

State of Vermont
Department of Mental Health
Vermont State Hospital
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05671

[phone] 802-241-1000
[fax] 802-241-1559
[tty] 802-241-3199

Agency of Human Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joint Fiscal Committee

FROM: Christine M. Oliver, Commissioner, Department of Mental Health *CMD*

DATE: July 20, 2011

RE: The Canteen at Vermont State Hospital

Statutory References

Sec. E.314.1 of Act No.156 of 2009 VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL; CANTEEN
Sec. 66 of Act No.3 of 2011 VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL; CANTEEN

As directed by the General Assembly, the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) completed a re-construction project of the canteen. Necessary repairs and upgrades were made to enable it to operate as a café. The upgrades included new sinks, appliances, tables, and a flat screen television. An open house was held recently to show the canteen space to state employees who work in the Waterbury complex, the public, Vermont State Hospital (VSH) patients and others anticipating the opening in September.

Since renovations were completed, the canteen has been available for VSH patients and staff who have been going there to have snacks, watch TV, and enjoy time off their unit. Once the canteen opens as a food service operation, it will become more of a public space not only for patients and staff of VSH but also for other state employees on the Waterbury campus. Currently, VSH staff and patients have access to the canteen, including evenings and weekends.

The business plan for operation of the canteen has come under the purview of the Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired, a part of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL). They have engaged the Vermont Youth Conservation Corp to develop a model similar to The Overlook Café at the Department of Health in Burlington. Integral to the operation of the canteen will be work experience for people with visual impairment and a range of disabilities. As with any new business, the canteen will need time to become established. The plan is to give Vermont State Hospital patients the opportunity for work experience in the canteen as in the past.

Cc: Douglas Racine, Secretary, Agency of Human Services
Michael Obuchowski, Commissioner, Department of Buildings and General Services
Susan Wehry, Commissioner, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living

