
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State is facing
2 a shortage of social workers to help people in the State manage
3 their mental health and cope with stressors in their everyday
4 lives. This shortage is of concern, as social workers already
5 have full caseloads and may be unable to provide additional
6 services, which may in turn intensify the need for help and
7 increase burnout among social workers. The demand for social
8 workers will likely continue to rise, especially during the
9 coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and its aftermath, because
10 individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, life transitions,
11 and other mental health challenges will need social workers'
12 support to address difficult or stressful life situations.

13 The legislature further finds that some nonviolent
14 incarcerated individuals may have experienced the need for
15 social services or may have firsthand experience receiving
16 services from social workers. These individuals may be uniquely
17 qualified to enter the field of social work as assistants after



1 undergoing training. The legislature also finds that to address
2 the shortage of social workers and lack of social services in
3 the State, providing social work training to nonviolent
4 incarcerated individuals may help these individuals reintegrate
5 into society once their period of incarceration is over.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 7 (1) Require the department of public safety, in
- 8 collaboration with the department of human services,
- 9 to develop and establish a social work training
- 10 program to assist incarcerated nonviolent individuals
- 11 explore a professional pathway in social work and
- 12 become eligible to work as assistants to licensed
- 13 social workers; and
- 14 (2) Appropriate funds.

15 SECTION 2. Chapter 353H, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
17 and to read as follows:

18 **"§353H- Incarcerated individuals; social work training**
19 **program; established.** (a) The department shall develop and
20 establish a social work training program, in collaboration with
21 the department of human services, to assist nonviolent



1 incarcerated individuals in exploring a professional pathway in
2 the practice of social work and becoming eligible for employment
3 as assistants to licensed social workers.

4 (b) The department may coordinate with accredited
5 institutions of higher education, private entities, and
6 nonprofit organizations to provide training in social work to
7 participating individuals.

8 (c) The department shall establish rules pursuant to
9 chapter 91 to implement this section."

10 SECTION 3. The department of public safety and department
11 of human services shall submit reports of the departments'
12 progress in developing and establishing the social work training
13 program pursuant to section 2 of this Act, along with findings,
14 recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the
15 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
16 the regular sessions of 2023 and 2024.

17 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to
20 develop and establish a social work training program to assist



1 certain incarcerated nonviolent individuals in the area of
2 social work pursuant to this Act.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
4 public safety for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2060;
7 provided that section 4 shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



S.B. NO. 2375
S.D. 1
H.D. 1

Report Title:

DPS; DHS; Social Work; Training; Incarcerated Nonviolent
Individuals; Reports; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of public safety, in collaboration with
the department of human services, to develop and establish a
social work training program to assist incarcerated nonviolent
individuals in the area of social work. Requires progress
reports on the program to the legislature. Appropriates funds.
Effective 7/1/2060. (HD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

