
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. For many years, the State has used homeless
2 shelters and transitional group homes as an interim measure
3 while attempting to place as many persons experiencing
4 homelessness as possible into subsidized rentals and
5 traditionally-constructed apartments. Economic constraints,
6 construction delays, and landlords' resistance to accepting
7 homeless tenants have made the supply of subsidized rentals and
8 traditionally-constructed housing inadequate to meet the demand
9 by persons experiencing homelessness. In addition, many persons
10 who struggle with mental illness or substance abuse are forced
11 to live unsheltered because they cannot reside in close quarters
12 with others in a shelter or group home.

13 However, recent technological innovations have made it
14 possible to build enough dwellings for every homeless person in
15 Hawaii at a lower cost than what the State spends on the
16 ancillary costs for unsheltered and nomadic homeless persons.
17 These innovations will allow the State to place more individuals



1 experiencing homelessness into housing more expeditiously and in
2 accordance with housing first principles.

3 Multiple national studies show that housing first programs
4 are enormously effective, mostly because the programs combine
5 the stability of a permanent home with supportive services and
6 treatment. As a result, housing first programs also foster
7 recovery from addiction, mental illness, and other afflictions
8 of homeless persons.

9 The legislature finds that chronic, unsheltered, nomadic
10 homelessness is a humanitarian disaster endangering public
11 health and safety. The legislature also finds that there is
12 sufficient under- or unutilized state land suitable for the
13 construction of homeless villages. The legislature further
14 finds that the use of current technology to build homeless
15 villages on state land will allow the State to create housing
16 and implement housing first principles on a scale large enough
17 to greatly reduce if not end homelessness in Hawaii.

18 The purpose of this Act is to increase efforts to reduce
19 homelessness by identifying certain parcels of state land for
20 the purpose of establishing homeless villages that will provide
21 approximately eight thousand units for individuals experiencing



1 homelessness; providing assessments, services, and referral
2 services for individuals within the homeless villages under a
3 housing first paradigm; and providing government employees and
4 volunteers with immunity for injuries and damages resulting from
5 the provision of services to individuals experiencing
6 homelessness.

7 SECTION 2. This Act shall be known as the Puuhonua
8 homeless villages act.

9 SECTION 3. (a) The governor shall take all steps and
10 engage in all actions necessary to identify parcels of state
11 land for the purpose of providing housing and supportive
12 services to homeless persons.

13 (b) The governor shall submit a report to the legislature
14 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular
15 session on the progress made in acquiring the parcels of state
16 land specified in subsection (a) until all required parcels of
17 land have been acquired for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 4. (a) There is established within the department
19 of human services a Puuhonua homeless villages program. The
20 program shall provide housing and supportive services to
21 individuals experiencing homelessness under a housing first



1 paradigm. A minimum of eight thousand homes shall be completed
2 within two years after the effective date of this Act or two
3 years after the date the governor makes the applicable land
4 available for the Puuhonua homeless villages program, whichever
5 occurs later.

6 (b) Each homeless village shall:

7 (1) Be a minimum of two acres in size and contain no more
8 than one hundred homes;

9 (2) Have a community center, which the department shall
10 make reasonable efforts to complete at a cost of
11 \$100,000 or less for each community center, that
12 includes:

13 (A) Communal showers;

14 (B) Bathrooms;

15 (C) A kitchen;

16 (D) Lockers for residents' valuables;

17 (E) Mailboxes for incoming mail; and

18 (F) A multipurpose room for residential meetings and
19 supportive services; and

20 (3) Have systems to dispose of trash and other waste.



1 (c) Each home within the homeless village shall adhere to
2 the following requirements:

3 (1) The construction cost for each home shall not exceed
4 \$15,000;

5 (2) Each home shall have at least three hundred square
6 feet of living space, electricity with lighting, and a
7 minimum of eight standard electrical outlets; and

8 (3) Each home shall be a private dwelling for an
9 individual or family experiencing homelessness;
10 provided that unrelated individuals shall not be
11 required to share a home.

12 (d) Individuals or families experiencing homelessness
13 shall be charged the cost of rent, utilities, and supportive
14 services as follows:

15 (1) Individuals and families experiencing homelessness and
16 who have no income shall not be charged;

17 (2) Individuals experiencing homelessness and who have
18 income shall not be charged more than twenty per cent
19 of the individual's gross monthly income; and

20 (3) Families experiencing homelessness and who have income
21 shall not be charged more than twenty per cent of the



1 family's aggregate monthly income, less \$100 per month
2 for each dependent family member that resides in the
3 home;

4 provided that the department may adjust these amounts for
5 inflation.

6 (e) The department of human services shall:

7 (1) Adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised
8 Statutes, as well as policies and procedures, for the
9 purpose of qualifying applicants for residency under
10 the Puuhonua homeless villages program; provided that:

11 (A) Qualification rules, policies, and procedures
12 shall be consistent with the rules, policies, and
13 procedures of the United States Department of
14 Housing and Urban Development's Coordinated Entry
15 System;

16 (B) Qualification procedures provide for rapid
17 admission, to the extent possible; and

18 (C) Qualification procedures use the least
19 restrictive standards practicable;

20 (2) Establish rules for residents of the homeless villages
21 that shall be reasonably consistent with housing first



1 principles and shall make reasonable efforts to allow
2 residents to participate in self-government;

3 (3) Collaborate with appropriate departmental personnel
4 and state and county law enforcement agencies to
5 provide security for the Puuhonua homeless villages
6 program; and

7 (4) Work with appropriate agencies to ensure that
8 residents of the homeless villages have reasonable
9 access to public transportation.

10 (f) All state and county permitting and construction fees
11 shall be waived for the homes and homeless village structures
12 constructed pursuant to this Act.

13 SECTION 5. Chapter 662, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
15 and to read as follows:

16 "§662- Limited liability for services to individuals
17 experiencing homelessness. No public entity or public employee
18 shall be liable to any person for injury or damage caused by a
19 public employee providing services to individuals experiencing
20 homelessness; provided that the employee was acting in good



1 faith and within the scope of the employee's functions and
2 duties as an employee of the State."

3 SECTION 6. Chapter 662D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
5 and to read as follows:

6 "§662D- Limited liability for volunteers providing
7 services to individuals experiencing homelessness. (a) No
8 volunteer for a governmental entity that provides services to
9 individuals experiencing homelessness shall be liable to any
10 person for injury or damage caused by the volunteer; provided
11 that the volunteer was acting in good faith and within the scope
12 of the volunteer's functions and duties.

13 (b) No nonprofit organization or nonprofit corporation
14 that provides volunteers to a governmental entity to provide
15 services to individuals experiencing homelessness shall be
16 liable to any person for injury or damage caused by a volunteer;
17 provided that the volunteer was acting in good faith and within
18 the scope of the volunteer's functions and duties."

19 SECTION 7. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
21 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 to



1 establish the Puuhonua homeless villages program and construct
2 homes and infrastructure as required by this Act.

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

5 SECTION 8. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for the
8 management, maintenance, and day-to-day operations of Puuhonua
9 homeless villages as required by this Act.

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

12 SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Puuhonua Homeless Villages Program; Appropriation; Homelessness; Department of Human Services; Government Liability; Immunity

Description:

Requires the Governor to identify available state land for the establishment of a homelessness village and establishes the Puuhonua Homeless Villages program. Provides limitation on liability for government entity and volunteers providing services. Makes an appropriation. (HB2014 HD2)

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