
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that maintaining an
2 inmate's family and community relationships by enhancing visitor
3 services and programs and increasing the frequency and quality
4 of the visits are underutilized correctional resources that can
5 improve an inmate's behavior in the correctional facility and,
6 upon an inmate's release from a correctional facility, will help
7 to reduce recidivism. The legislature further finds that strong
8 family and community ties increase the likelihood of inmate
9 success after release and that visits should therefore be
10 encouraged.

11 The most striking feature of the literature concerning
12 inmate visitation is that there is little, if any, contrary
13 argument or evidence that the better the quality of visitation
14 throughout an inmate's incarceration, the better the effects on
15 the inmate, the inmate's family and community, and the inmate's
16 post-release adjustment. Inmates who have regular, continuing
17 visits with at least three family members show a significantly
18 lower recidivism rate when compared with those who do not have



1 such visits throughout their prison term. Inmates with no
2 visitors were six times more likely to reenter prison during the
3 first year of parole as those with three or more visitors.
4 Female inmates who have contact with their children and who
5 complete family reunification programs that reintroduce them in
6 a community-based setting have lower recidivism rates than
7 female inmates without access to their children or reunification
8 programs.

9 The strong positive relationship between strength of
10 family-social bonds and parole success has held up for more than
11 fifty years, across very diverse offender populations, and in
12 different locations.

13 Recently there has been a disturbing pattern within the
14 Hawaii correctional system. Weekend family visits have been
15 canceled due to lack of department of public safety personnel
16 necessary to staff visitation. These cancellations are
17 detrimental to the inmates and their family members who are
18 integral to inmate rehabilitation and recovery.

19 The purpose of this Act is to address the ongoing problem
20 of canceled visitation at Hawaii correctional facilities and to
21 ensure that continued family and community contact constitutes



1 one of the major future goals of Hawaii's correctional system by
2 establishing twelve-month pilot visitation programs at the Oahu
3 community correctional center and the Halawa correctional
4 facility.

5 SECTION 2. The department of public safety shall establish
6 a twelve-month pilot program to promote continuity of weekend
7 family visitation in all corrections division facilities and may
8 hire part-time staff, to work no more than nineteen hours per
9 week, whose primary responsibility shall be to staff weekend
10 family visits. These part-time staff members may also staff
11 inmate visitation on weekdays; provided that no staff person
12 shall work more than nineteen hours per week.

13 SECTION 3. The department of public safety shall establish
14 a twelve-month pilot program to promote weekday family
15 visitation in the Oahu community correctional center and the
16 Halawa correctional facility. The director of public safety may
17 provide for weekday visits in both facilities from 4:00 p.m. to
18 7:00 p.m. each week on any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. The
19 department of public safety may hire part-time staff, to work no
20 more than nineteen hours per week, whose responsibility shall be
21 to staff weekday family visits. These part-time staff members



1 may also staff inmate visitation on weekends; provided that no
2 staff person shall work more than nineteen hours per week. The
3 director of public safety may conduct weekday family visitation
4 at other correctional facilities as the director deems
5 appropriate.

6 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
8 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and
9 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
10 year 2016-2017 for implementation of the pilot programs pursuant
11 to sections 2 and 3 of this Act.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
13 of public safety for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2016;
15 provided that section 4 shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

16



Report Title:

Inmate Visitation; Appropriation; Department of Public Safety

Description:

Authorizes and appropriates funds for the department of public safety to create two pilot programs designed to promote inmate visitation at state correctional facilities. (SD1)

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