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H.74

Introduced by Representatives Pugh of South Burlington, French of Randolph,
McFaun of Barre Town, and Mrowicki of Putney

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Human services; social and mental health workers; safety protocols

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require
departments and programs within or under contract with the Agency of Human
Services to create safety protocols for social workers, mental health workers,
volunteers, interns, and all other employees providing direct services to clients.

An act relating to safety protocols for social and mental health workers

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. chapter 80 is added to read:

CHAPTER 80. SAFETY PROVISIONS FOR WORKERS

§ 8001. SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR SOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
WORKERS

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall require that programs providing
direct services to clients and that are administered, licensed, certified, or
funded in part by the Agency or a department of the Agency establish a
violence prevention and crisis response protocol for the benefit of social

1 addresses the safety of the social workers, mental health workers, volunteers,
2 interns, and all other employees in the course of their work-related duties.

3 Each protocol shall contain:

4 (A) a system to record all incidents of work-related violence or
5 threats of work-related violence against social workers, mental health workers,
6 volunteers, interns, and all other employees; and

7 (B) written violence prevention and crisis response provisions that
8 include measures the program intends to take to respond to any incident of
9 work-related violence against social workers, mental health workers,
10 volunteers, interns, and all other employees.

11 (2) The program director or his or her designee shall:

12 (A) provide each employee with a copy of the violence prevention
13 and crisis response protocol;

14 (B) annually train social workers, mental health workers, volunteers,
15 interns, and all other employees about work-related violence and ways to
16 reduce risks; and

17 (C) develop and maintain a violence prevention and response team to
18 monitor ongoing compliance with the violence prevention and crisis response
19 protocol and to assist any social workers, mental health workers, volunteers,
20 interns, and all other employees victimized by or threatened with work-related
21 violence.

1 (7) identification of any injured body part;

2 (8) description of any weapon used;

3 (9) number of program employees in the vicinity when the incident
4 occurred;

5 (10) description of actions taken by employees involved or in the
6 vicinity of the incident; and

7 (11) the program's response to the incident.

8 (e) Incident records kept pursuant to subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section
9 shall be maintained by the program for at least five years following an
10 incident, during which time they shall be available to the Secretary of Human
11 Services or his or her designee for inspection upon request.

12 Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 7114 is added to read:

13 § 7114. SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR SOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
14 WORKERS

15 Programs providing direct services to clients and that are administered,
16 licensed, certified, or funded in part by the Agency of Human Services or a
17 department of the Agency must establish a violence prevention and crisis
18 response protocol for the benefit of social workers, mental health workers,
19 volunteers, interns, and all other employees working directly with clients,
20 pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 8001.