

2025 -- H 5171

LC000790

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- HARM REDUCTION CENTER ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE AND PILOT PROGRAM

Introduced By: Representatives Edwards, Craven, Potter, Caldwell, Kislak, Bennett,  
Ajello, Batista, McEntee, and Kazarian

Date Introduced: January 24, 2025

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The title of Chapter 23-12.10 of the General Laws entitled "Harm Reduction  
2 Center Advisory Committee and Pilot Program." is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 ~~CHAPTER 23-12.10~~

4 ~~Harm Reduction Center Advisory Committee and Pilot Program. [Expires March 1, 2026.]~~

5 CHAPTER 23-12.10

6 HARM REDUCTION CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM

7 SECTION 2. Section 23-12.10-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-12.10 entitled "Harm  
8 Reduction Center Advisory Committee and Pilot Program." is hereby amended to read as follows:

9 **23-12.10-1. Purpose and creation — Municipal authorization required.**

10 (a) The purpose of this chapter is to authorize a ~~four-year (4) pilot~~ permanent program to  
11 prevent drug overdoses through the establishment of "harm reduction centers," which, as used in  
12 this chapter, shall be defined as a community-based resource for health screening, disease  
13 prevention, and recovery assistance where persons may safely consume pre-obtained substances.  
14 Smoking of pre-obtained substances shall also be permitted within the harm reduction center.

15 (b) Each harm reduction center shall provide the necessary healthcare professionals to  
16 prevent overdose, and shall provide referrals for counseling or other medical treatment that may be  
17 appropriate for persons utilizing the harm reduction center.

18 (c) The director of the department of health shall promulgate regulations to authorize the

1 program established by this chapter, and in accordance with § 23-12.10-5. Nothing contained in  
2 this section authorizes a harm reduction center without approval of the municipality in which the  
3 center is proposed.

4 (d)(1) Any harm reduction center proposed to be operated pursuant to the provisions of this  
5 chapter shall require municipal authorization and approval prior to opening or operating in any  
6 community within this state.

7 (2) As used in this chapter, the term “municipal authorization and approval” means an  
8 express affirmative vote by the city or town council, or the equivalent governing body, of any  
9 municipality where a harm reduction center is proposed to be located, which affirmative vote  
10 approves:

11 (i) The opening and operation of the proposed harm reduction center;

12 (ii) The exact location of the proposed harm reduction center, which shall include street  
13 address and plat and lot number or other applicable number as used by the municipality’s tax  
14 assessor; and

15 (iii) An express authorization as to the hours of operation of the proposed harm reduction  
16 center.

17 (e) Each harm reduction center approved for operation pursuant to the provisions of this  
18 chapter shall cease operations on or before March 1, 2026, unless an act of the general assembly  
19 expressly authorizes the continuation of the operation of the harm reduction center.

20 SECTION 3. Section 23-12.10-6 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-12.10 entitled "Harm  
21 Reduction Center Advisory Committee and Pilot Program." is hereby repealed.

22 ~~**23-12.10-6. Sunset.**~~

23 ~~On or before January 31, 2026, the director of the department of health and the attorney~~  
24 ~~general shall submit to the governor, the speaker of the house, and the president of the senate,~~  
25 ~~recommendations as to continuation of the provisions of this chapter, and unless extended by the~~  
26 ~~general assembly, the provisions of this chapter shall sunset and expire on March 1, 2026.~~

27 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- HARM REDUCTION CENTER ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE AND PILOT PROGRAM

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1           This act removes the sunset provision of the four (4) year pilot program to prevent drug  
2 overdoses through the establishment of harm reduction centers and creates a permanent program  
3 for harm reduction centers.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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