

**From:** [Linda](#)  
**To:** [Bristol Town Administrator](#)  
**Cc:** [Diane Cushman](#)  
**Subject:** Justification for a town mask mandate  
**Date:** Sunday, January 9, 2022 8:47:09 AM

---

Hi Valerie,

I just wanted to send you this article to confirm my concerns and the need for a mask mandate.

FYI from VT Digger article attached Jan 6th

"Vermont's health care staffing shortage is nearing a [crisis point](#), as hospital beds and emergency rooms are filling up quickly with the advent of the highly transmissible Omicron variant. The Covid-19 crisis has forced a slew of canceled or delayed surgeries, long wait times at emergency rooms and a shortage of available hospital beds."

Read More Here: <https://vtdigger.org/2022/01/05/lawmakers-asked-to-extend-law-allowing-traveling-health-care-workers-to-fill-vermonts-critical-need/>

Look forward to the next select board meeting.

Best  
Linda Andrews



DONATE

NEWSLETTER

## News in pursuit of truth

SHOP

Omicron

2022 Legislature

January 6

Covid testing

Killington

Burlington council races

Return to school

- Business
- Criminal Justice
- Education
- Energy & Environment
- Health Care
- Politics
- People & Places
- Obituaries
- Covid-19 in VT
- Press Releases

### HEALTH CARE

# Lawmakers asked to extend law allowing traveling health care workers to fill Vermont's critical need

By Liora Engel-Smith  
Jan 5 2022

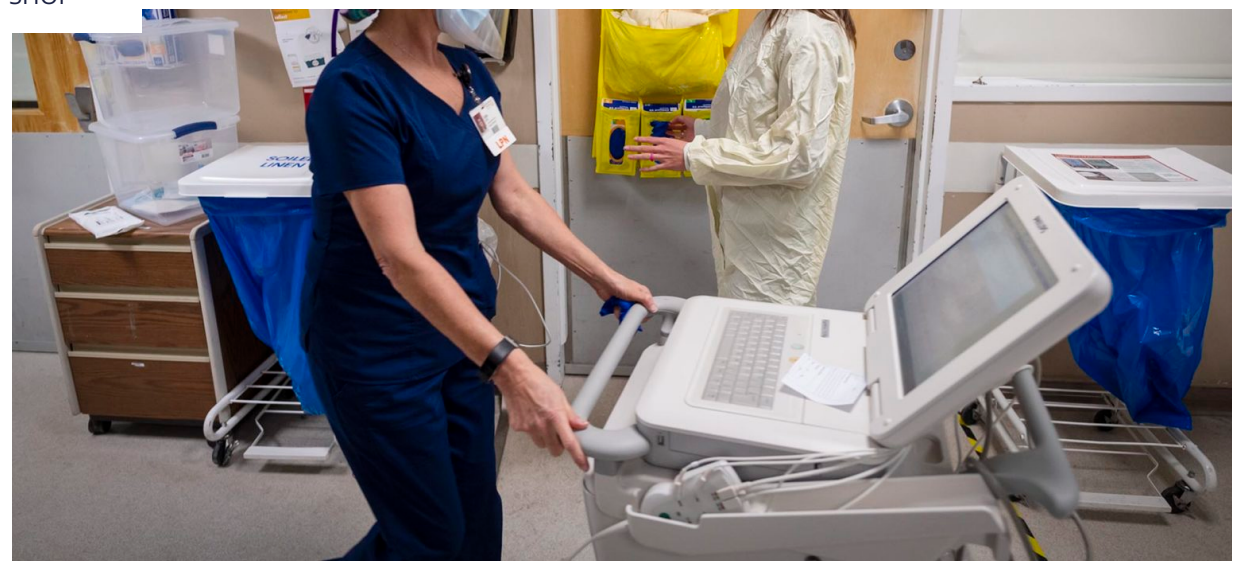


DONATE

NEWSLETTER

## News in pursuit of truth

SHOP



Health care workers tend to Covid-19 patients in the emergency department at the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington on Monday, Dec. 13. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

**W**ith rising concerns about health care staff shortages and the unprecedented spread of Covid-19, Vermont lawmakers may extend a policy that allows retired and out-of-state health care personnel to practice in Vermont.

Before the pandemic, medical providers could not practice without a valid Vermont medical license, and the process of obtaining one can take weeks.

But when the coronavirus crisis hit Vermont in March 2020, that tight regulatory setup went out the window. Act 6 allows providers who are licensed in other states to work in Vermont and allows retirees to return to practice much faster than normal.

**Get all of VTDigger's daily news.**  
You'll never miss a story with our daily headlines in your inbox.

Subscribe

### RELATED STORIES

- [Vermont schools should plan to stop contact tracing, change testing procedures, state officials say](#)
- [‘A pretty serious crisis’: Students and staff return to school closures, surging cases and expired tests](#)
- [Vermont reports 1,917 new Covid cases; average is now more than 1,100 a day](#)
- [Scott announces plan to send 500,000 free rapid tests to Vermonters](#)

[DONATE](#)[NEWSLETTER](#)

## News in pursuit of truth

[SHOP](#)

land a permanent job in Vermont could, in theory, begin work almost immediately. And it allows medical staff from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to offer support to hospitals as soon as they arrive.

But that speedy process could lead to concerns about patient safety, said Lauren Hibbert, director of the Office of Professional Regulation, which oversees professional licensing.

“I like to know who’s working in Vermont,” she said Wednesday at a joint meeting of the House Committee on Health and the Senate Health and Welfare Committee. “I’d like patients to know who’s working in Vermont. And I also think that the state should have appropriate regulatory control over people who work in Vermont.”

But Jill Massa Olson, speaking for a coalition that includes hospitals and provider associations, said the state’s staffing crunch is worse than it has ever been, and Act 6 has been a crucial remedy.

“I don’t think it’s possible to overstate the stress on the ground and the need for flexibility,” said Mazza Olson, who is executive director of VNAs of Vermont, a nonprofit organization of visiting nurse associations. “If this flexibility means one more nurse in one more place for one more day, we need that.”

Vermont’s health care staffing shortage is nearing a [crisis point](#), as hospital beds and emergency rooms are filling up quickly with the advent of the highly transmissible Omicron variant. The Covid-19 crisis has forced a slew of canceled or delayed surgeries, long wait times at emergency rooms and a shortage of available hospital beds.

Legislators said they want to extend the law well before the March 31 expiration date and indicated that some Act 6 provisions could become permanent.

“I think we’re in — for unfortunate reasons — a unique moment to reset,” said Rep. Mari Cordes, D-Lincoln, who is a registered nurse.

 [Get the latest statistics and live updates](#) on our coronavirus page.

 [Sign up for our coronavirus email list.](#)

 [Tell us your story or give feedback](#) at [coronavirus@vtdigger.org](mailto:coronavirus@vtdigger.org).



DONATE

NEWSLETTER

## News in pursuit of truth

SHOP

- [‘A pretty serious crisis’: Students and staff return to school closures, surging cases and expired tests](#)
- [Vermont reports 1,917 new Covid cases; average is now more than 1,100 a day](#)
- [Scott announces plan to send 500,000 free rapid tests to Vermonters](#)
- [Vermont reports 2,188 Covid cases and near-record hospitalization figures](#)

[ [REPORT AN ERROR](#) ] [ [UPLOAD A DOCUMENT](#) ] [ [TIP DROP](#) ]

Sign up for our guide to the global coronavirus outbreak and its impact on Vermont, with latest developments delivered to your inbox.

Subscribe

Filed under:

[HEALTH CARE](#)

Tags: [Act 6](#), [coronavirus](#), [COVID-19](#), [Jill Massa Olson](#), [Lauren Hibbert](#), [Mari Cordes](#), [Vermont hospitals](#)

### About Liora

Liora Engel-Smith covers health care for VTDigger. She previously covered rural health at NC Health News in North Carolina and the Keene Sentinel in New Hampshire. She also had been at the Muscatine Journal in rural Iowa. Engel-Smith has master's degrees in public health from Drexel University and journalism from Temple University. Before moving to journalism, she was a scientist who briefly worked in the pharmaceutical industry.

✉ Email: [lengel-smith@vtdigger.org](mailto:lengel-smith@vtdigger.org)

[View all stories by Liora Engel-Smith](#)