
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Acts 90 and 263,
2 Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, established a task force and
3 working group, respectively, to conduct a comprehensive review
4 of the current behavioral system of care, including existing
5 resources, gaps, and identification of action steps to improve
6 the overall continuum of care. The final task force report to
7 the legislature highlights the need in Hawaii for a coordinated
8 network of stabilization beds, which will allow triage, clinical
9 assessment, and recommendation for next level of care for those
10 struggling with substance use, mental health conditions, and
11 homelessness.

12 The legislature also finds that the National Coalition for
13 the Homeless has found that sixty-four per cent of homeless
14 individuals are dependent on alcohol or other substances. The
15 homeless point in time count for Oahu reported that 36.4 per
16 cent of homeless single adults suffer from some type of mental
17 illness. The intersection of homelessness and behavioral health



1 conditions is a crisis in Hawaii, which contributes to Hawaii
2 having the second highest rate of homelessness in the United
3 States. There is currently no coordinated system of
4 stabilization from the streets that assesses for and links to
5 the next level of clinical care.

6 The legislature further finds the current options for those
7 needing stabilization from substance use, mental health
8 conditions, or homelessness are stretched. Emergency facilities
9 throughout the entire State have experienced substantial
10 increases in psychiatric emergency admissions, which has
11 resulted in overcrowding and unsafe environments for patients
12 and medical staff.

13 The legislature additionally finds that comprehensive
14 crisis response and stabilization services are crucial elements
15 of the continuum of care. Reducing unnecessary transport of
16 clients to emergency departments and placing clients in more
17 suitable levels of care will improve outcomes for consumers,
18 reduce inpatient hospital stays, and facilitate access to other
19 behavioral health services.

20 The legislature also finds that the Hawaii coordinated
21 access resource entry system (CARES) provides access to



1 substance use treatment and behavioral health services. The
2 goal of CARES is to implement a synchronized system of care
3 rather than an assortment of independent services. In its first
4 three months of operation, CARES has identified that a lack of
5 stabilization beds represents a significant gap in services.

6 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
7 health to establish short-term residential beds for the purpose
8 of stabilization from mental health conditions or substance use
9 and to assess patients and triage them to a clinically
10 appropriate level of care through CARES.

11 SECTION 2. The department of health shall establish a
12 continuum of stabilization beds statewide by repurposing unused
13 state facilities for short-term residential use by non-forensic
14 patients experiencing substance use or mental health conditions,
15 and assessing and triaging these patients to a clinically
16 appropriate level of care through the Hawaii coordinated access
17 resources entry system.

18 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
20 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
21 the purposes of this Act.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
2 health for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on December 31,
4 2059.



Report Title:

DOH; Substance Use; Mental Health Conditions; CARES;
Homelessness; Stabilization Beds; Appropriation

Description:

Requires DOH to establish a continuum of stabilization beds statewide by repurposing unused state facilities for short-term residential use by non-forensic patients with substance abuse or mental health conditions, and accessing and triaging the patients to a clinically appropriate level of care through the Hawaii coordinated access resources entry system. Appropriates funds. Takes effect on 12/31/2059. (HD1)

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