

1 Introduced by Committee on Health Care

2 Date:

3 Subject: Health; mental health; preventing death by suicide

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes the duties and
5 responsibilities of the Director of Suicide Prevention.

6 An act relating to public health initiatives to address death by suicide

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

8 Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. chapter 192 is added to read:

9 CHAPTER 192. PREVENTING DEATH BY SUICIDE

10 § 8151. DIRECTOR OF SUICIDE PREVENTION; DUTIES

11 The Department of Mental Health’s Director of Suicide Prevention shall
12 lead the State’s suicide prevention efforts, intervention supports, and
13 postvention efforts and collaborate with communities and providers to reduce
14 the number of suicide deaths and attempts in the State. The Director shall
15 promote and support statewide crisis and suicide prevention recommendations
16 as outlined in the State’s Suicide Platform, including the creation of a strategic
17 plan and suicide prevention education protocol for all schools. The Director
18 shall expand partnerships, implementing innovative data-driven initiatives;
19 coordinate suicide prevention programs across the State; and work to secure
20 federal funding.

1 Sec. 2. STATEWIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION; STRATEGIC PLAN AND
2 SCHOOL PROTOCOL

3 (a)(1) On or before July 1, 2024, the Director of Suicide Prevention, in
4 collaboration with the Agency of Human Services and stakeholders, shall
5 develop and submit a statewide strategic plan pertaining to suicide prevention
6 services, training, education, and postvention services to the House Committee
7 on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare. The
8 statewide strategic plan shall identify goals, possible partners, and strategies
9 for meeting clearly defined targets in the prevention of suicide. Key resources
10 and gaps shall be identified, including sustainable 988 lifeline funding, zero
11 suicide program expansion, improved data collection and reporting to identify
12 contributing causes, including social factors, to inform prevention strategies,
13 and data-informed systems and strategies for establishing and maintaining
14 postvention services within communities, schools, and health care systems.

15 (2) Prior to the submission of the strategic plan required pursuant to
16 subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Director of Suicide Prevention shall
17 submit quarterly progress updates on the development of the strategic plan to
18 the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health
19 and Welfare between July 1, 2023 and April 1, 2024. In the January 2024
20 progress update, the Director of Suicide Prevention shall include preliminary
21 budget recommendations and a sustainable funding plan for the 988 lifeline.

1 **(b)** On or before January 15, 2024, the Director of Suicide Prevention, in
2 collaboration with the Agency of Education and stakeholders, shall develop
3 and submit a model protocol for all schools regarding suicide prevention,
4 education, and postvention services to the House Committee on Health Care
5 and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

6 Sec. 3. PRESENTATION; COMPREHENSIVE SUICIDE PREVENTION

7 GRANT

8 **(a)** On or before February 1, 2024, the Department of Health, in
9 collaboration with the Director of Suicide Prevention, shall present information
10 to the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on
11 Health and Welfare regarding the work accomplished by the State in
12 accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s
13 Comprehensive Suicide Prevention grant, including the results of the complete
14 Suicide Data Linkage Project.

15 **(b)** Prior to the presentation required pursuant to subsection (a) of this
16 section, the Department shall submit the results of the complete Suicide Data
17 Linkage Project to the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate
18 Committee on Health and Welfare as soon as they are available.

19 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

20 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.