

1 H.41

2 Introduced by Representative Dolan of Essex Junction

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Domestic and sexual violence; community justice centers

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to permit the  
7 referral of domestic and sexual violence cases to a community justice center,  
8 provided the center has entered a memorandum of understanding with the  
9 Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence regarding adherence  
10 to appropriate protocols.

11 An act relating to referral of domestic and sexual violence cases to  
12 community justice centers

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

14 Sec. 1. 24 V.S.A. § 1967 is amended to read:

15 § 1967. ~~CASES PROHIBITED~~ DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE;

16 STALKING

17 (a) ~~No~~ Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, no case  
18 involving domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual assault, or stalking shall  
19 be referred to a community justice center except in Department of Corrections  
20 offender reentry programs pursuant to protocols protecting victims. The

1 community justice centers shall work with the Department of Corrections and  
2 the Center for Crime Victim Services or its designee to develop victim safety  
3 protocols for community justice centers that take into consideration victim  
4 needs such as safety, confidentiality, and privacy.

5 (b) Cases involving domestic or sexual violence may be referred to a  
6 community justice center provided the community justice center has a current  
7 and executed memorandum of understanding with a local member organization  
8 of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Such  
9 memorandums of understanding shall include protocols that:

10 (1) establish a defined approach based on evidence or an established,  
11 promising program;

12 (2) prioritize victim safety;

13 (3) include voluntary engagement by participating parties;

14 (4) require initial and annual training for relevant community justice  
15 center staff, facilitators, and volunteers on the dynamics involving domestic  
16 violence and sexual violence, trauma-informed approaches, and restorative  
17 justice principles;

18 (5) establish roles and participation of the community justice center, the  
19 local domestic and sexual violence organization, and other community partners  
20 as needed;

21 (6) establish written confidentiality and privacy standards;

1           (7) establish data collection standards; and

2           (8) establish written annual evaluation and quality improvement plans

3           and processes that engage community and system stakeholders.

4           (c) Community justice centers may accept referrals involving domestic

5           violence or sexual violence after July 1, 2023 upon compliance with subsection

6           (b) of this section.

7           Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

8           This section shall take effect on passage.