

ACT 78

S.B. NO. 712

A Bill for an Act Relating to Corrections.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a significant proportion of the individuals in the corrections and rehabilitation system have experienced serious trauma during their lifetimes.

The legislature further finds that corrections professionals who are trained to properly assess and interact with persons who have experienced trauma are better able to engage these persons. As a result, these persons are more likely to connect with vital services, less likely to commit disciplinary infractions, and tend to experience improved rehabilitation and reduced rates of recidivism.

The legislature also finds that the establishment of a level I trauma-informed certification program may help to ensure that the State's corrections professionals are properly trained in trauma-informed care. A program certificate would require the completion of three courses, including a basic trauma-informed care course for adult corrections officers, especially those assigned to the women's community correctional center. The trauma-informed care course would be based upon an existing course implemented by windward community college for mental health technicians at Hawaii state hospital, and thus has already been proven successful. Accordingly, providing the windward community college with the ability to offer trauma-informed care courses to ensure that

corrections professionals are properly trained is a matter of statewide concern that falls under the legislature's purview pursuant to article X, section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution.

The purpose of this Act is to require the department of public safety to collaborate with the university of Hawaii windward community college to support a level I trauma-informed certification program for adult corrections officers in the State.

SECTION 2. There shall be established a level I trauma-informed certification program to be placed within the university of Hawaii windward community college for adult corrections officers; provided that:

- (1) The department of public safety shall collaborate with and provide support to the university of Hawaii in carrying out the purposes of this Act;
- (2) Courses shall be offered in eight-week or sixteen-week-long blocks during the 2023-2024 academic year;
- (3) Eligible courses shall be offered at no cost to adult corrections officers employed by the department of public safety or succeeding agency;
- (4) The certificate shall require completion of a level I trauma-informed care course designed for adult corrections officers;
- (5) With the approval of the governor, the department of public safety, as the designated expending agency for moneys appropriated for the purpose of a level I trauma-informed certification program to be funded by operating funds authorized during the regular session of 2023, may delegate to the university of Hawaii windward community college the implementation of projects related or similar to the level I trauma-informed certification program established by this Act when it is determined advantageous or convenient to do so by both the original expending agency and the agency to which expending authority is to be delegated; and
- (6) Moneys appropriated may be used for instructor costs, tuition, supplies, books, any necessary class materials, speaker fees, travel by instructors to correctional facilities to provide skills-building workshops, and other expenses of the university of Hawaii.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 14, 2023.)