reach Up program or the postsecondary education program within the prior 12 months for employment that meets the federal work requirements for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program for the family's size and composition;

(2) increase the amount of monthly food assistance from \$50 to \$100 in the first 12 months of a family's participation in Reach Ahead;

(3) increase the amount of monthly food assistance from \$5 to \$50 in the second 12 months of a family's participation in Reach Ahead; and

(4) provide incentive payments to participating families in the amounts of:

(A) \$1,250, to be paid after participating in the Program for six months;

(B) \$1,000, to be paid after participating in the Program for 12 months;

(C) \$750, to be paid after participating in the Program for 18 months; and

(D) \$750, to be paid after participating in the Program for 24 months.

Sec. E.323.8 REACH AHEAD PILOT PROGRAM

The Department for Children and Families' Economic Services Division shall collect and report data that measures outcomes for participants of the Reach Ahead Pilot Program established in Sec. E.323.7 of this act; the indicators used to measure participant and Pilot Program progress; and the strategies that are implemented to improve quality of life for all children, adults, and families participating in the Reach Ahead Pilot Program.

Sec. E.325. DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – OFFICE OF
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 of this act, \$14,789,597 shall be granted to community agencies to assist individuals experiencing homelessness by preserving existing services, increasing services, or increasing resources available statewide. These funds may be granted alone or in conjunction with federal Emergency Solutions Grants funds. Funds shall be administered in consultation with the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness.

Sec. X. 33 V.S.A. § 1103 is amended to read:

§ 1103. ELIGIBILITY AND BENEFIT LEVELS

(a) Financial assistance shall be given for the benefit of a dependent child to the relative or caretaker with whom the child is living, unless otherwise provided. The amount of financial assistance to which an eligible person is entitled shall be determined with due regard to the income, resources, current basic needs calculation, and maintenance available to that person and, as far as funds are available, shall provide that person a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health. The Commissioner may fix by rule maximum amounts of financial assistance and act to ensure that the expenditures for the programs shall not exceed appropriations for them consistent with section 101 of this title. In no case shall the Department expend State funds in excess of the appropriations for the programs under this chapter.

* * *

Sec. XXX. STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP; FACILITY PLANNING FOR
JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH

(a) The Department for Children and Families, in consultation with the Department of Buildings and General Services, shall assemble a stakeholder working group to provide regular input on the planning, design, development, and implementation of the temporary stabilization facility for youth and on the development of a long-term plan for the high-end system of care.

(b) The stakeholder working group, constituted as a subcommittee of, or drawn from, existing groups or created as a separate group, may include representatives from:

(1) the families of children in the Department's custody for delinquency offenses;

(2) youth who have been in custody for juvenile offenses;

(3) the Juvenile Defender's Office;

(4) the Office of State's Attorneys;

(5) the Family Court;

(6) the Office of Racial Equity;

(7) the Vermont Family Network;

(8) the Vermont Federation of Families;

(9) the Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs;

(10) the Vermont Protection and Advocacy;

(11) the Department of Mental Health;

(12) the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living;

(13) the State Program Standing Committees for Developmental Services,

Children's Mental Health, and Adult Mental Health; and

(14) any other groups the Department may select.

(c) The Department shall regularly present relevant information to the stakeholder working group established pursuant to this section and review recommendations from the working group regarding:

(1) facility design layout, programming, and policy development for the temporary stabilization facility, including data on the number of cases and types of case mix, as well as likely length of stay; and

(2) the Department's data and assumptions for size, type of treatment, and security levels for future permanent facilities included in the planning process proposed in the fiscal year 2024 capital bill; optimal locations, including whether a campus plan is appropriate; and any plans regarding the use of outside contractors for facility operations, including State oversight of appropriate quality of care.

(d) The stakeholder working group established in this section shall be subject to the requirements of the Vermont Open Meeting Law.

(e) On or before January 15, 2024, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall develop and submit a strategic plan to the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and Institutions, as part of the overall planning process for development of the high-end system of care, for preventing the disproportionality of youth who are Black, Indigenous, or Persons of Color in staff- or building-secure facilities. The strategic plan shall include mechanisms for collecting necessary data, and the process of development shall include input from relevant public stakeholders.

(e) The stakeholder working group shall cease to exist on June 30, 2025.

Sec. X. LUND; SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

It is the intent of the General Assembly that Lund will develop a sustainability plan and share it with the Agency of Human Services and the General Assembly.

Sec. X. HEALTH; SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAMS

In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide additional grants from the Global Commitment in the amount of \$1,850,000 to Vermont's 13 recovery centers, including Jenna's Promise and Vermont Recovery Partners, for recovery center operations. The methods by which these funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department and the recipient recovery centers. The performance period of these grants shall be State fiscal year 2024. Recipient recovery centers shall report outcomes to the Department.

Sec. B.1100 FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated from the General Fund for new and ongoing initiatives as follows:

* * *

(16) \$30,563,537 to the Agency of Human Services Central Office for the following:

(A) \$1,000,000 to the State Refugee Office for the Employment Assistance Grants program created in 2022 Act and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.300.2 as amended by the fiscal year 2023 Budget Adjustment Act. Funds remaining at the end of fiscal year 2025 shall revert to the General Fund.

(B) \$25,000 to the State Refugee Office for a comprehensive inventory and needs assessment of Vermont's immigrant community and the organizations providing support to this community.

* * *

(19) \$26,040,000 to the Department for Children and Families for the following:

(A) \$2,000,000 to implement the two-year Reach Ahead Pilot Program. Funds shall be used to increase monthly food assistance benefits to Reach Ahead participants, expand the eligibility window for those leaving Reach Up, and provide incentive payments.

(B) \$1,000,000 to fund a two-year continuation of the Youth Development Independent Living stipends program.

(C) \$40,000 to fund the purchase of a driving school vehicle for the Youth Development Program to support foster and former foster youth access driver's education.

(D) \$16,000,000 to address the estimated need for the Adverse Weather Conditions policy and General Assistance emergency housing hotel and motel expenditures in fiscal year 2024.

(E) \$2,500,000 to the Housing Opportunity Grant Program to expand and provide wrap-around support services for households participating in the General Assistance Emergency Housing program.

(F) \$1,500,000 to Family Supportive Housing to support homeless families with children in their transition to stable housing.

(G) \$3,000,000 to Vermont Food Bank to support increased capacity of services to meet the persistent of food insecurity.

* * *

Sec. E.300.1. FUNDING FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE;
VERMONT LEGAL AID

Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.300 of this act:

(1) \$1,847,406 shall be used for the contract with the Office of the Health Care Advocate; and

(2) \$1,200,000 shall be appropriated to Vermont Legal Aid for the purposes of maintaining current program capacity and addressing increased requests for services, including eviction prevention and protection from foreclosure and consumer debt.

Sec. E.300.2 STATE REFUGEE OFFICE; INVENTORY AND NEEDS

ASSESSMENT; REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

(a) Request for Proposal. On or before September 15, 2023, the State Refugee Office shall issue a request for proposal for a comprehensive inventory and needs assessment of Vermont's immigrant community and the organizations providing support to this community. For purposes of this section, "Vermont's immigrant community" includes refugees, asylum seekers, asylees, humanitarian parolees, immigrants, individuals without a legal immigrant status, and any permanent lawful residents who may have held one of these statuses in the past.

(b) Inventory and Assessment. The State Refugee Office shall contract with an independent third party to conduct the inventory and assessment described in subsection (a) of this section. On or before November 15, 2024, the completed inventory and assessment shall be delivered to the State Refugee Office.

(c) Scope. The inventory and assessment described in subsection (a) of this section shall include the following:

(1) a list of any organizations in the State that formally provide social, housing, health, mental health, or legal support services to Vermont's immigrant community;

(2) a summary of the services provided by each listed organization to Vermont's immigrant community;

(3) the sources of funding supporting each organization;

(4) the relationship with and support provided by the State Refugee Office and any listed refugee agency and the organization, including how each organization's needs, goals, and opportunities are communicated to the State Refugee Office;

(5) how referrals are made to each organization; and

(6) the governing structure of each organization.

(d) Reports.

(1) On or before January 15, 2024, the State Refugee Office shall submit a status update on the request for proposal described in subsection (a) of this section to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

(2) On or before December 1, 2024, the State Refugee Office shall submit a copy of the final inventory and assessment described in subsection (b) of this section to the House Committee on Human Services and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

Sec. E.223. 9 V.S.A. § 2730 is amended to read:

§ 2730. LICENSING FOR OPERATION OF WEIGHING AND
MEASURING DEVICES

(a) As used in this section:

* * *

(14) “Electric vehicle supply equipment” and “electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public” have the same meanings as in 30 V.S.A. § 201.

* * *

(f)(1) The Secretary shall charge, per unit, the following annual license fees:

(A) Retail motor fuel dispenser meter: \$25.00.

* * *

(E) Each distinct plug-in connection point of electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public: \$25.00.

* * *

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE HOUSING; ADVERSE WEATHER
CONDITIONS

(a) The Commissioner for Children and Families may, by policy, provide temporary housing for a limited duration in adverse weather conditions when appropriate shelter space is not available.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, eligible households that seek emergency housing shall receive it, regardless of the number of nights previously received or adverse weather conditions. The Department shall use the income and resource eligibility criteria in effect as of June 2021. A household is eligible under this subsection if it meets one or more of the following:

(i) a household that lost its housing due to a natural disaster, such as a flood, fire, or hurricane;

(ii)(I) a household that has a member who has experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; or

(II) a household that has a member who has experienced a dangerous or life-threatening incident related to violence against the member that either occurred within the member's home or caused the member to reasonably believe that the member was at risk of further harm if the member remained in the home;

(iii) a household with a child or children who are either under 18 years of age or who are 18 or 19 years of age and attending secondary school on full-time basis or an equivalent level of vocational or technical training;

(iv) a household that has a member who is 60 years of age or older;

(v) a household that has a member who receives SSI or SSDI;

(vi) a household that has a member who is pregnant;

(vii) a household that is pursuing legal resolution of violations of the Rental Housing Health Code through the Department of Health or appropriate local officials; or

(viii) a household that has been physically barred from entering their residence through an intentional act of the landlord.

Sec. E.318.XX REPORT; EMERGENCY HOUSING

On or before January 1, 2024, the Department for Children and Families shall develop and submit a plan to coordinate and deliver crisis standards, including for emergency housing and shelter with strong connections to housing, health, and employment services, to the House Committees on Human Services and on General and Housing and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Health and Welfare. In developing the plan, the Department shall consult with stakeholders who specialize in homelessness prevention and mitigation, including those organizations who participated in developing the Vermont Roadmap to End Homelessness developed pursuant to 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 172, Sec. B.1102(a).