



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE
Joint Fiscal Office

1 Baldwin Street • Montpelier, VT 05633-5701 • (802) 828-2295 • <https://jfo.vermont.gov>

Fiscal Note

April 24, 2026

Patrick Titterton, Senior Fiscal Analyst

S.173 – An act relating to vocational rehabilitation

As recommended by the House Committee on Appropriations¹

Bill Summary

This bill proposes to make changes to provisions relating to workers compensation and vocational rehabilitation. It would create the Vocational Rehabilitation Working Group to provide recommendations on how to improve the current vocational rehabilitation system.

Fiscal Impact

Members of the Working Group would be eligible to receive expense reimbursement and/or per diem compensation for up to five meetings, at an estimated cost of \$5,200. Of this total, \$2,500 would be paid by the Department of Labor (DOL) and \$2,700 would be paid by the General Assembly in fiscal year 2027.

Background and Details

Section 2: Vocational Rehabilitation Working Group

Section 2 would establish the Vocational Rehabilitation Working Group to provide recommendations to the General Assembly on how to improve the current vocational rehabilitation system. This 10-member Working Group would be comprised of:

- One member of the House of Representatives;
- One member of the Senate;
- The Commissioner of Labor, or designee;
- The Commissioner of Financial Regulation, or designee;
- Two representatives of workers' compensation claimants;
- Two representatives of employers and workers' compensation insurance carriers; and
- Two vocational rehabilitation counselors currently certified in Vermont.

The Commissioner of Labor or designee would serve as chair and would call the first meeting on or before August 14, 2026. The Working Group would receive administrative, technical, and legal support from DOL. The Working Group would submit a report to the General Assembly detailing their recommendations by

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December 15, 2026. Non-legislative members would be eligible for expense reimbursement, and the two legislative members would be eligible for per diem and expense reimbursement, for up to five meetings. This would have an estimated cost of \$5,200. Of that total, \$2,500 would be a cost to DOL and \$2,700 would be a cost to the General Assembly in fiscal year 2027.