
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH PILOT PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that one in ten young
2 adults who are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five
3 years, and at least one in thirty adolescents between the ages
4 of thirteen and seventeen, experience some form of homelessness
5 in which the young adult or adolescent is unaccompanied by a
6 parent or guardian over the course of a year.

7 The legislature further finds that among homeless youth,
8 sixty-nine per cent report mental health problems; thirty-three
9 per cent have once been part of the foster care system; and
10 fifty per cent have been in the juvenile justice system, in jail
11 or detention. Moreover, sixty-two per cent of lesbian, gay,
12 bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth
13 report being physically harmed while experiencing homelessness,
14 while forty-seven per cent of non-LGBTQ youth reported being
15 physically harmed while homeless.

16 The legislature also finds that runaway and homeless youth
17 are vulnerable to multiple threats, including having unmet basic
18 food and shelter needs, untreated mental health disorders,



1 substance use, significant disruption to their education,
2 sexually transmitted diseases and human immunodeficiency virus
3 infection, sexual exploitation, physical victimization, and
4 suicide. As the consequences faced by homeless youth are vast,
5 coordination among various agencies, including those responsible
6 for the State's child welfare, education, health, human
7 services, and juvenile justice systems, is required to protect
8 the State's youth and ensure their safety.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish an inter-agency
10 safe spaces for youth pilot program to provide safe spaces in
11 each county for youth experiencing homelessness.

12 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the department
13 of human services for administrative purposes only a safe spaces
14 for youth pilot program, which shall be an inter-agency
15 initiative to provide safe spaces in each county for youth
16 experiencing homelessness.

17 (b) The program shall collaborate with all departments of
18 the State and its political subdivisions that offer services for
19 the purpose of ensuring the well-being of youth in Hawaii,
20 including the department of education, department of health,
21 department of human services, department of public safety, and



1 county police departments, to coordinate the identification of
2 youth who are experiencing homelessness and placement of these
3 youth at a shelter for homeless youth.

4 (c) The department of human services shall enter into
5 contracts with nonprofit organizations to provide shelters for
6 homeless youth. Any nonprofit organization contracted under
7 this subsection shall have the knowledge, experience, and
8 qualifications, including licenses, necessary to operate a
9 shelter for homeless youth.

10 (d) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, a
11 shelter for homeless youth contracted under subsection (c) may
12 admit a youth into the shelter's care for up to ninety days
13 without the consent of the youth's parent or guardian.

14 (e) The department of human services shall submit a report
15 of its findings and recommendations pertaining to the safe
16 spaces for youth pilot program to the legislature no later than
17 thirty days prior to the convening of the regular session of
18 2025. The report shall include:

19 (1) A record of pilot program activities and
20 accomplishments;

21 (2) A recommendation on whether to extend the program; and



1 (3) Any proposed legislation.

2 (f) The department of human services shall adopt rules
3 pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, necessary to
4 carry out the purposes of this Act.

5 (g) For the purposes of this Act:

6 "Shelter for homeless youth" means a facility that operates
7 to receive youth twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and
8 provide youth with services, including:

9 (1) Overnight lodging and supervision;

10 (2) Hot meals and hot showers;

11 (3) Access to medical and behavioral health services; and

12 (4) Education and employment support.

13 "Youth" means an individual who is at least fourteen years
14 of age but under twenty-five years of age.

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$600,000 or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to fund
18 the safe spaces for youth pilot program, including funding for
19 one full time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position and administrative
20 costs for the pilot program.



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

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022, and
4 shall be repealed on June 30, 2025.



Report Title:

Department of Human Services; Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program; Homeless Youth; Shelter; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program within the Department of Human Services. Requires the pilot program to collaborate with all state and county departments that offer services to ensure the well-being of youth in Hawaii to coordinate the identification of youth who are experiencing homelessness and placement of these youth at a shelter for homeless youth. Requires the Department of Human Services to contract with nonprofit organizations to provide shelters for homeless youth. Requires the Department of Human Services to submit a report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2025. Appropriates funds. Repeals 6/30/2025. (CD1)

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