
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO A DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PILOT PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that addressing shortages
2 in the State's public health workforce serves the public
3 interest and is a key priority for the State. In September
4 2024, the department of health reported nine hundred vacant
5 positions, revealing a severe staffing shortage impeding the
6 State's ability to quickly assess public health issues, develop
7 effective public health policy, and instill confidence in
8 residents about Hawaii's ability to protect their health and
9 well-being.

10 The legislature further finds that Hawaii is currently
11 experiencing a comprehensive shortage of skilled, professional
12 workers. This shortage is driven by a multitude of factors,
13 including workers relocating to states with lower costs of
14 living and an aging population wherein experienced workers are
15 beginning to qualify for retirement. These factors have
16 resulted in increased competition for skilled workers among
17 employers across many industry sectors.



1 The legislature recognizes that the State faces a wide
2 range of public health issues stemming from climate change,
3 increased globalization and global travel, an aging population,
4 and the complicated effects of mental health issues and
5 substance abuse. These issues require the State to be
6 increasingly vigilant to ensure the well-being of its residents.

7 The legislature further recognizes that section 76-5,
8 Hawaii Revised Statutes, authorizes the director of human
9 resources development to delegate the performance of services
10 under chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the State's civil
11 service laws, to other agencies. In addition, section 14-1-9,
12 Hawaii Administrative Rules, authorizes the director of human
13 resources development to delegate to other departments the
14 authority to act on human resources matters in accordance with
15 policies, rules, guidelines, and standards issued by the
16 director of human resources development. The legislature finds
17 that if the director of health could take over certain human
18 resources responsibilities as contemplated under these
19 provisions, the department of health may be able to more
20 expeditiously address public health issues facing the State.



1 The legislature further finds that under policy number
2 200.004 of the department of human resources development
3 policies and procedures, titled establishment of minimum
4 qualification requirements, the civil service system is based on
5 the merit principle, which is defined as "the selection of
6 persons based on their fitness and ability for public employment
7 and the retention of employees based on their demonstrated
8 appropriate conduct and productive performance". However, the
9 minimum qualifications established under this policy, which date
10 back to December 2003 and are still in effect, do little to
11 promote the merit principle.

12 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to streamline the
13 hiring process in the department of health by requiring the
14 delegation of certain human resources services under chapter 76,
15 Hawaii Revised Statutes, from the department of human resources
16 development to the department of health until June 30, 2028.

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a hiring pilot
18 program within the department of health. The pilot program
19 shall include the following:

20 (1) For delegated position classifications, the department
21 of health may forward to the hiring program



1 applications received without verifying minimum
2 qualifications. When the hiring program selects an
3 applicant for hire, the human resources office of the
4 department of health shall verify the applicant's
5 minimum qualifications before extending an offer of
6 employment. The department of human resources
7 development shall approve the temporary delegation of
8 other unique position classifications and non-unique
9 position classifications that are requested by the
10 department of health for recruitment under the pilot
11 program;

12 (2) The department of health shall have the following
13 flexibilities regarding minimum qualifications for
14 positions having a salary range at or below SR-10:

15 (A) Considering required minimum qualifications as
16 desired qualifications; and

17 (B) Allowing certain community college development
18 programs to be substituted for required or
19 desired experience;



1 provided that the department of health shall specify
2 any minimum qualification requirement or substitute in
3 the recruitment posting;

4 (3) The department of health may directly hire an
5 individual who meets minimum qualifications into a
6 civil service position; provided that there are more
7 than five vacant positions within the department of
8 health for that position classification; and

9 (4) The director of health may make a temporary
10 appointment outside the list at what would be the
11 merited civil service pay scale without step
12 limitation; provided that the department of health
13 shall notify the department of human resources
14 development of all temporary appointments outside the
15 list made under this paragraph. As used in this
16 paragraph, a "temporary appointment outside the list"
17 means a non-civil service temporary appointment
18 outside the list as described in policy number 300.001
19 of the department of human resources development
20 policies and procedures, titled types of appointments.



1 (b) The pilot program established under subsection (a)
2 shall be available for department of health recruitments that
3 are initiated before July 1, 2028.

4 (c) The department of health shall submit a report to the
5 legislature of its findings and recommendations, including any
6 proposed legislation regarding the pilot program established by
7 this Act, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
8 the regular sessions of 2026, 2027, 2028, and 2029.

9 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025;
10 provided that the pilot program established pursuant to this Act
11 shall be repealed on July 1, 2028.



Report Title:

DOH; Department of Human Resources Development; Hiring Pilot Program; Reports

Description:

Establishes a Hiring Pilot Program within the Department of Health, which includes an amended hiring procedure for delegated position classifications, certain flexibilities regarding minimum qualifications for positions having a salary range at or below SR-10, the ability to directly hire certain individuals into a civil service position if certain conditions are met, and the authority to make certain temporary appointments at the merited civil service pay scale without step limitation. Applies to recruitments initiated before 7/1/2028. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Sunsets 7/1/2028. (CD1)

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