
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. Ohana is a group of closely- or distantly-
2 related people who share nearly everything, from land and food
3 to responsibility for taking care of children and elders.
4 Members of an ohana, whether or not related by blood, treat each
5 other as extended family and share generously with each other.
6 The legislature finds that some homelessness encampments in
7 the islands embody this ethic of ohana and have the capacity to
8 improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness.
9 The legislature also finds that, while significant strides
10 have been made, current attempts to address homelessness in
11 Hawaii remain insufficient. Hawaii continues to have the
12 highest number of individuals experiencing homelessness per
13 capita of any state in the nation. Oahu, which has the highest
14 number of individuals experiencing homelessness of any county in
15 Hawaii, has seen the number of unsheltered individuals
16 experiencing homelessness rise over the past five years and the



1 number of people in shelters decline during the same period
2 despite increased investment in shelters and enforcement.

3 Therefore, the legislature finds that addressing
4 homelessness requires the courage to try something new.

5 The legislature finds that ohana zones have the potential
6 to serve individuals experiencing homelessness in a way that
7 existing programs are currently unable. Ohana zones will have
8 the goal of improving the health and well-being of individuals
9 experiencing homelessness and providing access to needed
10 services. The use of the term ohana is not meant to suggest
11 that the use of an ohana zone is limited to nuclear families or
12 people related by blood, but rather that an ohana zone provides
13 a welcoming, safe haven where both individuals experiencing
14 homelessness and those who serve them treat each other as an
15 extended family.

16 Because it is unclear what costs and benefits will accrue
17 using the new model of an ohana zone, the legislature finds that
18 these costs and benefits should be carefully studied, and that
19 ohana zones should, at least initially, be temporary.

20 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot program for
21 the establishment of ohana zones, with the goal of improving the



1 health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness
2 and providing individuals experiencing homelessness with needed
3 services.

4 SECTION 2. Definitions. For purposes of this Act:

5 "Department" means the department of human services.

6 "Office" means the department's homeless programs office.

7 "Homeless" means the same as in section 346-361, Hawaii
8 Revised Statutes.

9 "Ohana zone" or "ohana zones" means a place that has a
10 program to provide individuals experiencing homelessness with
11 basic needs including food, shelter, bathrooms, showers, and
12 other hygiene needs and where wrap-around services, social
13 health care services, transportation, and other similar services
14 are offered with the goals of alleviating intergeneration
15 poverty and transitioning individuals experiencing homelessness
16 into affordable housing.

17 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the
18 department's office for administrative purposes a three-year
19 pilot program to be known as the ohana zone pilot program. The
20 homeless programs office, in consultation with the Hawaii
21 interagency council on homelessness and any other appropriate



1 agency and with people experiencing homelessness, shall serve as
2 the administrator of the pilot program.

3 (b) Contracts entered into by the office, pursuant to the
4 ohana zone pilot program, shall be exempt from the requirements
5 of chapters 103D and 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

6 (c) For the purpose of the ohana zone pilot program, the
7 department and department of land and natural resources may
8 develop interim administrative rules without regard to chapter
9 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

10 (d) The office shall consult with the department of land
11 and natural resources, the governor's coordinator on
12 homelessness, and with people experiencing homelessness to
13 identify and evaluate locations in which an ohana zone may be
14 established, beginning with the locations previously identified
15 as potential safe zone sites in the final report submitted by
16 the working group to examine the feasibility of safe zones
17 pursuant to Act 212, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017.

18 The office shall also consider locations that are on
19 private property and shall be authorized to inquire with private
20 property landowners regarding the availability of the private
21 property as a possible location of an ohana zone.



1 (e) The office shall consider whether there are any
2 benefits to establishing multiple ohana zones that address
3 specific target populations, such as individuals who are
4 experiencing homelessness and who are frail, elderly, or victims
5 of domestic violence, or establishing ohana zones targeting the
6 general homeless population

7 (f) The office, in consultation with people experiencing
8 homelessness, shall establish no later than December 31, 2018,
9 the following:

- 10 (1) The criteria that the office will use to evaluate
11 potential ohana zone locations;
- 12 (2) A monthly timetable of milestones that the office
13 expects to meet in establishing one or more ohana
14 zones over the course of the three-year pilot program;
- 15 (3) The specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and
16 time-based performance measures that the office
17 expects to meet at the end of each fiscal year;
- 18 (4) The evaluation criteria and process that the office
19 intends to use each year when reviewing the success
20 and sustainability of the ohana zones; and



1 (5) The monitoring and oversight controls that the office
2 will have over the ohana zones to identify, address,
3 and prevent possible fraud, waste, and abuse and
4 ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws.

5 (g) The office shall establish an ohana zone at one or
6 more of the sites approved for a ohana zone no later than June
7 30, 2019.

8 (h) The office shall submit reports to the legislature no
9 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2019, 2020,
10 and 2021 regular sessions.

11 (1) The report that shall be submitted no later than
12 twenty days prior to the convening of the 2019 regular
13 session shall include but not be limited to the
14 following information:

15 (A) A summary and explanation of the process that the
16 office engaged in to identify possible ohana zone
17 locations;

18 (B) A list of the locations considered, including but
19 not limited to physical location, whether the
20 property was owned by state or local government
21 or by a private landowner; the cost of obtaining



1 the use of the property; and any remediation
2 costs needed to make the property suitable for
3 individuals experiencing homelessness to reside
4 upon;

5 (C) Identification of approved and rejected ohana
6 zone locations, and the rationale for the
7 selection or rejection of the sites; and

8 (D) A summary of the information required under
9 subsection (e).

10 (2) The reports that shall be submitted no later than
11 twenty days prior to the convening of the 2020 and
12 2021 regular sessions shall include but not be limited
13 to the following information:

14 (A) The milestones, which were previously established
15 pursuant to subsection (e) that were met by the
16 office and the established ohana zones during the
17 fiscal year;

18 (B) An evaluation of the ohana zones to determine
19 whether the objectives set have been met or
20 exceeded;



1 (C) Any proposed changes that need to be made to the
2 performance measures used to assess the
3 achievement of program goals; and

4 (D) An assessment of the impact of the ohana zone
5 model on the homelessness problem in Hawaii.

6 (i) The pilot program shall cease to exist on June 30,
7 2021.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to the
11 department of human services to implement the ohana zone pilot
12 program, including all program costs and hiring of necessary
13 staff.

14 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
15 human services for purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000;
17 provided that section 4 shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Ohana Zone Pilot Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Ohana Zone Pilot Program. Defines the intent of the pilot program, and sets preliminary milestones that shall be met by the Department of Human Services Office Homeless Programs Office in establishing the pilot program. Appropriates funds.
(HB2753 HD1)

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