
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the coronavirus
2 disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has decimated the State's
3 economy and caused the State's unemployment rate to surge.
4 Despite efforts to reopen the State's economy, Hawaii still had
5 the second-highest unemployment rate in the nation as of
6 November 2020. As the pandemic continues to rage around the
7 world, Hawaii's tourism industry is not expected to recover for
8 many more years. Accordingly, the State will continue to feel
9 the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for the
10 foreseeable future.

11 The legislature also finds that recent data from the
12 university of Hawaii economic research organization showed that
13 more than eleven thousand Hawaii tenants have fallen behind on
14 their rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that forty per cent
15 of rental tenants have lost their jobs. Thousands of other
16 households may face an unsustainable change in their housing
17 cost burden in 2021 as the State's economic challenges continue.



1 Even in a best-case scenario, the number of individuals facing
2 homelessness is likely to continue rising during the upcoming
3 fiscal year.

4 The legislature further finds that budget cuts proposed by
5 the administration have threatened the ability of the department
6 of human services to adequately address the State's growing
7 homelessness crisis, including key programs such as:

- 8 (1) The housing first program, which provides support to
9 the State's chronically homeless population to allow
10 them to achieve stability and recovery;
- 11 (2) The rapid re-housing program, which provides
12 assistance to people who are homeless and at imminent
13 risk of becoming homeless and allows them to access
14 permanent housing as rapidly as possible;
- 15 (3) Family assessment centers, which ensure families are
16 housed while they are being connected to services and
17 long-term housing; and
- 18 (4) Homeless outreach and civil legal services, which
19 provides urgent services and help to connect
20 individuals to permanent housing and other basic but
21 important needs.



H.B. NO. 729

1 The purpose of this Act is to ensure that certain moneys
2 appropriated to the department of human services are used to
3 fund core services that address homelessness.

4 SECTION 2. Of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii
5 that are appropriated for medicaid (HMS) by the General
6 Appropriations Act of 2021, the sum of \$ or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 shall be
8 reallocated for services that address homelessness (HMS224);
9 provided that the sum appropriated shall be expended as follows:

- 10 (1). \$ for the housing first program;
- 11 (2) \$ for the rapid re-housing program;
- 12 (3) \$ for the family assessment centers; and
- 13 (4) \$ for homeless outreach and civil legal
14 services.

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

17 SECTION 3. The department of human services shall take any
18 actions necessary to modify its medicaid waiver and negotiate
19 with the federal government to effectuate this Act.

20 SECTION 4. It is the intent of this Act not to jeopardize
21 the receipt of any federal aid nor to impair the obligation of



H.B. NO. 729

1 the State or any agency thereof to the holders of any bond
2 issued by the State or by any agency, and to the extent, and
3 only to the extent, necessary to effectuate this intent, the
4 governor may modify the strict provisions of this Act, but shall
5 promptly report any modification with reasons therefor to the
6 legislature at its next session thereafter for review by the
7 legislature.

8 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

9

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Johnson", written over a horizontal line.

JAN 25 2021



H.B. NO. 729

Report Title:

Homelessness; Department of Human Services; Family Assessment Center; Housing First; Homeless Outreach and Civil Legal Services; Rapid Rehousing; Appropriation

Description:

Reallocates moneys to fund and administer core homelessness services (HMS 224), including the housing first program, rapid re-housing program, family assessment centers, and homeless outreach and civil legal services.

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