

No. 152. An act relating to a report on recommended changes in the structure of Vermont State employment in order to reduce employment-related stress.

(S.225)

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

Sec. 1. COMMISSIONER OF HUMAN RESOURCES; REPORT;

HIGH-STRESS STATE EMPLOYEE POSITIONS

(a) On or before January 15, 2015, the Commissioner of Human Resources shall report to the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations and the Senate and House Committees on Government Operations regarding recommended changes in the structure of State employment that would help alleviate the health and safety impacts related to high-stress State employee positions and their effect on State employees and the Vermont State Retirement System.

(b) In addition to any classes of employees he or she deems relevant, the Commissioner shall specifically consider the employment of:

(1) employees of the Department of Corrections;

(2) employees of the Woodside facility;

(3) dispatchers in the Department of Public Safety;

(4) social workers in the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families who provide direct child safety services;

(5) direct care providers at the Vermont Veterans' Home;

(6) State Police officers in the Computer Crimes Unit that assist in cases regarding child pornography; and

(7) employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital.

(c) In considering potential changes in the structure of State employment, the Commissioner shall consider:

(1) the number of workers' compensation claims Vermont has had due to post-traumatic stress disorder;

(2) how job stresses affect State employees;

(3) whether changes in job rotation or personnel practices could decrease job-related stress; and

(4) how high-stress positions impact the sustainability of the Vermont State Retirement System, including the impact of early retirement benefits.

(d) The Commissioner shall specifically review and consider the job groups or positions that are treated differently in the Vermont State Retirement System, including in the provision of early retirement benefits, and shall recommend the criteria that should be used to differentiate among those groups or positions in the System.

(e) In conducting his or her analysis, the Commissioner shall consult with the Office of State Treasurer, the Vermont State Employees' Association, and the heads of the departments of those employees set forth in subsection (b) of this section and shall review available evidence and research regarding employment-related stress.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

Date Governor signed bill: May 27, 2014