



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE
Joint Fiscal Office

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Fiscal Note

February 15, 2024

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H.847 – An act relating to peer support provider and recovery support specialist certification

As amended by the House Committee on Ways and Means

DRAFT – Contingent on Committee Vote

Bill Summary

The bill would require the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) to certify peer support providers and recovery support specialists. For OPR to implement this change, it would cost approximately \$25,000 in staff time, technology costs, community outreach costs, and expenses associated with rulemaking.

The bill would require that the Secretary of State appoint six advisors to the Director of OPR in matters relating to peer support and recovery support. Four of the advisors would not be State employees and entitled to per diem compensation under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for attendance at any meeting called by the Director. Costs for per diem compensation would be nominal (less than \$2,000 per year). The other two advisors, one from the Department of Health and one from the Department of Mental Health, would be acting within the scope of their positions and not receive per diem compensation.

The bill would also require application and licensure fees similar to those for other professions OPR regulates. The W&M amendment would lower the initial certification fee from \$115 (which is set in statute) to \$50 effective upon passage and then increase to \$75 on July 1, 2027.¹ The bill would also set the biennial renewal fee at \$50. While the true number of peer support providers and recovery support specialists in Vermont is currently unknown, based on what currently is known, estimated FY 2026 revenues from the initial application fee are estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$20,000 and could increase in the out years as more people are trained and certified in these professions.

Background and Details

Peer Support Providers – While the true number of peer support providers practicing in Vermont is currently unknown, there are estimated to be at least 169 peer support providers employed at designated agencies and peer-run entities throughout the state.²

Recovery Support Specialists – According to the Department of Health, as of June 31, 2023, there were 116 certified recovery coaches working in Vermont recovery centers. Further, there is continued demand for the certification training and as such, this workforce is anticipated to grow.³

¹ 3 V.S.A. § 125(b)(2)

² Based on information provided to JFO by Vermont Care Partners and Wilda White.

³ Testimony provided on 2/14/24 by Emily Trutor, Director of Substance Use Programs, Vermont Department of Health.

Fiscal Impact Summary

- Estimated cost to OPR to implement = \$25,000 (FY 2025)
- Per diem compensation for appointed non-State employee advisors = Less than \$2,000 (FY 2026)
- Estimated fee revenue = \$10,000 to \$20,000 from application fee (FY 2026).
 - Fee revenues will likely increase in the out years.
 - More people are likely to be trained and enter the profession.
 - The initial certification fee will increase to \$75 in FY 2028