
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that according to the
2 National Institute of Mental Health, one in five adults in the
3 United States has a mental health condition. In Hawaii, a
4 significant number of persons with mental illness end up in the
5 criminal justice system. Often times, trained mental health
6 care professionals can significantly help individuals with
7 mental health issues avoid the criminal justice system.

8 In addition, for those already in the criminal justice
9 system, there is a long wait for mental health treatment.
10 During 2017 and 2018, the department of public safety held two
11 hundred seventy-five pretrial detainees who were awaiting
12 treatment. This category of detainees spent a cumulative twelve
13 thousand days occupying the department's bed space before they
14 were transferred to the Hawaii state hospital.

15 The legislature recognizes that, as a matter of statewide
16 concern, action must be taken to increase the number of mental
17 health care professionals in Hawaii, not only to address the



1 needs of the criminal justice system, but also the general
2 public at large.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a behavioral health
4 social worker scholarship program to be administered by the
5 University of Hawaii.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by adding a new section to subpart B of part II to be
8 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

9 "§304A- Behavioral health social worker scholarship
10 program; service commitment. (a) There is established the
11 behavioral health social worker scholarship program to be
12 administered by the University of Hawaii. The behavioral health
13 social worker scholarship program shall assist students with
14 school tuition and fees in return for a service commitment of
15 five years with the department of human services, department of
16 health, department of public safety, judiciary, or contracted
17 service providers for services in the areas of psychiatric and
18 mental health, or other behavioral health social work.

19 (b) The behavioral health social worker scholarship
20 program shall cover the cost of tuition and fees for a complete
21 course of study that qualifies an individual for licensure under



1 chapter 467E; provided that a recipient who fails to maintain
2 satisfactory academic progress shall be terminated from the
3 behavioral health social worker scholarship program and shall be
4 required to repay the portion of the scholarship already
5 dispensed on the recipient's behalf.

6 (c) Recipients shall be required to complete five years of
7 service with the department of human services, department of
8 health, department of public safety, judiciary, or contracted
9 service providers for services in the areas of psychiatric and
10 mental health, or other behavioral health social work. If the
11 recipient fails to complete the required five-year service
12 commitment, the recipient shall reimburse the University of
13 Hawaii for the full amount of the award received from the
14 behavioral health social worker scholarship program.

15 (d) The number of scholarships awarded annually shall be
16 determined by the University of Hawaii, in collaboration with
17 the department of human services, and shall be subject to the
18 availability of funds.

19 (e) The University of Hawaii, in collaboration with the
20 department of human services, shall establish necessary policies
21 and procedures to implement and sustain the behavioral health



1 social worker scholarship program, including application
2 procedures, eligibility requirements, and standards to determine
3 which applicants are awarded scholarships.

4 (f) The department of human services shall adopt rules,
5 pursuant to chapter 91, for purposes of the five-year service
6 commitment component of the behavioral health social worker
7 scholarship program, including policies and procedures to
8 implement and sustain the five-year service commitment and terms
9 and conditions of employment."

10 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
13 the behavioral health social worker scholarship program
14 established in section 2 of this Act.

15 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
16 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

17 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

18 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on December 31,
19 2059.



Report Title:

Behavioral Health Social Worker Scholarship Program; UH; DHS;
Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the behavioral health social worker scholarship program at UH, which requires recipients of the scholarship to commit to five years of service with DHS, DOH, PSD, Judiciary, or contracted service providers. Appropriates funds. Takes effect on December 31, 2059. (HD2)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

