

Happy New Year!

LEGISLATURE OPENS

VCDR 2022 Weekly Summary of Legislative Activities, Committee Agendas and Calendar of Events

January 4 – January 7, 2022

Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights

Legislature

The Legislature reconvened this Tuesday January 4th for the second year of the 2021-2022 Biennium.

Although the Legislative Rules Committee and other key leaders had every intent to meet “safely” in person this year beginning in January, they have decided to meet only remotely for the first two weeks this session because of the increased COVID threats and reassess at that time when more information following the end of year activities is available. The committee charged with overseeing the safe return to the Statehouse does have a plan for returning in person.

When the Legislature does meet in person, as they expect to, they will continue to maintain remote access. Some committees have met in person at the Statehouse through the summer and fall. Although there have been some technology issues and other issues with meeting virtually, for the most part all legislative meetings can be accessed remotely. This includes the respective caucuses, floor sessions of the House and Senate, legislative committees, and other proceedings. (*See links below*)

The Legislature will meet on their regular (Tuesdays through Friday) schedule to do the session’s work. House Appropriations generally meets on Mondays as well.

The work to combat the ongoing Coronavirus health and economic crisis continues to be a focus of the Legislature and the Scott Administration, in addition to continuing to make use of the federal ARPA monies and the new funds that will be coming to Vermont in the Federal Infrastructure bill now passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. House and Senate Leaders will be tackling tackling other key issues as well.

Below you will find: the VCDR Legislative Platform, Legislative Pages, Highlights of Legislative Activities, Selected Testimony and Legislation Updates, Committee Highlights, Legislation Introduced, Articled of interest

*****VCDR PLATFORM*****

Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights 2021 Legislative Platform
The 2022 VCDR Platform will be available at the end of January

VCDR Website: www.VCDR.org
<https://vcdr.org/about-vcdr/vcdr-platform/>

*****THIS WEEK*****

The Governor will give his State of the State Address on Wednesday, January 5th at 2:00 PM

The Vermont House Committee on Appropriations met two weeks ago to look at the FY 2022 Budget Adjustment (BAA) and will continue to take that up this week. They will hold a **Public Hearing on Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. via videoconference.** The Governor's proposal can be accessed HERE:

<https://finance.vermont.gov/budget/budget-recommendations/operating-budget/fy2022>

Press Release

- [PR - Public Hearing - Governor's FY22 BAA Proposal](#)

Budget Adjustment Letters to Committees:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2022/9/Subject/373610#documents-section>

Budget Adjustment Documents:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2022/9/Subject/366486#documents-section>

Advocate testimony on the Budget Adjustment is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, January 10th sat 1:00 PM**

*****LAST WEEK*****

*****Featured LEGISLATIVE UPDATES *****

*****LEGISLATIVE PAGES*****

Legislature Website: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>

Announcements - Caucuses, Meetings and Streaming Links:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/home/noteworthy/announcements/>

Complete Schedule of Legislative Committee Agendas:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/weeklyAgendas/2022>

House and Senate Standing Committees:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/list/2022/>

All committees can be viewed through you tube LIVE STREAM. You can find the link on the committee's page or the agenda.

House and Senate Floor Times

House Sessions

Tuesday at 10:00 AM

Wednesday at 1:15 PM

Thursday at 1:15 PM

Friday at 9:30 AM

Senate Sessions

Tuesday at 9:30 AM

Wednesday at 1:00 PM

Thursday at 1:00 PM

Friday at 11:30 AM

Times are subject to change.

*****SELECTED LEGISLATION and TESTIMONY *****

*****JOINT FISCAL INFORMATION*****

*****COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS*****

House and Senate Committee Pages: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>

Weekly Committee Agendas:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/weeklyAgendas/2022>

Below please find highlight of House and Senate Committees this week. You can go to any committee page to find documents, bills, and testimony by date, witness, bill numbers and key word searches. *The House Appropriations Committee generally meets on Mondays until they pass the budget over to the Senate; most other committees meet Tuesday through Friday.*

HOUSE COMMITTEES

House Committee on Appropriations:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/9>

The Committee will take up the Budget Adjustment (BAA) all week (An act relating to the fiscal year 2022 Governor's recommended budget adjustment). There is a Public Hearing on Thursday in the morning, and they will take up the Human Services portion of the budget adjustment.

Letter to the Human Services Committee on the Budget Adjustment:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Appropriations/FY%202022%20Budget%20Adjustment/Policy%20Committee%20Letters/W~FY22%20Budget%20Adjustment~Memo%20TO%20House%20Human%20Services~12-30-2021.pdf>

House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/11>

On Thursday the Committee will take up the Healthcare Workforce Strategic Plan Report

House Committee on Corrections and Institutions:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/17>

House Committee on Education:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/10>

House Committee on Energy and Technology:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/19>

House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/13>

On Wednesday the Committee will take up Housing related to the BAA and on Thursday will take up **H. 329 - An act relating to amending the prohibitions against discrimination**

H.329: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/H.329>

House Committee on Government Operations:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/14>

House Committee on Health Care:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/15>

On Thursday the committee will take testimony from the Department of Mental Health and the Department of VT Health Access related to the BAA.

House Committee on Human Services:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/16>

On Thursday the Committee will hear from the Commissioner, Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living and from advocates on DAIL programs related to the BAA. On Friday they will hear from the Department of Children and Families on Economic Services and Child Development related to the BAA.

House Committee on Judiciary:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/18>

House Committee on Transportation:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/20>

House Committee on Ways and Means:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/21>

SENATE COMMITTEES

Senate Committee on Appropriations:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/23>

The Committee will begin the to take up the Governor's Budget Adjustment Bill (BAA) and hear from Human Services on Friday.

Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/32>

On Wednesday the Committee will take up **S. 101 - An act relating to promoting housing choice and opportunity in smart growth areas** (passed by the Senate amended by the House) and **S. 79 - An act relating to improving rental housing health and safety** (This bill was passed by the House and Senate but vetoed by the Governor)

S.101: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/S.101>

S.79: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0079/S-0079%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

Senate Committee on Education:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/24>

On Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon the Committee with take up COVID-19 Updates Related to Schools.

Senate Committee on Finance:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/25>

Senate Committee on Government Operations:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/26>

Senate Committee on Health and Welfare:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/27>

On Thursday morning the Committee will hear from sponsors of introduced bills including **S. 74 – An act relating to modifications to Vermont's patient choice at end-of-life laws** and **H.153 - An act relating to Medicaid reimbursement rates for home- and community-based service providers** (passed by the House). They will also receive the VT Health Care Workforce Development Report.

S.74: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0074/S-0074%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

H.153: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0153/H-0153%20As%20Passed%20by%20the%20House%20Unofficial.pdf>

Senate Committee on Institutions:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/28>

Senate Committee on Judiciary:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/29>

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/30>

Senate Committee on Transportation:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/detail/2022/31>

*****VCDR BILLS OF INTEREST*****

Courtesy of Disability Rights Vermont

We will have the new "Bills of Interest" introduced next week.

*****ARTICLES OF INTEREST*****

With a quick trip to Montpelier, Vermont lawmakers kick off 2022 session

By [Sarah Mearhoff](#) Jan 4 2022,

<https://vtdigger.org/2022/01/04/with-a-quick-trip-to-montpelier-vermont-lawmakers-kick-off-2022-session/>

Vermont Legislature to meet remotely next week

<https://www.wcax.com/2021/12/29/vermont-legislature-meet-remotely-next-week/>

Vermont Legislature likely to begin 2022 session remotely

By [Sarah Mearhoff](#) Dec 28 2021

<https://vtdigger.org/2021/12/28/vermont-legislature-likely-to-begin-2022-session-remotely/>

****INFORMATIONAL LINKS****

VT Department of Health – COVID -19: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/>

VT Digger State Coronavirus Updates: <https://vtdigger.org/coronavirus/>

COVID-19 Coronavirus: Legal and Benefits Updates for Vermonters
<https://vtlawhelp.org/coronavirus-updates>

VT Digger Coronavirus Update: <https://vtdigger.org/coronavirus/>

Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living:
<https://dail.vermont.gov/novel-coronavirus-information>

Department of Mental Health: <https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/coronavirus-and-our-mental-health>

Resources for Education Agency of Education Guidance to Schools:
<https://education.vermont.gov/news/covid-19-guidance-vermont-schools>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Federal agency with up-to-date information on health and security.

Office of Governor Phil Scott: Press releases from the governor's office, including details on the state's efforts to address COVID-19.

The University of Vermont Health Network: Provides updated information from the health network, including preventative measures and current cases.

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Submitted by Karen Lafayette, VCDR Coordinator
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