

S.B. NO. 3118

JAN 24 2024

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EMERGENCY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding to part II a new section to be appropriately
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 "§346- Temporary emergency public assistance; emergency
5 management program. (a) Following the end of a proclamation,
6 including any supplementary proclamations, by the governor
7 declaring a state of emergency in the State under section 127A-
8 14 and subject to available funds, the department may administer
9 and provide temporary emergency public assistance, including
10 necessary case management and other recovery services to
11 residents and organizations who were impacted by a declared
12 emergency, continue to require recovery assistance, and are not
13 otherwise provided for under this chapter.

14 (b) There is established within the office of the
15 director, the emergency management program that shall develop
16 emergency management plans, conduct periodic emergency
17 management training for staff and service providers, participate
18 in other federal, state, and county emergency management
19 planning efforts, establish agreements with community partners

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1 to prepare and respond to emergency management events and
2 disasters, pursue grants and technical assistance, and
3 coordinate and develop data sharing agreements and information
4 technologies capacity.

5 (c) To the extent that appropriations or private funds are
6 made available, the department may contract with one or more
7 provider agencies to administer temporary emergency public
8 assistance, case management services, or any other recovery
9 program for individuals or organizations impacted by an
10 emergency. Any procurement executed pursuant to this section
11 shall be exempt from the competitive procurement processes in
12 chapters 103D and 103F.

13 (d) The department may accept grants, donations, and
14 contributions from private or public sources for the purposes of
15 this section, which may be expended consistent with the
16 grantor's and donors' wishes."

17 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much
19 thereof as may be necessary for the fiscal year 2024-2025, and
20 one permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) program
21 administrator to implement the emergency management program.

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1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
2 human services for the purposes of this Act, including the
3 hiring of staff and operating expenses.

4 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: 

8

BY REQUEST

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Report Title:

Temporary Public Assistance After Emergencies; Emergency Management Program; DHS; Appropriation

Description:

Authorizes the Department of Human Services to provide temporary emergency assistance, case management, and other recovery services following the period covered by an emergency proclamation and establishes an emergency management program within the Director's office.

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

JUSTIFICATION SHEET **SB. NO. 3118**

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EMERGENCY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

PURPOSE: To authorize the Department to provide temporary emergency public assistance and recovery services beyond an emergency declaration and to establish an emergency management program within the Department.

MEANS: Add a new section to part II of chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

JUSTIFICATION: The Department requires the authority to provide temporary emergency public assistance and recovery services beyond the emergency or disaster declaration period to people or organizations affected by the emergency and who require additional assistance and services and who may not be eligible for existing public benefits and services provided by the Department.

Over the past five years, the Department has responded to various emergency management incidents, including the devastating Maui Wildfires, COVID-19, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, and flooding events. The Department's current emergency responses rely on deploying staff to attend Hawaii Emergency Management Agency meetings to facilitate the State's Emergency Support Function 6, Mass Care and Feeding.

For the Maui Wildfire incident, the Department expanded its response activities and responsibilities by assisting with sheltering survivors, rapidly setting up a temporary field shelter, conducting a Disaster SNAP program, and providing additional programs to expand access to child care subsidies and financial assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

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Notably, the Department is the State's applicant for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Case Management Program. The Department will also lead the recovery support function for social services and anticipate that Maui Wildfire residents will continue to require financial assistance, case management, and other services as they recover from the wildfires.

When the wildfires occurred in August, the Department was only several months into "unwinding" programs and services implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 response, the Department remained fully operational, pivoted to a hybrid work environment, applied for numerous program waivers, and was the first in federal Region IX to put up the Pandemic-EBT program that provided nutritional resources to Hawaii's families with young and school-aged children. The Med-QUEST Division's COVID-19 response supported 141,001 new enrollments in the State's Medicaid program from 3/6/2020 - 4/10/2023, a 43 percent increase.

The emergency management activities need a dedicated program and permanent emergency management program administrator to plan, prepare, train, and implement emergency management programs and activities. A dedicated program and staff are required to improve the Department's expanded roles and responsibilities with mass care and sheltering and to continue to support individuals and organizations impacted by emergency incidents following the end of the final emergency or disaster proclamation. Additional duties of the emergency management program administrator will include participating in federal, state, and county emergency management planning and exercise activities, assisting with communication, and establishing memorandums of agreement and data-sharing agreements

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with other entities active in disasters and long-term recovery.

Impact on the public: The Department's response will improve the delivery of resources and coordinated service to residents impacted by disasters.

Impact on the department and other agencies: The Department of the Attorney General may need to provide additional legal review of memorandums of understanding and data-sharing agreements active during disasters and recovery. Planners with the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency may be required to review and align the Department's plans and agreements with its plans.

GENERAL FUND: \$100,000.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: HMS 904.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: Department of the Attorney General,
Department of Defense, and Hawaii Emergency
Management Agency.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.