

JAN 27 2021

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DEMENTIA TRAINING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that for first responders
2 to emergency situations, it is critical to understand how to
3 best approach situations involving someone with Alzheimer's
4 disease and related dementia. The Approaching Alzheimer's:
5 First Responder Training program is a free, online training that
6 features high-quality content in an interactive format,
7 developed by the Alzheimer's Association with input from first
8 responders. It can be accessed anytime of day or night,
9 accommodating for shift work and new hires; and by anyone with
10 access to a computer and the Internet, making it easy to take
11 from home or work. Upon completion, a certificate is furnished
12 to the trainee.

13 The legislature further finds that a 2015 nationwide survey
14 by Justice in Aging concluded that ten states have laws
15 requiring dementia training for law enforcement personnel while
16 only one state requires dementia training for emergency medical
17 technicians (EMTs). Six in ten people with dementia will wander



1 and a person with Alzheimer's disease may not remember their
2 name or address and can become disoriented, even when in a
3 familiar place. When individuals with dementia are lost, they
4 may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility - all of which can
5 escalate to more aggressive behaviors.

6 As the condition progresses, persons with dementia or
7 Alzheimer's disease may misplace belongings or forget family
8 members, resulting in false reports of theft or home-intrusions
9 by people whose faces they cannot remember. The cognitive
10 impairments can also place the person suffering from Alzheimer's
11 disease or related dementias in danger, as forgetting to pay for
12 items at a store may lead to an arrest for shoplifting.
13 Moreover, people with Alzheimer's disease may present as
14 uncooperative, disruptive, and combative when they have
15 difficulty communicating and understanding their predicament,
16 further exposing them to dangerous situations.

17 First responders may not know how to work with people in
18 these situations, leading to more confusion. Educating first
19 responders about the disease and training in de-escalation
20 tactics can often effectively address the situation and ensure



1 the safety of individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's disease
2 as well as the safety of firefighters and EMTs.

3 The purpose of this Act is to develop and provide for
4 dementia training to first responders.

5 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
6 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
7 and to read as follows:

8 "§321- First responders; Alzheimer's disease and related
9 dementias training. (a) The employers of first responders
10 shall develop and provide Alzheimer's disease and related
11 dementias training for first responders. The training required
12 under this section shall include, but not be limited to:

13 (1) Recognizing the key signs of Alzheimer's disease and
14 related dementias;

15 (2) Strategies for assessing cognition;

16 (3) Best practices for interacting with persons living
17 with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias; and

18 (4) Strategies to best identify and intervene in
19 situations where persons with Alzheimer's disease and
20 related dementias may be at particular risk of abuse
21 or neglect.



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1 (b) The department of health, through the executive office
 2 on aging, may set the standards and frequency for the training
 3 and may coordinate as necessary with all public and private
 4 entities and agencies responsible for services provided by first
 5 responders to provide the training required under this section.

6 (c) The employers of first responders may utilize existing
 7 educational and training resources available in the public and
 8 private sectors when developing the training required under this
 9 section.

10 (d) As used in this section, "first responders" includes
 11 firefighters, emergency medical technicians, mobile intensive
 12 care technicians, emergency management workers, police officers,
 13 and state law enforcement officers."

14 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on December 31,
 16 2021.

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INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 1389

Report Title:

Dementia; Dementia Training; First Responders; Alzheimer's Disease

Description:

Requires employers of first responders to provide Alzheimer's disease and related dementias training for first responders. Takes effect 12/31/2021.

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