

# Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

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## *FISCAL NOTE*

Date: Updated April 2, 2019

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### **S. 146 - An act relating to substance misuse prevention**

*As passed by the Senate*

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2020/S.146>

The bill proposes to establish a Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council to replace the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council. It also proposes establishing two new positions within the Agency of Human Services for the purposes of directing and coordinating substance misuse prevention strategies across State government and in collaboration with community partners.

#### **Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council**

Sec. 5 creates the Substance Misuse Prevention Advisory Council (SMPAC) that would replace the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (ADAC). The SMPAC will have a membership of 9 people. It is anticipated that spending on per diems will be comparable to the current per diem spending by the ADAC. As such, this section is anticipated to be budget neutral.

The bill as passed the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare (SHW) also appropriated up to \$400,000 from the Evidence-Based Education & Advertising Fund to the Department of Health (VDH) for the purpose of funding the prevention of prescription drug misuse efforts undertaken by the Substance Misuse Prevention Council. The Senate Committee on Appropriations (SAC) amended the bill removing the \$400,000 appropriation and will consider an appropriation for such purposes as part of the overall budget construct in the budget bill.

Fiscal Impact:

- SMPAC Stipends = Budget Neutral

#### **Director & Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention**

Sec. 5 also creates two new permanent positions:

- Director of Substance Misuse Prevention – created within the Office of the Secretary in the Agency of Human Services (AHS) for the purpose of directing and coordinating systemic trauma-informed prevention strategies across State government and in collaboration with community partners.
- Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention – Created within the Department of Health for the purpose of coordinating the work of the SMPAC, coordinating strategic regional plans, and serving as a liaison to the Director of Substance Misuse Prevention.

According to AHS, no new positions need to be created since positions already exist within AHS (related to the Opioid Coordination Council) that can be reconstituted for the purposes laid out in this bill. The positions are currently filled but could be adapted to reflect the intent of S.146.

Current Position	New Position under S.146	FY 2020 Total Budgeted
		Salary & Benefits
Director of Drug Prevention Policy (AHS)	Director of Substance Misuse Prevention (AHS)	\$137,658
Community Engagement Liaison (AHS)	Manager of Substance Misuse Prevention (VDH)	\$131,108

While these two positions are not currently funded in the Governor’s proposed FY 2020 budget, AHS planned to fund the existing positions with carryforward funds appropriated in Act 11 of the 2018 Special Session for the purpose of supporting substance use disorder activities.<sup>1</sup>

Fiscal Impacts:

- Two Positions = Potentially Budget Neutral

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<sup>1</sup> Sec. C.1000(a)(14) appropriated \$7.1 million to AHS to maintain critical health care services that have lost federal funding and to support substance use disorder activities including needle exchange programs, active case management of opioid addicted persons and the distribution of naloxone.