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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO FOODS AND DRUGS -- THE UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES  
ACT

Introduced By: Senators Miller, Seveney, Coyne, Quezada, Bell, Murray, Valverde,  
Archambault, Burke, and Cano

Date Introduced: January 19, 2021

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 21-28-4.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 21-28 entitled "Uniform  
2 Controlled Substances Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **21-28-4.01. Prohibited acts A -- Penalties.**

4 (a)(1) Except as authorized by this chapter, it shall be unlawful for any person to  
5 manufacture, deliver, or possess with intent to manufacture or deliver a controlled substance.

6 (2) Any person who is not a drug-addicted person, as defined in § 21-28-1.02(20), who  
7 violates this subsection with respect to a controlled substance classified in schedule I or II, except  
8 the substance classified as marijuana, is guilty of a crime and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned  
9 to a term up to life or fined not more than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) nor less than  
10 ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or both.

11 (3) Where the deliverance as prohibited in this subsection shall be the proximate cause of  
12 death to the person to whom the controlled substance is delivered, it shall not be a defense that the  
13 person delivering the substance was, at the time of delivery, a drug-addicted person as defined in §  
14 21-28-1.02(20).

15 (4) Any person, except as provided for in subdivision (2) of this subsection, who violates  
16 this subsection with respect to:

17 (i) A controlled substance, classified in schedule I or II, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
18 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than thirty (30) years, or fined not more than one

1 hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) nor less than three thousand dollars (\$3,000), or both;

2 (ii) A controlled substance, classified in schedule III or IV, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
3 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than twenty (20) years, or fined not more than forty  
4 thousand dollars (\$40,000), or both; provided, with respect to a controlled substance classified in  
5 schedule III(d), upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not  
6 more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), or both.

7 (iii) A controlled substance, classified in schedule V, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
8 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than ten thousand  
9 dollars (\$10,000), or both.

10 (b)(1) Except as authorized by this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to create, deliver,  
11 or possess with intent to deliver, a counterfeit substance.

12 (2) Any person who violates this subsection with respect to:

13 (i) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule I or II, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
14 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than thirty (30) years, or fined not more than one  
15 hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), or both;

16 (ii) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule III or IV, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
17 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than twenty (20) years, or fined not more than forty  
18 thousand dollars (\$40,000), or both; provided, with respect to a controlled substance classified in  
19 schedule III(d), upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not  
20 more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), or both.

21 (iii) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule V, is guilty of a crime and, upon  
22 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than ten thousand  
23 dollars (\$10,000), or both.

24 (c)(1) It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly or intentionally to possess a controlled  
25 substance, unless the substance was obtained directly from, or pursuant to, a valid prescription or  
26 order of a practitioner while acting in the course of his or her professional practice, or except as  
27 otherwise authorized by this chapter.

28 (2) Any person who violates this subsection with respect to:

29 (i) A controlled substance classified in schedules I, II and III, IV, and V, except the  
30 substance classified as marijuana, is guilty of a crime and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for  
31 not more than three (3) years, or fined not less than five hundred dollars (\$500) nor more than five  
32 thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both;

33 (ii) More than one ounce (1 oz.) of a controlled substance classified in schedule I as  
34 marijuana is guilty of a misdemeanor, except for those persons subject to (a)(1), and, upon

1 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not less than two hundred  
2 dollars (\$200) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or both.

3 (iii) Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, the possession of  
4 one ounce (1 oz.) or less of marijuana by a person who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, and  
5 who is not exempted from penalties pursuant to chapter 28.6 of this title, shall constitute a civil  
6 offense, rendering the offender liable to a civil penalty in the amount of one hundred fifty dollars  
7 (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana, but not to any other form of criminal or civil punishment or  
8 disqualification. Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, this civil  
9 penalty of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana shall apply if the offense  
10 is the first (1st) or second (2nd) violation within the previous eighteen (18) months.

11 (iv) Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, possession of one  
12 ounce (1 oz.) or less of marijuana by a person who is seventeen (17) years of age or older and under  
13 the age of eighteen (18) years, and who is not exempted from penalties pursuant to chapter 28.6 of  
14 this title, shall constitute a civil offense, rendering the offender liable to a civil penalty in the amount  
15 of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana; provided the minor offender  
16 completes ~~an approved,~~ a drug-awareness program [approved by the department of behavioral](#)  
17 [healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals](#) and community service as determined by the  
18 court. If the person seventeen (17) years of age or older and under the age of eighteen (18) years  
19 fails to complete an approved, drug-awareness program and community service within one year of  
20 the disposition, the penalty shall be a three hundred dollar (\$300) civil fine and forfeiture of the  
21 marijuana, except that if no drug-awareness program or community service is available, the penalty  
22 shall be a fine of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana. The parents or  
23 legal guardian of any offender seventeen (17) years of age or older and under the age of eighteen  
24 (18) shall be notified of the offense and the availability of a drug-awareness and community-service  
25 program. The drug-awareness program ~~must be approved by the court, but~~ shall, at a minimum,  
26 provide four (4) hours of instruction or group discussion and ten (10) hours of community service.  
27 Notwithstanding any other public, special, or general law to the contrary, this civil penalty shall  
28 apply if the offense is the first or second violation within the previous eighteen (18) months.

29 (v) Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, a person not  
30 exempted from penalties pursuant to chapter 28.6 of this title found in possession of one ounce (1  
31 oz.) or less of marijuana is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for  
32 not more than thirty (30) days, or fined not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) nor more than five  
33 hundred dollars (\$500), or both, if that person has been previously adjudicated on a violation for  
34 possession of less than one ounce (1 oz.) of marijuana under (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) two (2) times

1 in the eighteen (18) months prior to the third (3rd) offense.

2 (vi) Any unpaid civil fine issued under (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) shall double to three hundred  
3 dollars (\$300) if not paid within thirty (30) days of the disposition. The civil fine shall double again  
4 to six hundred dollars (\$600) if it has not been paid within ninety (90) days.

5 (vii) No person may be arrested for a violation of (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) of this subsection  
6 except as provided in this subparagraph. Any person in possession of an identification card, license,  
7 or other form of identification issued by the state or any state, city, or town, or any college or  
8 university, who fails to produce the same upon request of a police officer who informs the person  
9 that he or she has been found in possession of what appears to the officer to be one ounce (1 oz.)  
10 or less of marijuana, or any person without any such forms of identification who fails or refuses to  
11 truthfully provide his or her name, address, and date of birth to a police officer who has informed  
12 such person that the officer intends to provide such individual with a citation for possession of one  
13 ounce (1 oz.) or less of marijuana, may be arrested.

14 (viii) No violation of (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) of this subsection shall be considered a  
15 violation of parole or probation.

16 (ix) Any records collected by any state agency, tribunal, or the family court that include  
17 personally identifiable information about violations of (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) shall not be open to  
18 public inspection in accordance with § 8-8.2-21.

19 (3) Jurisdiction. Any and all violations of (c)(2)(iii) and (c)(2)(iv) shall be the exclusive  
20 jurisdiction of the Rhode Island traffic tribunal. All money associated with the civil fine issued  
21 under (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) shall be payable to the Rhode Island traffic tribunal. Fifty percent  
22 (50%) of all fines collected by the Rhode Island traffic tribunal from civil penalties issued pursuant  
23 to (c)(2)(iii) or (c)(2)(iv) shall be ~~expended on drug awareness and treatment programs for youth~~  
24 deposited as general revenues to be allocated by the department of behavioral healthcare,  
25 developmental disabilities and hospitals (BHDDH) and used to fund substance abuse prevention  
26 programs and student assistance programs for youth pursuant to chapters 21.2 and 21.3 of title 16,  
27 and in accordance with the criteria set forth in §§ 16-21.2-4(a) and 16-21.3-2(a).

28 (4) Additionally, every person convicted or who pleads nolo contendere under (c)(2)(i) or  
29 convicted or who pleads nolo contendere a second or subsequent time under (c)(2)(ii), who is not  
30 sentenced to a term of imprisonment to serve for the offense, shall be required to:

31 (i) Perform up to one hundred (100) hours of community service;

32 (ii) Attend and complete a drug-counseling and education program, as prescribed, by the  
33 director of the department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals and  
34 pay the sum of four hundred dollars (\$400) to help defray the costs of this program which shall be

1 deposited as general revenues to be allocated by the department of behavioral healthcare,  
2 developmental disabilities and hospitals (BHDDH) to fund substance abuse prevention programs  
3 and student assistance programs for youth pursuant to chapters 21.2 and 21.3 of title 16 and in  
4 accordance with the criteria set forth in §§ 16-21.2-4(a) and 16-21.3-2(a). Failure to attend may  
5 result, after hearing by the court, in jail sentence up to one year;

6 (iii) The court shall not suspend any part or all of the imposition of the fee required by this  
7 subsection, unless the court finds an inability to pay;

8 (iv) If the offense involves the use of any automobile to transport the substance or the  
9 substance is found within an automobile, then a person convicted or who pleads nolo contendere  
10 under (c)(2)(i) and (c)(2)(ii) shall be subject to a loss of license for a period of six (6) months for a  
11 first offense and one year for each offense after.

12 (5) All fees assessed and collected pursuant to ~~(e)(3)(ii)~~ subsection (c)(4)(ii) of this section  
13 shall be deposited as general revenues to be allocated by the department of behavioral healthcare,  
14 developmental disabilities and hospitals (BHDDH) to fund substance abuse prevention programs  
15 and student assistance programs for youth pursuant to chapters 21.2 and 21.3 of title 16 and in  
16 accordance with the criteria set forth in §§ 16-21.2-4(a) and 16-21.3-2(2) and shall be collected  
17 from the person convicted or who pleads nolo contendere before any other fines authorized by this  
18 chapter.

19 (d) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, or possess with intent to  
20 manufacture or distribute, an imitation controlled substance. Any person who violates this  
21 subsection is guilty of a crime and, upon conviction, shall be subject to the same term of  
22 imprisonment and/or fine as provided by this chapter for the manufacture or distribution of the  
23 controlled substance that the particular imitation controlled substance forming the basis of the  
24 prosecution was designed to resemble and/or represented to be; but in no case shall the  
25 imprisonment be for more than five (5) years nor the fine for more than twenty thousand dollars  
26 (\$20,000).

27 (e) It shall be unlawful for a practitioner to prescribe, order, distribute, supply, or sell an  
28 anabolic steroid or human growth hormone for: (1) Enhancing performance in an exercise, sport,  
29 or game, or (2) Hormonal manipulation intended to increase muscle mass, strength, or weight  
30 without a medical necessity. Any person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor  
31 and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than six (6) months or a fine of not more  
32 than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both.

33 (f) It is unlawful for any person to knowingly or intentionally possess, manufacture,  
34 distribute, or possess with intent to manufacture or distribute, any extract, compound, salt

1 derivative, or mixture of salvia divinorum or datura stramonium or its extracts unless the person is  
2 exempt pursuant to the provisions of § 21-28-3.30. Notwithstanding any laws to the contrary, any  
3 person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be  
4 imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or  
5 both. The provisions of this section shall not apply to licensed physicians, pharmacists, and  
6 accredited hospitals and teaching facilities engaged in the research or study of salvia divinorum or  
7 datura stramonium and shall not apply to any person participating in clinical trials involving the  
8 use of salvia divinorum or datura stramonium.

9 SECTION 2. Sections 16-21.2-4 and 16-21.2-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-21.2  
10 entitled "The Rhode Island Substance Abuse Prevention Act" are hereby amended to read as  
11 follows:

12 **16-21.2-4. Substance abuse prevention program.**

13 (a) The department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals shall  
14 be charged with the administration of this chapter and shall:

15 (i) Identify funding distribution criteria;

16 (ii) Identify criteria for effective substance abuse prevention programs; and

17 (iii) Provide ~~provide~~ grants to assist in the planning, establishment, ~~and~~ operation and  
18 reporting of substance abuse prevention programs. Grants under this section shall be made to  
19 municipal governments or their designated agents according to the following guidelines:

20 (1) The maximum grant shall be one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000);  
21 provided, however, in the event that available funding exceeds \$1.6 million in a fiscal year, those  
22 surplus funds are to be divided proportionately among the cities and towns on a per capita basis but  
23 in no event shall the city of Providence exceed a maximum grant cap of \$175,000.00.

24 (2) In order to obtain a grant, the municipality or its designated agent must in the first year:

25 (i) Demonstrate the municipality's need for a comprehensive substance abuse program in  
26 the areas of prevention and education.

27 (ii) Demonstrate that the municipality to be provided a grant has established by appropriate  
28 legislative or executive action, a substance abuse prevention council which shall assist in assessing  
29 the needs and resources of the community, developing a three (3) year plan of action addressing  
30 the identified needs, the operation and implementation of the overall substance abuse prevention  
31 program; coordinating existing services such as law enforcement, prevention, treatment, and  
32 education; consisting of representatives of the municipal government, representatives of the school  
33 system, parents, and human service providers.

34 (iii) Demonstrate the municipality's ability to develop a plan of implementation of a

1 comprehensive three (3) year substance abuse prevention program based on the specific needs of  
2 the community to include high risk populations of adolescents, children of substance abusers, and  
3 primary education school aged children.

4 (iv) Agree to conduct a survey/questionnaire of the student population designed to establish  
5 the extent of the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol in students throughout the local community's  
6 school population.

7 (v) Demonstrate that at least twenty percent (20%) of the cost of the proposed program will  
8 be contributed either in cash or in-kind by public or private resources within the municipality.

9 (3) Each municipality that receives a grant must demonstrate in an annual written report  
10 submitted to the department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals that  
11 the funding issued is expended on substance abuse prevention programs that reflect the criteria  
12 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

13 (b) The department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals shall  
14 adopt rules and regulations necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section.

15 **16-21.2-5. Funding of substance abuse prevention program.**

16 (a)(1) Money to fund the Rhode Island Substance Abuse Prevention Act shall be  
17 appropriated from state general revenues and shall be raised by assessing an additional penalty ~~of~~  
18 not to exceed thirty dollars (\$30.00) for all speeding violations as set forth in ~~§ 31-43-5.1~~ § 31-  
19 41.1-4.

20 (2) Money to fund the Rhode Island substance abuse prevention program shall also be  
21 appropriated from state general revenues collected by any state or municipal court from civil  
22 penalties issued pursuant to §§ 21-28-4.01(c)(2)(iii) and 21-28-4.01(c)(2)(iv) to the extent that the  
23 revenues collected are not otherwise specifically appropriated and the available funds shall be  
24 allocated in accordance with the distribution criteria identified by the department of behavioral  
25 healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals set forth in § 16-21.2-4(a).

26 (3) The money shall be deposited as general revenues. The department of behavioral  
27 healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals may utilize up to ten percent (10%) of the sums  
28 appropriated for the purpose of administering the substance abuse prevention program.

29 (b) Grants made under this chapter shall not exceed money available in the substance abuse  
30 prevention program.

31 SECTION 3. The title of Chapter 16-21.3 of the General Laws entitled "The Rhode Island  
32 Student Assistance Junior High/Middle School Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

33 ~~CHAPTER 16-21.3~~

34 ~~The Rhode Island Student Assistance Junior High/Middle School Act~~

1 CHAPTER 16-21.3

2 THE RHODE ISLAND STUDENT ASSISTANCE HIGH SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE  
3 SCHOOL ACT

4 SECTION 4. Sections 16-21.3-2 and 16-21.3-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-21.3  
5 entitled "The Rhode Island Student Assistance Junior High/Middle School Act" are hereby  
6 amended to read as follows:

7 **16-21.3-2. ~~Junior high/middle school student assistance program.~~ High school/junior**  
8 **high/middle school student assistance program.**

9 (a) The department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals shall  
10 be charged with the administration of this chapter and shall:

11 (1) Identify funding distribution criteria;

12 (2) Identify criteria for effective substance abuse prevention programs; and

13 (3) Contract ~~contract~~ with appropriate substance abuse prevention/intervention agencies to  
14 provide student assistance services that incorporate the criteria in high school/junior high/middle  
15 schools.

16 (b) Following the first complete year of operation, school systems receiving high  
17 school/junior high/middle school student assistance services will be required to contribute twenty  
18 percent (20%) of the costs of student assistance counselors to the service provider agency in order  
19 to continue the services.

20 **16-21.3-3. ~~Funding of junior high/middle school student assistance program.~~ Funding**  
21 **of high school/junior high/middle school student assistance program.**

22 (a)(1) Money to fund this program shall be raised by assessing an additional substance  
23 abuse prevention assessment ~~of~~ not to exceed thirty dollars (\$30.00) for all moving motor vehicle  
24 violations handled by the traffic tribunal including, but not limited to, those violations set forth in  
25 § 31-41.1-4, except for speeding. The money shall be deposited in a restricted purpose receipt  
26 account separate from all other accounts within the department of behavioral healthcare,  
27 developmental disabilities and hospitals. The restricted purpose receipt account shall be known as  
28 the high school/junior high/middle school student assistance fund and the traffic tribunal shall  
29 transfer money from the high school/junior high/middle school student assistance fund to the  
30 department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals for the administration  
31 of the Rhode Island Student Assistance High School/Junior High/Middle School Act.

32 (2) Money to fund the Rhode Island substance abuse prevention program shall also be  
33 appropriated from state general revenues collected by any state or municipal court from civil  
34 penalties issued pursuant to §§ 21-28-4.01(c)(2)(iii) and 21-28-4.01(c)(2)(iv) to the extent that the

1 [revenues collected are not otherwise specifically appropriated and the available funds shall be](#)  
2 [allocated in accordance with the distribution criteria identified by the department of behavioral](#)  
3 [healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals set forth in § 16-21.2-4\(a\).](#)

4 (b) The department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals may  
5 utilize up to ten percent (10%) of the sums collected from the additional penalty for the purpose of  
6 administering the program.

7 SECTION 5. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO FOODS AND DRUGS -- THE UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES  
ACT

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1           This act would: (1) Place approval of drug awareness programs for minors up through high  
2 school level charged with civil marijuana offenses in the discretion of the department of behavioral  
3 healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals (BHDDH); (2) Redirect funds from certain  
4 civil fines imposed to the general revenue fund to be expended by BHDDH to fund substance abuse  
5 and student assistance programs for youth; (3) Mandate that BHDDH establish funding criteria for  
6 distribution of funds and require that municipalities receiving funds file annual reports verifying  
7 that the funds are being used for substance abuse prevention programs; (4) Make high schools  
8 eligible for assistance programs; and (5) Changes the title of chapter 16-21.3 to reflect high school  
9 participation in the programs.

10           This act would take effect on July 1, 2021.

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