
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that current state
2 welfare policy often penalizes welfare recipients who seek job
3 promotions or higher paying career opportunities. Receiving
4 increased income often causes welfare recipients to lose their
5 beneficiary status, thus perpetuating financial hardship. The
6 legislature further finds there is a need to revise the welfare
7 payment system to allow recipients to advance in their careers
8 without necessarily losing their beneficiary status.

9 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 10 (1) Require the department of human services to establish
11 a task force to develop a restructured welfare payment
12 system; and
- 13 (2) Reestablish the exit and retention bonus program to
14 encourage welfare recipients to transition back into
15 the workforce.

16 SECTION 2. (a) Beginning no later than January 1, 2019,
17 the department of human services, including the financial



1 assistance advisory council, shall convene a task force to
2 revise and restructure the welfare payment structure to
3 incentivize qualifying welfare recipients to advance in their
4 careers while retaining their beneficiary status. The task
5 force shall:

- 6 (1) Examine the current welfare payment structure;
- 7 (2) Develop recommendations to revise the welfare payment
8 structure to incentivize qualifying recipients to
9 advance in their careers or seek high paying jobs
10 without necessarily causing recipients to lose their
11 welfare beneficiary status;
- 12 (3) Develop recommendations for a sliding scale payment
13 system to incrementally reduce welfare payments to
14 recipients as they advance in their careers or obtain
15 higher-paying jobs;
- 16 (4) Explore other possible methods to incentivize welfare
17 recipients to seek financial self-sufficiency; and
- 18 (5) Assess the effectiveness of the temporary assistance
19 for needy families program of the United States
20 Department of Health and Human Services.



1 (b) The director of human services or the director's
2 designee shall serve as the chairperson of the task force and
3 shall request representatives of advocacy organizations focused
4 on poverty, children, families, and women's issues to serve as
5 members of the task force.

6 (c) The task force shall report to the legislature no
7 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2020
8 regular session on its findings and recommendations, including
9 any recommendations for an implementation plan or legislation.

10 SECTION 3. Beginning no later than January 1, 2019, the
11 department of human services shall reestablish the exit and
12 retention bonus program. The program shall:

- 13 (1) Be available to recipients who voluntarily terminate
14 their welfare benefits within a twenty-four month
15 period and remain out of the welfare system;
- 16 (2) Provide bonuses available after three, six, twelve,
17 and twenty-four months, with bonus amounts increasing
18 for more hours of employment; and
- 19 (3) Provide a maximum bonus amount over a period of
20 twenty-four months.



1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to
4 reestablish the exit and retention bonus program.

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

7 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

DHS; Welfare; TANF

Description:

Requires the Department of Human Services to establish a task force to develop a restructured welfare payment system and assess the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Reestablishes the exit and retention bonus program to encourage welfare recipients to transition back into the workforce. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (SD1)

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