

GOV. MSG. NO. 1108

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

April 20, 2021

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,  
President of the Senate  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki,  
Speaker and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on April 20, 2021, the following bill was signed into law:

SB1127 SD1 HD2

MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION FOR  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
**ACT 008 (21)**

Sincerely,

David Y. Ige  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1       SECTION 1. This Act is recommended by the governor for  
2 immediate passage in accordance with article VII, section 9, of  
3 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

4       SECTION 2. Act 9, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020,  
5 appropriated a certain designated sum to the department of human  
6 services to provide funds for the general assistance program  
7 under the benefit, employment and support services division for  
8 the fiscal period beginning July 1, 2020, and ending June 30,  
9 2021.

10       A critical funding emergency exists. Pursuant to  
11 section 346-53(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, the general  
12 assistance program operates as a block grant program.  
13 Currently, depending upon the amount appropriated by the  
14 legislature, the monthly maximum allowance a general assistance  
15 recipient may receive is determined by dividing the amount of  
16 the appropriation by the number of general assistance



1 recipients; though per section 346-71(d), Hawaii Revised  
2 Statutes, the maximum allowance shall not exceed sixty-two and  
3 one-half per cent of the standard of need. The current monthly  
4 general assistance amount is \$388 or forty-one per cent of the  
5 standard of need. The standard of need is based upon the 2006  
6 federal poverty level.

7 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of individuals  
8 receiving general assistance benefits increased more than  
9 thirty-one per cent from February through October 2020. Based  
10 upon the October caseload of 6,814, the department projects the  
11 general assistance program will expend all appropriated funds  
12 before the end of the current fiscal year and the department  
13 will be unable to maintain the current monthly general  
14 assistance allowance of \$388 to the projected caseload of 6,834  
15 general assistance recipients.

16 The current monthly allowance of \$388 is barely enough to  
17 cover living expenses for disabled individuals on a fixed income  
18 who have no other viable means of support. Stopping the grant  
19 payment or reducing the amount of the grant payment for these  
20 recipients poses a real threat to their health and safety.  
21 Additional funds are urgently needed to prevent the reduction of



1 general assistance payments in the fourth quarter of fiscal  
2 year 2020-2021. The department anticipates that the high  
3 monthly caseload will continue, and the department projects an  
4 \$8,400,000 shortfall for state fiscal year 2020-2021.

5 In Act 196, Session Laws of Hawaii 2015, the legislature  
6 established the interim assistance reimbursement special fund to  
7 receive federal reimbursements paid to the State by the United  
8 States Social Security Administration for general assistance  
9 payments. Reimbursements paid after the end of the fiscal year  
10 are retained by the department and deposited into the interim  
11 assistance reimbursement special fund to meet shortfalls in the  
12 general assistance program in the event of economic downturn.

13 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn, the  
14 department withdrew \$202,222.97 from the interim assistance  
15 reimbursement special fund to meet program shortfalls in the  
16 last quarter of the state fiscal year 2019-2020.

17 For the current state fiscal year, the department  
18 anticipates withdrawing the entire \$3,000,000 from the interim  
19 assistance reimbursement special fund and that withdrawals may  
20 begin in December 2020.



1 The department requires an emergency appropriation for  
2 state fiscal year 2020-2021.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$3,200,000 or so much  
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to be used  
6 for general assistance payments.

7 SECTION 4. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the  
8 department of human services for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

APPROVED this 23 day of APR, 2021





GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I**

Date: April 16, 2021  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate  
of the Thirty-First Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2021.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate

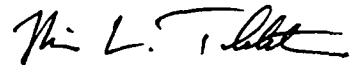
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
STATE OF HAWAII

Date: April 9, 2021  
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Third Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-First Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2021.



Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker  
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives