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# 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 (ACE) study  
12 conducted by the Centers on Disease Control & Prevention and  
13 Kaiser Permanente, surveyed nearly 17,000 adults in southern  
14 California. The primary conclusion of the ACE study was the  
15 finding of a strong relationship between "exposure to abuse or  
16 household dysfunction during childhood and multiple risk factors  
17 for several leading causes of death in adults," such as heart  
18 disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, fractures, and liver  
19 disease. While adverse childhood experiences occur across all  
20 races and economic classes, there is a higher prevalence of



1 adverse childhood experiences for those who also live in  
2 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." See Agahi N, et al., "Social and economic conditions in  
8 childhood and the progression of functional health problems from  
9 midlife into old age," J Epidemiol Community Health 2014; 0:1-7.  
10 doi:10.1136/jech-2013-20369.

11 The Swedish study also concluded that "creating equal  
12 opportunities for educational attainment may help reduce the  
13 long-term effect of disadvantaged childhood conditions and  
14 postpone functional health problems." Transitioning the  
15 department's service delivery to a multigenerational approach  
16 will refocus the department's efforts to provide available  
17 resources and support to reduce the time a child and family  
18 spends in poverty, stabilize the child's basic needs and  
19 environment to enhance their ability to learn, improve all  
20 recipients' economic security, and ultimately reduce  
21 intergenerational poverty in Hawaii.



1       The purpose of this Act is to require the department of  
2 human services to use an integrated and multigenerational  
3 service delivery approach to reduce the incidence of  
4 intergenerational poverty and dependence on public benefits  
5 consistent with the nationally recognized best practices.

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

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

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

20       SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
21 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

Department of Human Services; 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. (HB1926 HD1)

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