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STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY
GRAND ISLE COUNTY

MEMO

To: Vermont State Police;
Grand Isle County Sheriff's Dept.; and
Vermont Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

From: Douglas E. DiSabito, Esq., State's Attorney, Grand Isle County

Date: June 19, 2018

Re: Possession of Buprenorphine/Suboxone

In light of the Chittenden County State's Attorney's June 13, 2018 memo, advising that her office will decline to prosecute any citations or arrests for Misdemeanor Possession of Buprenorphine and related compounds such as Suboxone, I am writing to advise that my office will continue to prosecute individuals found in possession of a controlled substance, including buprenorphine, without a valid prescription¹, within Grand Isle County. Buprenorphine is a unique mixed opioid agonist-antagonist, and can only be prescribed by certain qualified doctors. As with all medications used in Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), buprenorphine is prescribed as a part of a comprehensive treatment program that includes compliance monitoring, counseling, behavioral contract, lifestyle changes, and participation in social support programs.

Since September 14, 2017, Vermont has been able to quickly meet the demand for treatment in all 14 counties.² While Suboxone is less likely to be abused, abuse is still possible, and without a doctor's supervision and without counseling, these abuses are more likely to occur. With abuse and without positive life-change, the chances for relapse are high.

It is illegal in the State of Vermont for a person to knowingly and unlawfully possess buprenorphine. 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a). Furthermore, it is illegal in the State of Vermont for a person to knowingly and unlawfully dispense buprenorphine to another person. 18 V.S.A. § 4234(b)(1). Lastly, it is illegal in the State of Vermont for a person to knowingly and unlawfully sell buprenorphine to another person. 18 V.S.A. § 4234(b)(2).

Thank you for your cooperation.

A blue ink signature of Douglas E. DiSabito, Esq., written over a horizontal line.

Douglas E. DiSabito, Esq.
State's Attorney, Grand Isle County

¹ 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a).

² Jess Aloe, *No more waiting for opiate addiction treatment in Chittenden County*, Burlington Free Press, Sept. 14, 2017.