



**GOV. MSG. NO. 1189**

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

June 27, 2024

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

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second 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 June 27, 2024, the following bill was signed into law:

SB3094 SD2 HD2 CD1

RELATING TO PEER SUPPORT  
SPECIALISTS.  
**ACT 088**

Sincerely,

Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the federal Centers  
2 for Medicare and Medicaid Services recognizes that the  
3 experiences of peer support specialists, as part of an  
4 evidence-based model of care, can be an important component in  
5 the delivery of effective mental and behavioral health  
6 treatment.

7           The legislature further finds that the federal Substance  
8 Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration identifies peer  
9 support as one of the six guiding principles of trauma-informed  
10 care. Peer support specialists use strengths-based approaches  
11 that emphasize physical, psychological, and emotional safety and  
12 create opportunities to rebuild a sense of control and  
13 empowerment.

14           The legislature additionally finds that research shows that  
15 peer support is effective for improving behavioral health  
16 outcomes. Benefits of peer support include reduced hospital  
17 admission rates, longer community tenure, increased social  
18 support and social functioning, decreased substance use and



1 depression, raised empowerment scores, and increased engagement  
2 in self-care and wellness.

3       The legislature also finds that peer support provides  
4 benefits not only to individuals suffering from mental health  
5 disorders and substance use disorders, but also to individuals  
6 who are experiencing homelessness, involved in the child welfare  
7 system, survivors and responders of disasters, involved in the  
8 correctional and juvenile justice systems, and caregivers of  
9 youth involved in one or more child-serving systems.

10       The legislature also finds that Act 291, Session Laws of  
11 Hawaii 2022, established on a temporary basis the office of  
12 wellness and resilience within the office of the governor. The  
13 office of wellness and resilience was established to address the  
14 various barriers that impact the physical, social, and emotional  
15 well-being of all people in the State by building wellness and  
16 resilience through trauma-informed, strength-based strategies  
17 and to support state departments and agencies in their  
18 individual efforts to address trauma-informed care and move  
19 toward a collaborative, shared purpose of collective system  
20 reform.



1           The legislature finds that establishing a working group  
2 within the office of wellness and resilience that comprises  
3 state departments and agencies that engage with peer support  
4 specialists; community-based organizations; contracted service  
5 providers; and adults, youth, parents, and caregivers with lived  
6 experiences will contribute to the development of a framework  
7 that elevates the role of peer support specialists and enhances  
8 their ability to serve individuals in need.

9           The purpose of this Act is to:

- 10           (1) Establish a temporary peer support specialist working  
11 group to develop and make recommendations for a  
12 framework for peer support specialists in the State;  
13 and  
14           (2) Require the working group to submit a report of its  
15 findings and recommendations to the legislature before  
16 the regular session of 2025.

17           SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the office of  
18 wellness and resilience for administrative purposes a peer  
19 support specialist working group. The working group shall  
20 consist of the following members:



- 1           (1) The director of the office of wellness and resilience,  
2                    or the director's designee, who shall serve as the  
3                    chairperson of the working group;
- 4           (2) The director of health, or the director's designee;
- 5           (3) The superintendent of education, or the  
6                    superintendent's designee;
- 7           (4) The director of law enforcement, or the director's  
8                    designee;
- 9           (5) A member of the Hawaii state judiciary, to be  
10                   appointed by the chief justice;
- 11           (6) A member of the department of health's adult mental  
12                   health division representing the administrator of the  
13                   Hawaii certified peer specialist program;
- 14           (7) A member of the department of health's child and  
15                   adolescent mental health division representing the  
16                   administrator of the peer support specialist program  
17                   carried out within the division;
- 18           (8) The administrator of med-QUEST, or the administrator's  
19                   designee;
- 20           (9) The governor's coordinator on homelessness, or the  
21                   coordinator's designee;



- 1 (10) Two members of the nonprofit sector, who shall be
- 2 invited by the chairperson; and
- 3 (11) A member from each of the following constituencies,
- 4 whom the chairperson shall invite to participate in
- 5 the working group;
- 6 (A) An individual with lived experience as a child or
- 7 youth in the child welfare system;
- 8 (B) An individual with lived experience in the
- 9 juvenile justice system or an individual with
- 10 lived experience in the adult correctional
- 11 system;
- 12 (C) Two caregivers with lived experience as the
- 13 caregiver of a child or youth in the behavioral
- 14 health, child welfare, or juvenile justice
- 15 systems;
- 16 (D) An individual with lived experience with recovery
- 17 from substance abuse and lived experience being
- 18 homeless; and
- 19 (E) An individual with lived experience navigating
- 20 the mental health system either as a child or
- 21 youth or as an adult.



1 (b) The working group shall develop and make  
2 recommendations for a framework for peer support specialists in  
3 the State. The working group shall:

4 (1) Identify best practices and create, develop, and adopt  
5 a statewide framework for peer support specialists.

6 The framework shall include:

7 (A) Clear roles and definitions of peer support  
8 specialists, youth peer support specialists,  
9 adult peer support specialists, and caregiver  
10 peer support specialists;

11 (B) Ethics, values, and standards required of peer  
12 support specialists;

13 (C) Recommendations on whether the State should  
14 require youth peer support specialists, adult  
15 peer support specialists, and caregiver peer  
16 support specialists to undertake the same  
17 training, certification, and credentialing  
18 process or whether the training should be  
19 individualized based on the type of peer support;

20 (D) Recommendations on how to require peer support  
21 specialists in state-awarded contracts; and



- 1 (E) An implementation and quality improvement plan,  
2 consisting of an evaluation plan with coordinated  
3 data collection and suggested metrics for  
4 assessing ongoing progress of the framework;
- 5 (2) Identify a trauma-informed model of supervision of  
6 peer support specialists to support competent and  
7 ethical delivery of services that support continued  
8 development of peer support specialist abilities and  
9 support navigation of state systems, including the  
10 certification and credentialing process, integration  
11 in decision making and program development processes,  
12 debriefing from meetings, training and technical  
13 assistance, and programs to support the well-being of  
14 peer support specialists;
- 15 (3) Provide an inventory of current use of peer support  
16 specialists within and across public and private  
17 agencies and departments; and
- 18 (4) Develop a sustainability plan that includes  
19 identification of federal and state funding streams to  
20 incorporate requirements to establish peer support as  
21 a medicaid billable service.





1 (c) Members of the peer support specialist working group  
2 who are employed by the State and serving in their official  
3 capacity on the working group shall serve without compensation.  
4 Other members of the working group who are not employed by the  
5 State shall receive compensation for their travel expenses.

6 (d) The office of wellness and resilience may contract  
7 with an administrative facilitator to provide necessary support  
8 for the peer support specialist working group in carrying out  
9 its duties.

10 (e) The peer support specialist working group shall submit  
11 a report of its findings and recommendations, including any  
12 proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty  
13 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2025.

14 (f) The peer support specialist working group shall cease  
15 to exist on June 30, 2025.

16 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



S.B. NO. 3094  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 2  
C.D. 1

APPROVED this **27th** day of **June**, 2024




GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

**THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I**

Date: May 1, 2024  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2024.

  
President of the Senate

  
Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 3094, SD 2, HD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 1, 2024

Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024.



Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker  
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita  
Chief Clerk  
House of Representatives