
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness in
2 Hawaii is a long-term problem. The legislature acknowledges
3 that homelessness requires greater collaboration and
4 coordination among diverse government entities, businesses,
5 nonprofit organizations, and faith-based organizations.
6 Accordingly, the legislature enacted Act 105, Session Laws of
7 Hawaii 2012. Act 105, in part, formally established the Hawaii
8 interagency council on homelessness, which was temporarily
9 created through Executive Order No. 11-21, and allowed the
10 council to continue identifying critical strategic goals and
11 initiatives that would mitigate homelessness while ensuring that
12 persons experiencing homelessness obtain permanent housing and
13 become reintegrated into the community. As one of its statutory
14 duties, the council adopted a ten-year plan on September 10,
15 2012. At that time, the point-in-time count or the annual one-
16 day unduplicated count of sheltered and unsheltered individuals
17 and families experiencing homelessness in the State totaled



1 7,921 statewide. Eight years later, in 2020, the point-in-time
2 count totaled 6,458.

3 While the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness has a
4 ten-year plan, the legislature further finds that the State
5 lacks a long-term commitment to reduce, prevent, and end
6 homelessness. Various state agencies and programs that address
7 homelessness have been built up on a piecemeal basis and have
8 approached homelessness in a similar manner. There is no
9 central agency tasked with finding solutions to homelessness
10 through reduction and prevention by coordinating state and local
11 government agencies and private entities.

12 The legislature recognizes that year-to-year funding,
13 rather than consistent funding in the base budget, creates
14 uncertainty for the staff of a program to continue fulfilling
15 the staff's duties and responsibilities. For example, in 2019,
16 the legislature enacted Act 81, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019,
17 which appointed the governor's coordinator on homelessness to
18 administer and enforce the duties and responsibilities of the
19 council. The coordinator is currently funded as a special
20 project under the department of human services, while the
21 coordinator's full-time staff of four are not permanent



1 employees. In addition, year-to-year funding among agencies and
2 providers for homeless services threatens already potentially
3 sporadic and fragmented services, instead of providing
4 consistent support that will help permanently house persons
5 experiencing homelessness in the State.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 7 (1) Establish the office on homelessness and housing
8 solutions; and
9 (2) Make an appropriation.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
12 to read as follows:

13 **"PART . OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS**

14 **§ -1 Definitions.** As used in this part, unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Coordinator" means the governor's coordinator on
17 homelessness as provided in section 346-381.5.

18 "Fund" means the homelessness and housing solutions special
19 fund.

20 "Office" means the office on homelessness and housing
21 solutions.



1 **§ -2 Office on homelessness and housing solutions;**
2 **establishment.** There is established within the department of
3 human services, for administrative purposes only, an office on
4 homelessness and housing solutions that shall:

- 5 (1) Work with state, county, and community agencies to
6 develop solutions to prevent and end homelessness in
7 the State through transitional and permanent housing
8 and supportive or assisted services, or both; and
9 (2) Test innovative solutions to prevent and end
10 homelessness in the State.

11 **§ -3 Administration.** (a) The office on homelessness
12 and housing solutions shall be headed by the governor's
13 coordinator on homelessness, appointed under section 346-381.5,
14 for the proper administration and enforcement of this part.

15 (b) The coordinator shall report directly to the governor
16 and appoint staff as may be necessary.

17 (c) The employees of the office shall be exempt from
18 chapter 76.

19 **§ -4 Duties and responsibilities.** The office shall:

- 20 (1) Identify and address gaps in the homeless service
21 system by:



- 1 (A) Developing and implementing homelessness and
2 housing strategies, including but not limited to
3 tax exemptions for homeless shelters, mental
4 health and substance abuse treatment facilities,
5 and supportive housing projects;
- 6 (B) Developing a standard strategy for coordinated
7 entry, needs assessment, and allocation of
8 services and housing types to create pathways to
9 permanent assisted and independent housing;
- 10 (C) Working with state departments and agencies to
11 develop and maintain multi-year strategic and
12 tactical plans and road maps as a part of the
13 Hawaii interagency council on homelessness' ten-
14 year statewide plan;
- 15 (D) Coordinating matters relating to homelessness and
16 affordable housing between state and county
17 agencies and private entities; and
- 18 (E) Developing and testing innovative solutions to
19 homelessness through collaboration with
20 appropriate agencies;



(2) Provide administrative support for the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness to develop the council's unified ten-year statewide plan to address homelessness in all counties of the State; and

(3) Establish and maintain a statewide homelessness and shelter and housing data clearinghouse, which may include information on persons experiencing homelessness and available services, shelters, and housing.

§ -5 Annual report. The coordinator shall submit an annual report to the legislature on the progress of the coordinator's activities, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The report shall also include:

(1) Performance metrics relating to reducing the number of persons experiencing homelessness in the State;

(2) Performance metrics relating to housing and services inventory gaps, including but not limited to the number of persons experiencing homelessness served and placed into permanent housing and the cost per person served;



(3) Performance metrics to evaluate the State's performance on homeless services, housing, care coordination, and other needed services to end homelessness in the State; and

(4) An inventory of available vacant public lands provided by each state agency that administers public lands pursuant to section -7.

§ -6 Homelessness and housing solutions special fund.

(a) There is established in the state treasury the homelessness and housing solutions special fund, into which shall be deposited:

(1) Appropriations by the legislature to the fund; and

(2) Gifts, donations, and grants from public agencies and private persons.

(b) All interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited in the fund shall become part of the fund.

(c) Moneys in the fund shall be used for the following purposes:

(1) Expanding tested solutions to end homelessness, including the homeless outreach and navigation for unsheltered persons program, ohana zones pilot



1 program, law enforcement assisted diversion, and
2 community outreach courts;

3 (2) Providing financial assistance to public and private
4 agencies in accordance with chapter 103F involved in
5 homelessness and housing solutions other than those
6 covered by this section;

7 (3) Testing, developing, and assessing innovative housing
8 solutions; and

9 (4) Covering administrative and operational costs of the
10 office.

11 **§ -7 Available vacant public lands inventory.** Each
12 state agency that administers public lands shall provide the
13 coordinator with an inventory identifying any available vacant
14 public lands under the jurisdiction of that agency."

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general fund
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to be
18 deposited into the homelessness and housing solutions special
19 fund; provided that any moneys appropriated pursuant to this
20 section shall be in addition to, and shall not supplant, any
21 portion of the budget used for ohana zones pilot program or



1 housing first program funding, the rental housing revolving
2 fund, and any other existing fund.

3 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the homelessness
4 and housing solutions special fund the sum of \$ or so
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for
6 the administration of the office of homelessness and housing
7 solutions; provided that each county shall provide support for
8 programs within the respective county and the governor's
9 coordinator on homelessness shall seek matching funds from the
10 county in which any proposed capital improvements are built or
11 created.

12 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
13 human services for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

DHS; Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness; Homelessness and Housing Solutions Special Fund; Appropriations

Description:

Establishes the Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions within the Department of Human Services to be headed by the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness. Establishes the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Special Fund and appropriates moneys into and out of the special fund, to be expended by the Department of Human Services for the administration of the Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

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