

Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee

Date: 6/22/2026

Location and Time: Via Microsoft Teams 10:00 – noon

Members Present: Rick Hildebrant (arr. 10:31), Shayla Livingston, Daniel Franklin, Monica Hutt (dep. 11:00), Jess Kirby (dep. 11:04), Deb Wright, Madeline Motta, Amie Wunderlich (arr. 10:12), Eric Maguire

Members Absent: Shawn Burke, Thomas Davis, Ruth Hardy, Matt Prouty, Stacy Sigmon, Tim Tanner

Others Present: Edwin Baker, Dale Crook, Tracie Hauck, Lauren Layman, Emily Trutor, Suzie Walker

Meeting Facilitator and Note Taker: Rick Hildebrant, MD/Shayla Livingston, Heather Michaud

Agenda Item	Discussion	Next Steps
Approve May 22, 2026, Minutes	Approval of the May 22, 2026 Minutes was tabled until the next meeting due to lack of a quorum at the time of this agenda item.	
Update on H.660 Bill – Lauren Layman	<p>Act 141 (H.660) is an act relating to FY27 Opioid Abatement Special Fund and Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund appropriations.</p> <p>Lauren provided an overview of the final FY27 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund and explained how legislative decisions compared with recommendations from both the Department of Health and the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee. Projects for annual funding included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$455,000.00 for outreach and engagement staff; 2. \$1.6 million for recovery residences; and 3. \$850,000 for syringe service programs (SSPs). <p>The Legislature confirmed its intent for annual funding for the Burlington Overdose Prevention Center through at least FY28, but determined additional funding is not immediately necessary because previous appropriations have not yet been fully spent. Funding needs will be revisited during FY27's budget adjustment process.</p>	See Act 141 As Enacted

There are several additional appropriations for one-time funding.

The Legislature also approved funding for four community service prevention projects through the Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund.

Consistent with recommendations from OSAC and the Department of Health, the Legislature reverted approximately \$1.45 million from previous funded projects back to the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

Lauren reported that Act 141 creates new reporting requirements for the Department of Health including quarterly reporting regarding expenditures from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund and the requirement for a plan containing recommendations for the implementation of one or more syringe recovery models throughout the state to enhance public health and safety.

Act 141 recommends several procedural shifts that will inform OSAC's work over the next year. The Committee must now:

1. Consult with the Health Equity Advisory Committee for every ongoing funding proposal, whether intended for annual funding or in the future;
2. Consider a sustainability plan for each of the ongoing funding proposals; and
3. Consult with the Attorney General regarding allowable uses of the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.
4. Review outcomes of previously funded programs for efficacy, sustainability, and appropriate use of the special fund to inform FY29 recommendations and thereafter.

As of February 2026, the estimated unappropriated balance of the Opioid Abatement Special Fund was approximately \$11.8 million, with an estimated balance after Act 141 of approximately \$5.3 million absence consideration of any future allocations.

<p>OSAC Process Guidelines Discussion and Possible Vote – Lauren Layman</p>	<p>Lauren Layman provided an overview of the proposed OSAC FY27 review process drafted by the Department of Health to align with Act 141 and guide the OSAC’s work for the coming year, as well as limit the description of what the Committee’s work will be for FY28. Lauren explained that once the Committee has approved the process and begins its review of OASF funding proposals, the process may not be revised.</p> <p>Part 1 of the proposed process focuses on reviewing initiatives that the Legislature indicated should receive annual funding. Part 2 of the proposed process looks at previously funded initiatives and programs that did not get a recommendation or do not have a recommendation in legislation or statute expressing an intent to fund annually. Part 3 of the proposed process pertains to assessment of total potential remaining funds which is not statutorily required, but just good practice. Part 4 of the proposed process outlines letter drafting and recommendations submission.</p> <p>Monica raised concerns about clarity regarding separate recommendation letters from the Committee and the Department. Lauren confirmed that the Department will submit its own independent recommendations letter. Monica suggested adding a step to the proposed process requiring the Department’s letter to be shared with the Committee for awareness only. There were no objections to this suggestion and Lauren agreed to add this to the proposed process.</p> <p>Discussion ensued as to whether the Committee needed to vote on the proposed process immediately or could review it further before voting. Lauren explained that approval of the proposed process at this meeting would help keep the Committee on schedule because there is no August meeting. There was also discussion about whether the process was intended only for FY27 or for multiple years. Jessica confirmed that the proposed process is intended only for FY27, but the Committee may choose whether and how extensively to begin reviewing previously funded projects this year and not do any of the recommendations work.</p> <p>There was discussion around governance and membership including suggestions to:</p>	<p>See Draft FY27 Review Process</p> <p>Future agenda item – update operating procedures</p>
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1. Add a governance review process;
2. Provide introductions and background information for new members;
3. Create a mentorship or onboarding process for new members; and
4. Acknowledge departing members and their service, particularly the ones that have been on the Committee from the beginning.

These suggestions would be operating procedure amendments and could be part of the Commission's work this year but do not need to be reflected in the review and recommendations process. Lauren suggested that work on operating procedure amendments be included as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Regarding approval of the review process, Committee Chair Hildebrant noted that the Committee faces a tight timeline and delaying approval today would limit the ability to begin formal reviews at the next meeting. Jess Kirby expressed concern that she had not had sufficient time to review the document since materials had only recently been distributed. Monica noted that the process largely reflects what's in legislation anyway and provides limited room for substantive changes.

Following discussion, Amie Wunderlich moved, seconded by Deb Wright, to approve the OSAC Review Process for FY27.

Roll Call:

Monica Hutt – yes
Eric Maguire – yes
Jess Kirby – abstain
Daniel Franklin – yes
Madeline Motta – abstain
Deb Wright – yes
Amie Wunderlich – yes

The motion passed, 5 in favor, 2 abstentions.

<p>Peer Recovery Support in Corrections - Dale Crook Department of Corrections and Tracie Hauck, Turning Point Center of Rutland</p>	<p>Dale Crook, Director of Innovation and Administrative Services for the Department of Corrections, and Tracie Hauck, Director of the Turning Point Center of Rutland, presented on Vermont’s peer recovery coaching programs within correctional facilities and probation/parole offices. The initiative began more than a decade ago and has expanded significantly through state funding and opioid settlement funds. Program accomplishments, benefits and enhancements were discussed.</p> <p>Committee Chair Hildebrant inquired about gaps in substance use treatment and recovery services for people leaving corrections. Identified barriers include lack of housing upon release, limited transportation, especially in rural Vermont, difficulty obtaining identification and driver’s licenses, limited financial resources, lack of long-term recovery housing and treatment options, mental health needs, trauma histories, and generational poverty. Tracie explained that individuals released with few resources and no clear path to transportation, housing, or services increases the likelihood of relapse or non-compliance. Dale believes a successful reentry plan requires a holistic approach that addresses housing, healthcare, employment, education, recovery support, and transportation. He said the first 90-180 days after release are critical to long-term success.</p> <p>Dale highlighted the Vermont Medicaid Reentry Program which provides Medicaid coverage and care coordination for incarcerated individuals 90 days before release and up to six months post release to support successful community reintegration.</p> <p>Daniel Franklin expressed praise for the program and hopes the expansion of recovery residences through Rural Health Transformation Program funding over the next five years will help ease some piece of the housing puzzle. He also suggested looking at recovery and job access ride programs, as well as the Kingdom and Royal Valley programs, as possibilities for addressing a portion of the transportation needs.</p>	
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	<p>Mr. Franklin inquired about improvements in healthcare within corrections following recent leadership changes and Dale indicated it was too early to assess those efforts at this point.</p>	
<p>Harm Reduction Test Strips – Emily Trutor</p>	<p>The OASF appropriation FY24-26 was \$200,000. This funding supported the purchase of fentanyl test strips – inexpensive, small paper strips used to detect the presence of fentanyl in unregulated drugs.</p> <p>Distribution strategies including harm reduction packs, standalone test strips, and leave behind kits were discussed. Outcomes highlighted a 37% decrease in overdose deaths from 2022 to 2025, as well as a decline in opioid-involved overdose deaths from 2024 to 2025 (183 in 2024 to 121 in 2025.)</p> <p>The downward trend in overdose deaths is encouraging and reflects the combined impact of harm reduction efforts, naloxone distribution, education, and community partnerships.</p>	<p>See presentation</p>
<p>School Based Services – Emily Trutor</p>	<p>Emily began the conversation with the statement that 90% of those with substance use disorders nationally started using drugs and alcohol before age 18, making early prevention critical.</p> <p>The OASF appropriation FY24-26 was \$714,481.00. This funding expanded prevention programming into new school districts and supervisory unions that previously lacked school-based prevention funding.</p> <p>Program requirements for grantees, funding impact, 2030 goals, and additional funding streams were discussed.</p> <p>Emily described the harm reduction test strips initiative and the school-based substance use services initiative as successful investments that have produced meaningful results.</p>	<p>See presentation</p>

Public Comment	<p>Ed Baker</p> <p>Thanked the Committee, Dr. Hildebrant and today’s presenters for their work.</p> <p>Suggested that committee member biographies be made available online to improve transparency and help the public better understand what makes each member suited to serve on the committee.</p> <p>Thanked Judge Motta and other long-serving committee members for their ongoing commitment and thoughtful participation while acknowledging the time commitment required to serve on the committee.</p> <p>Formally expressed his desire to be considered for a future opening on the committee. Mr. Baker detailed extensive lived and professional experience and also shared his professional credentials in support of his request to join the committee.</p>	
Next Meeting	July 27, 2026 10 – noon	