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# 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 according to the  
2 2022 Homeless Counts by State, the State of Hawaii is ranked  
3 fourth in the nation for highest rates of homelessness. The  
4 2023 Oahu Point in Time Count reported that among homeless  
5 persons: thirty-six per cent were chronically homeless; thirty-  
6 one per cent suffer from substance abuse problems; thirty-nine  
7 per cent reported a mental illness; sixty-two per cent reported  
8 one or more disabling conditions; and twenty-eight per cent  
9 reported a physical, developmental, or other disability.

10           The legislature further finds that homeless individuals  
11 suffering from behavioral health conditions are often high users  
12 of the hospital emergency departments, which costs the State's  
13 health system millions of dollars each year for emergency  
14 ambulance transportation and emergency mental health  
15 evaluations. Providing appropriate care for these individuals  
16 requires clinical expertise to evaluate their physical and  
17 mental impairments and to assist in overcoming barriers to



1 access proper medical treatment and resources to meet the basic  
2 needs like food, hygiene, safety, and transportation.

3       The legislature additionally finds that more can be done to  
4 support existing crisis intervention programs to reduce the cost  
5 of restoring homeless persons to normalcy and independence.  
6 According to Oahu's 2023 Point in Time Count, there are 1,602  
7 homeless persons reporting substance abuse or mental health  
8 issues. The average cost of detoxification per year is \$1,536  
9 for outpatients and \$58,810 for residential patients, while the  
10 costs for emergency transport and treatment total \$3,633 per  
11 year. Saving 1,602 patients from outpatient rehab visits or  
12 diverting them from emergency medical treatment could save the  
13 State upwards of \$2,460,672 and \$5,820,066, respectively.

14       Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 15       (1) Support existing crisis intervention programs by  
16       implementing a homeless triage center program for  
17       homeless individuals and individuals at risk of being  
18       homeless within the alcohol and drug abuse division in  
19       the department of health; and  
20       (2) Appropriate funds to the department of health to  
21       implement a homeless triage center program.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to part XVI to be appropriately  
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 "§321- Alcohol and drug abuse division; homeless triage  
5 center program; establishment. (a) The department shall  
6 establish a homeless triage center program within the alcohol  
7 and drug abuse division that focuses on serving homeless and  
8 individuals at risk of homelessness with substance abuse issues  
9 or mental illness.

10 (b) The homeless triage center program shall provide:

11 (1) Access to emergency food, shelter, housing navigation,  
12 and supportive services;

13 (2) Mobile outreach and case management services;

14 (3) Medical assessments;

15 (4) Substance abuse treatment and detoxification services;

16 (5) Behavioral health services; and

17 (6) Trauma-informed, cultural-based life skills groups for  
18 shelter guests to maximize engagement and retention.

19 (c) The alcohol and drug abuse division shall work in  
20 cooperation with local hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, law



1 enforcement agencies, and homeless service providers in  
2 establishing the homeless triage center program.

3 (d) The alcohol and drug abuse division may contract with  
4 facilities that provide comprehensive triage services to  
5 homeless individuals suffering from substance abuse issues or  
6 mental illness to carry out the homeless triage center program."

7 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
8 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,  
9 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the  
10 appropriations contained in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023,  
11 and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure  
12 ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by  
13 \$            or            per cent. This current declaration takes  
14 into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal  
15 year 2024-2025 in Act 164, Regular Session of 2023, and this Act  
16 only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund expenditure  
17 ceiling are that:

- 18 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to  
19 serve the public interest; and  
20 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs  
21 addressed by this Act.



1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to  
4 implement the homeless triage center program established  
5 pursuant to section 2 of this Act.

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

8 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on December 31,  
10 2050.



**Report Title:**

DOH; Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division; Homeless Triage Center Program; Expenditure Ceiling; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a Homeless Triage Center Program within the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division of the Department of Health. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Appropriates funds. Takes effect 12/31/2050. (SD1)

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

