

# Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

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## FISCAL NOTE

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### H.210 - An act related to addressing disparities and promoting equity in the health care system

*As Introduced*

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/H.210>

The bill as introduced proposes to (1) establish the Office of Health Equity; (2) establish the Health Equity Advisory Commission; (3) issue grants for the promotion of health equity; (4) collect data to better understand health disparities in Vermont; and (5) require an additional two hours of continuing medical education on cultural competency in the practice of medicine.

#### Office of Health Equity

The bill would create the Office of Health Equity in the Department of Health (VDH) to advise the Commissioner of Health, Governor, and General Assembly on matters of health equity affecting Vermonters. The Office would be administered by the newly created position of Director of Health Equity (appointed by the Commissioner of Health) who may hire personnel as may be necessary. The following table estimates the potential salaries and benefits of these and other positions that could be needed by the Department in general to carry out the work as proposed in the bill as introduced.

Table 1: Estimated Positions Costs

Job	Salary Est.	Benefits & FICA <sup>1</sup> Est.	Other	Total Gross Est.	Shall/May Hire
Director of Health Equity	\$86,000 - \$115,000	\$16,000 - \$32,000	N/A	\$102,000 - \$147,000	Shall
Other Personnel (per listed FTE) <sup>2</sup>	\$52,000 - \$85,000	\$13,000 - \$32,000	N/A	\$65,000 - \$117,000	May
▪ Program Manager – Health Equity Advisory Commission					
▪ Grants Manager – Grants in Promotion of Health Equity					
▪ Data Analyst – Data Responsiveness to Health Equity Inquiries					
▪ Policy Analyst – Office of Health Equity					

Position costs will depend on if and how many personnel are hired by the Director or Commissioner and at what pay grades. According to VDH, at least 3 to 5 positions would be needed to do the work as proposed in the bill as introduced (see table 1). Additionally, there could also be other additional costs for equipment, space, travel, training, etc. that could be

<sup>1</sup> Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA) are taxes that help fund Social Security and Medicare.

<sup>2</sup> Costs could be more or less depending on the job descriptions, pay grades, responsibilities, and number of personnel determined necessary by the Director and the Commissioner.

associated with standing up new positions and carrying out this work. Finally, at this time we assume these positions would be paid for with general funds – unless grants or other funding sources can be identified.

*Fiscal Summary:*

- Director of Health Equity: \$102,000 - \$147,000
- Other Personnel: TBD

Health Equity Advisory Commission

The bill establishes a Health Equity Advisory Commission. The Advisory Commission would have 26 members, of which 18 would be public members who are residents of Vermont and eligible for per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses. The bill requires the Advisory Commission to meet at least bi-monthly.

The actual cost to VDH for per diems and expenses will depend on how often the Advisory Commission meets in-person and how many public members attend each meeting. Assuming the Advisory Commission is more likely to meet remotely through the end of the calendar year, the following assumes they could meet in-person three times in FY 2022.

- (17 Public Members) x (\$126.25 for per diems, meals, transportation, other) x (3 In-person meetings) = \$6,438.75

Additionally, according to VDH, a program manager position would be needed to support and manage the work of the Advisory Commission (see table 1).

*Fiscal Summary:*

- Per diems and expenses: \$6,439
- Program Manager Position: \$65,000 - \$117,000

Grants in Promotion of Health Equity

The bill contains legislative intent language to provide grants that stimulate the development of community-based and neighborhood-based projects that will improve the health outcomes of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities. The bill as drafted includes no appropriation for grants. Further, if the Department were to provide grants, a grants manager position would be needed to work with grantees in receiving and managing such grants (see table 1).

*Fiscal Summary:*

- Grants: Intent language / TBD
- Grants Manager Position: \$65,000 - \$117,000 (only if grant money appropriated).

Data Responsive to Health Equity Inquiries

The bill includes health equity requirements related to the current collection of health-related data across state government.

The Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) estimates it would cost approximately \$165,000.00 gross in one-time funds to implement these requirements, of which \$66,000.00 would be general funds and \$99,000.00 would be special funds through billback. At this time, it is unknown what other costs would be incurred by other agencies and departments across state government in meeting the requirements of the bill as introduced.

Finally, the bill requires VDH to systematically analyze the health equity data. According to VDH, a data analyst position would be needed to support this work (see table 1).

*Fiscal Summary:*

- Green Mountain Care Board: \$165,000 gross (\$66,000 general fund)
- Other State Agencies/Departments: N/A
- Data Analyst Position: \$65,000 - \$117,000

Appropriation

The bill as introduced does not include any appropriations. An appropriation would be needed to carry out various aspects of the bill, however, the amount of the appropriation is yet to be determined.