
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The department of human services has the
2 largest operating budget of any state department, approximately
3 \$3,304,000,000, including seventy-nine per cent of all the
4 executive branch's federal funds. The department provides
5 benefits and services to one in four Hawaii residents or nearly
6 360,000 individuals. The State's medicaid program provides
7 medical insurance coverage for nearly one-half of Hawaii's
8 children.

9 The department's programs and services include: protection
10 of vulnerable children and adults; vocational rehabilitation and
11 financial assistance to the disabled; the supplemental nutrition
12 assistance program; financial assistance; job training and
13 placement; housing and services for the homeless; medicaid
14 services for the State's medically needy population; and
15 prevention, treatment, and housing for the State's youthful
16 offenders.



1 To provide these benefits and services to Hawaii's
2 vulnerable individuals and families, the department manages
3 significant federal and state funds and processes vast amounts
4 of information on a daily basis. Initiated by the Patient
5 Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, the department
6 continues to invest in the development of an enterprise
7 eligibility system that will support the integration of services
8 that will lead to improved individual and program outcomes
9 through more efficient service delivery and data analytics.

10 As part of the department's continuous improvement efforts,
11 in 2016 the department embarked on its 'ohana nui effort by
12 adopting a multigenerational approach to transform the way
13 services are provided to individuals and families to improve
14 outcomes and well-being. By providing programs and services
15 that maintain a high level of service integration, quality, and
16 intensity across multiple generations, the department intends to
17 reduce intergenerational poverty in the State, and the human and
18 financial costs associated with poverty.

19 The human and financial costs associated with poverty are
20 well documented. The 2009 paper "Childhood and
21 Intergenerational Poverty: The Long Term Consequences of Growing



1 up Poor," by Robert L. Wagmiller, Jr., and Robert M. Adelman,
2 found that "individuals who grow up in poor families are much
3 more likely to be poor in early adulthood. Moreover, the
4 chances of being poor in early adulthood increase sharply as the
5 time spent living in poverty during childhood increases." The
6 department's programs must focus on reducing the time children,
7 families, and individuals spend in poverty and supporting every
8 person's ability to meet their human and economic potential.

9 Furthermore, other studies link adverse social and economic
10 conditions in childhood to health problems in adulthood. The
11 original 1998 Adverse Childhood Experiences study conducted by
12 the Centers on Disease Control & Prevention and Kaiser
13 Permanente, surveyed nearly seventeen thousand adults in
14 southern California. The primary conclusion of the Adverse
15 Childhood Experiences study was the finding of a strong
16 relationship between "exposure to abuse or household dysfunction
17 during childhood and multiple risk factors for several leading
18 causes of death in adults," such as heart disease, cancer,
19 chronic lung disease, fractures, and liver disease. While
20 adverse childhood experiences occur across all races and



1 economic classes, there is a higher prevalence of adverse
2 childhood experiences for those who also live in poverty.

3 A similar conclusion was again found in a 2014 Swedish
4 study that "showed social and economic disadvantages in
5 childhood were associated with an earlier onset and faster
6 progression of functional health problems from midlife into old
7 age." The Swedish study also concluded that "creating equal
8 opportunities for educational attainment may help reduce the
9 long-term effect of disadvantaged childhood conditions and
10 postpone functional health problems."

11 The legislature finds that transitioning the department's
12 service delivery to a multigenerational approach will refocus
13 the department's efforts to provide available resources and
14 support to reduce the time a child and family spends in poverty,
15 stabilize the child's basic needs and environment to enhance
16 their ability to learn, improve all recipients' economic
17 security, and ultimately reduce intergenerational poverty in
18 Hawaii.

19 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
20 human services to use an integrated and multigenerational
21 service delivery approach to reduce the incidence of



1 intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits,
2 consistent with the nationally recognized best practices.

3 SECTION 2. Section 26-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

5 "(b) The department shall administer programs through an
6 integrated and multigenerational approach designed to improve
7 the social well-being, economic security, and productivity of
8 the people of the State[-], and to reduce the incidence of
9 intergenerational poverty and dependence upon public benefits.

10 Without limit to the generality of the foregoing, the department
11 shall concern itself with problems of human behavior,
12 adjustment, and daily living through the administration of
13 programs of family, child and adult welfare, economic
14 assistance, health care assistance, rehabilitation toward self-
15 care and support, public housing, and other related programs
16 provided by law."

17 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
18 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

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H.B. NO. 1417

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Report Title:

DHS; Integrated and Multigenerational Approach; Reduction of Intergenerational Poverty

Description:

Requires the Department of Human Services to use an integrated and multigenerational approach to delivering human services to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits.

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