
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Act 90, Session Laws
2 of Hawaii 2019, established the involuntary hospitalization task
3 force to improve the admission process and care access for
4 certain individuals who are involuntarily hospitalized. Act
5 263, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, established a working group to
6 evaluate current behavioral health care and related systems and
7 to identify existing resources, systems gaps, and possible
8 action steps to improve the overall system of care. The
9 findings from these initiatives highlight the need in Hawaii for
10 a coordinated network of stabilization beds to allow health care
11 workers to provide triage, clinical assessment, and
12 recommendations for the next level of care for individuals
13 struggling with substance use, mental health conditions, and
14 homelessness.

15 The National Coalition for the Homeless has found that
16 sixty-four per cent of homeless individuals are dependent on
17 alcohol or other substances. In Hawaii, the Oahu homeless point



1 in time count reported that 36.4 per cent of homeless single
2 adults suffer from some type of mental illness. The
3 intersection of homelessness and behavioral health conditions is
4 a crisis in the State and contributes to Hawaii having the
5 second highest rate of homelessness in the nation.

6 Unfortunately, there is currently no coordinated system of
7 stabilization for homeless individuals that assesses for and
8 links to the next level of clinical care.

9 The legislature additionally finds that the current
10 resources for those needing stabilization based on substance
11 use, mental health, and homelessness are stretched, and
12 emergency facilities throughout the State have experienced
13 substantial increases in psychiatric emergency admissions. This
14 has resulted in overcrowding and unsafe conditions for patients
15 and medical staff.

16 The legislature also finds that comprehensive crisis
17 response and stabilization services are crucial elements of the
18 continuum of care. Reducing unnecessary admissions to emergency
19 departments by appropriately placing clients in more suitable
20 levels of care will improve outcomes, reduce inpatient hospital



1 stays, and facilitate access to other behavioral health
2 services.

3 The Hawaii coordinated access resource entry system
4 provides access to services for substance use and behavioral
5 health. The purpose of the system is to provide a coordinated
6 system of care rather than an assortment of independent
7 services. During its first three months of operation, the
8 Hawaii coordinated access resource entry system identified the
9 lack of stabilization beds as a significant gap in existing
10 resources.

11 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require and
12 appropriate funds for the department of health to provide
13 short-term residential beds to allow the stabilization, triage,
14 and assessment of patients in need of services for mental health
15 conditions, substance use, or homelessness.

16 SECTION 2. The department of health shall repurpose unused
17 state facilities to provide short-term residential beds to allow
18 the stabilization, triage, and assessment of patients in need of
19 services for mental health conditions, substance use, or
20 homelessness.



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
4 the purposes of this Act.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
6 health for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

DOH; Stabilization Beds; Substance Use; Mental Health
Conditions; Homelessness; Appropriation

Description:

Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Health to repurpose unused state facilities to provide short-term residential beds to allow the stabilization, triage, and assessment of patients in need of services for mental health conditions, substance use, or homelessness. Effective 7/1/2050.
(SD2)

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