



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE
Joint Fiscal Office

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Fiscal Note

March 6, 2024

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

A Passed by the House of Representatives

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 for matters relating to peer 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 lower initial licensure and certification application fees from \$115, as currently in statute, to \$50.¹ These fees would then increase to \$75 on July 1, 2027. 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 fiscal year 2026 revenue from application fees is estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$20,000. Revenue could increase in future fiscal years as more people are trained and certified in these professions.

Background and Details

Peer Support Providers – While the actual number of peer support providers practicing in Vermont is not known, it's estimated that at least 169 peer support providers are currently employed at designated agencies and peer-run entities across the state.²

Recovery Support Specialists – According to the Department of Health, as of June 31, 2023, there were 116 certified recovery support specialists working in Vermont recovery centers. There is continued demand for the certification training; this workforce is likely 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

There are no appropriations in the bill.

- Estimated cost to OPR to implement = \$25,000 (fiscal year 2025)
- Per diem compensation for non-State employee advisors = Less than \$2,000 (fiscal year 2026)
- Estimated fee revenue = \$10,000 to \$20,000 from application fee (fiscal year 2026)
 - Revenue will likely increase in future fiscal years because:
 - More people are likely to be trained and enter the profession
 - The initial certification fee will increase to \$75 on July 1, 2027 (fiscal year 2028)