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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that children and  
2 families who are referred to the department of human services  
3 child welfare services branch have undergone a significant  
4 amount of trauma.

5       The malama ohana working group created by Act 86, Session  
6 Laws of Hawaii 2023, has submitted a report to the legislature  
7 that provides recommendations to create transformative changes  
8 to the State's existing child welfare system. Among the  
9 recommendations, the malama ohana working group has put forward  
10 a recommendation that calls for all child welfare services  
11 branch staff in the department of human services to receive  
12 comprehensive trauma-informed care training as part of  
13 developing a trauma-informed organization.

14       The legislature also finds that, in order for an  
15 organization to fully adopt a trauma-informed approach, there  
16 must be policies and practices that address the needs of staff,  
17 including training on the impacts of vicarious trauma, secondary

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1 traumatic stress, and burnout that staff experience as a result  
2 of their work.

3 Accordingly, the purposes of this Act are to direct the  
4 office of wellness and resilience to collaborate with the  
5 department of human services to, either directly or by contract,  
6 design, administer, and implement a program for trauma-informed  
7 organizational assessments and a training curriculum for the  
8 department of human services child welfare services branch  
9 staff, and appropriate funds for the program.

10 SECTION 2. The office of wellness and resilience, in  
11 collaboration with the department of human services, shall  
12 design, administer, and implement a trauma-informed care  
13 organizational assessment and training program, either directly  
14 or by contract.

15 The trauma-informed organizational assessment and training  
16 curriculum for the department of human services child welfare  
17 services branch staff shall specifically include:

18 (1) An evidence-based assessment tool to help child  
19 welfare services branch staff assess their current  
20 policies and procedures in the context of serving  
21 children and families who have experienced trauma;

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(2) An evidence-based assessment tool to measure the degree to which child welfare services branch staff address worker well-being, including the effects of vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout of all child welfare services branch staff;

(3) A training curriculum that establishes a cohort of trained trainers, as well as a branch-wide trauma-informed care curriculum accompanied by ongoing technical assistance;

(4) Specialized trauma-informed supervisor training and technical assistance to ensure implementation of the curriculum is sustainable; and

(5) A child welfare services expert to consult on the implementation of the assessment findings.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$425,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the office of wellness and resilience to design, administer, and implement a trauma-informed care training and organizational assessment program for the department of human services child welfare branch, directly or by contract.

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1       The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of  
2 wellness and resilience for the purposes of this Act.

3       SECTION 5. This Act, upon its approval, shall take effect  
4 on July 1, 2025.

5  
6       INTRODUCED BY:

Nadine K. Puhara

7       BY REQUEST

JAN 21 2025

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**Report Title:**

Trauma-informed Care; Office of Wellness and Resilience; Child Welfare Services; Department of Human Services; Assessment; Training; Appropriation

**Description:**

Directs the Office of Wellness and Resilience to collaborate with the Department of Human Services to, either directly or by contract, design, administer, and implement a program for trauma-informed organizational assessments and a training curriculum for the Department of Human Services child welfare services branch staff, and appropriates funds for the program.

*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

DEPARTMENT: Office of the Governor

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE.

PURPOSE: To direct and appropriate funds to the Office of Wellness and Resilience to design, administer, and implement a trauma-informed organizational assessment and a training curriculum for the Child Welfare Services Branch, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services.

MEANS: Enact a session law that directs the Office of Wellness and Resilience to collaborate with the DHS to design, administer, and implement a trauma-informed organizational assessments and training curriculum for the DHS Child Welfare Services Branch staff and appropriates general revenues.

JUSTIFICATION: Act 86, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, mandated the Malama Ohana Working Group to submit recommendations to improve and transform the child welfare system. One of the findings of the Malama Ohana Working Group was that children and families referred to the Child Welfare Services Branch of the Department of Human Services have undergone a significant amount of trauma. To address this finding, the Malama Ohana Working Group submitted a recommendation to develop a trauma-informed system for the DHS Child Welfare Services Branch. The trauma-informed care organizational assessment and training proposed in this bill aims to implement the Malama Ohana Working Group recommendation.

Impact on the public: Children and families that are referred to the Child Welfare Services Branch will be able to go through a system that is better prepared to recognize and respond to the trauma that the children

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and families have experienced, resulting in minimization of re-traumatization.

Impact on the department and other agencies:

The Office of Wellness and Resilience, in collaboration with DHS, will administer, directly or by contract, the development, administration, and implementation of the trauma-informed care organizational assessments and training program. By participating in the trauma-informed organizational assessments and training, not only will Child Welfare Services Branch staff be better equipped to address the trauma of children and families that are referred to the Branch but also be able to adequately address the impacts of vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout that staff experience as a result of their work.

GENERAL FUND: \$425,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026.  
\$425,000 for fiscal year 2026-2027.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM  
DESIGNATION: GOV100.

OTHER AFFECTED  
AGENCIES: Department of Human Services.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025.