
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 the return-to-home
2 pilot program established by Act 94, Session Laws of Hawaii
3 2023, has been a success, sending over one hundred homeless
4 individuals back to their home states in the State's partnership
5 with the Institute for Human Services.

6 The legislature further finds that additional manpower
7 would assist in furthering the program.

8 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to repeal the pilot
9 program, establish the program on a permanent basis, and
10 appropriate funds.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Part XVIII, Hawaii Revised
12 Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately
13 designated and to read as follows:

14 "§346- Return-to-Home Program. (a) The statewide
15 office on homelessness and housing solutions shall coordinate a
16 voluntary homeless assistance program, to be known as the
17 return-to-home program, to provide eligible homeless individuals



1 with assistance in being reunited with family and relatives in
2 the individual's home state. The office shall establish a
3 public-private partnership by contracting with eligible
4 nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, or
5 foundations to administer the program without regard to chapters
6 103D and 103F. The governor's coordinator on homelessness may
7 assist with the implementation of this program.

8 (b) An individual who is homeless shall be eligible to
9 participate in the return-to-home program if:

10 (1) The individual's participation is completely
11 voluntary;

12 (2) The individual, if on parole, probation, or awaiting a
13 court hearing or sentencing, has proper clearance from
14 the court to participate in the program; and

15 (3) The individual is indigent and lacks the financial
16 resources necessary to secure transportation to return
17 to the individual's home state.

18 (c) An individual shall participate in the return-to-home
19 program only once and shall sign an agreement to this effect
20 before participating in the program. The agreement shall be



1 kept on file with the statewide office on homelessness and
2 housing solutions.

3 (d) The return-to-home program shall actively seek the
4 participation of local airlines, cruise lines, charter
5 companies, homeless programs, travel agencies, and the visitor
6 industry to coordinate and implement the program.

7 (e) The return-to-home program shall assist program
8 participants with necessary and proper preparations for travel,
9 including obtaining proper identification, accessing public
10 transportation to the airport, providing orientation relating to
11 airport security, and ensuring sufficient personal hygiene.

12 (f) The statewide office on homelessness and housing
13 solutions shall submit a report of its findings and
14 recommendations relating to the return-to-home program,
15 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later
16 than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular
17 session."

18 SECTION 3. Act 94, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, is
19 repealed.

20 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so



1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
3 year 2026-2027 for the return-to-home program, including:

4 (1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position to assist
5 and supervise the program; and

6 (2) Operation costs and other current expenses relating to
7 the program.

8 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the statewide
9 office on homelessness and housing solutions for the purposes of
10 this Act.

11 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

13

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 15 2025



H.B. NO. 212

Report Title:

OHHS; Homelessness; Return-to-Home Program; Report;
Appropriations

Description:

Requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to establish a permanent Return-to-Home program to return homeless individuals in the State to families and relatives in their home states. Requires the Office to report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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

