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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii  
2 coordinated access resource entry system (CARES) is overseen by  
3 the department of health's behavioral health administration and  
4 is managed by two separately contracted entities; one  
5 specializes in behavioral health crisis response, and the other  
6 specializes in substance use disorder treatment referrals. On  
7 October 1, 2019, contracts commenced to form a statewide network  
8 of service providers that is focused around crisis intervention,  
9 substance use disorder treatment, mental health, and other  
10 behavioral health services. These service providers are  
11 contracted through the administration's three behavioral health  
12 divisions: adult mental health division, child and adolescent  
13 mental health division, and alcohol and drug abuse division.

14           Hawaii CARES, through its crisis helpline, a statewide  
15 crisis call line open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a  
16 week, connects Hawaii residents who are experiencing a mental  
17 health crisis with appropriate service providers to reduce



1 unnecessary hospitalizations and arrests, and provides continual  
2 care by staying in touch with the individual and providers  
3 throughout the duration of treatment. Services provided through  
4 Hawaii CARES include:

- 5 (1) Suicide crisis hotline services that provide  
6 therapeutic support and de-escalation techniques to  
7 active suicidal callers and connects them with crisis  
8 services;
- 9 (2) Crisis support management services, a temporary  
10 thirty-day case management service provided when  
11 requested by the crisis mobile outreach team, which  
12 provides face-to-face contact with each individual  
13 within twenty-four hours after receiving a referral  
14 and maximum effort to support and assist while linking  
15 the individual to additional services;
- 16 (3) Crisis mobile outreach services that send out local  
17 crisis therapists to callers experiencing a mental  
18 health crisis in a variety of community settings to  
19 provide them with face-to-face, short term, intensive  
20 mental health services; trauma informed care response  
21 with initial screening and comprehensive assessment;

1 and assistance in returning to their baseline level of  
2 functionality;

3 (4) Licensed crisis residential shelters offered on a  
4 temporary ten-day admission basis for purposes of  
5 stabilizing and preventing serious mental health  
6 decompensation, psychotic breaks, or hospitalization  
7 to individuals in crisis who would continue to be at  
8 high risk without the benefit of the twenty-four-hour  
9 support services; and

10 (5) Bed stabilization services, provided to individuals in  
11 crisis with mental health concerns or a substance use  
12 disorder and in need of a stabilization bed as a  
13 bridge or a long-term solution in their continuum of  
14 care, with case managers assigned to individuals to  
15 ensure wrap-around service as needed.

16 In addition to receiving calls made directly to its crisis  
17 helpline, Hawaii CARES serves as Hawaii's local crisis center  
18 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, now known as the  
19 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, a national network of two  
20 hundred local crisis centers established by the federal  
21 government to assist individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional



1 distress to connect with suicide prevention and mental health  
2 support services at any time of the day or night. Calls to the  
3 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which can be made by dialing  
4 "9-8-8" or a ten-digit, toll-free number, 1-800-273-TALK (8255),  
5 are routed to a certified local crisis center closest to the  
6 caller, as determined by the caller's area code. For Hawaii,  
7 calls made from within the State to the 988 Suicide and Crisis  
8 Lifeline are routed to the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline.

9 In 2020, the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline received 138,856  
10 calls, which amounts to more than three hundred thirty calls per  
11 day on average. The volume of calls has increased following the  
12 transition of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's  
13 telephone number to a new, easy-to-remember, three-digit dialing  
14 code "9-8-8" in July 2022.

15 To accommodate the increased volume of calls and ensure  
16 that individuals who access the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline  
17 directly or through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline are  
18 provided with appropriate crisis intervention services and  
19 crisis care coordination, the behavioral health administration  
20 requires funds to improve or establish the necessary technology  
21 and infrastructure, retain necessary personnel, and expand and



1 enhance existing services provided by contracted service  
2 providers through the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline, including:

3 (1) Expanding and enhancing suicide crisis hotline and  
4 crisis management services by:

5 (A) Providing high-quality crisis counseling;

6 (B) Providing in-person intervention by trained  
7 mental health professionals as an alternative to  
8 law enforcement personnel;

9 (C) Improving the coordination of linkages for  
10 individuals contacting the Hawaii CARES crisis  
11 helpline directly or through the 988 Suicide and  
12 Crisis Lifeline with ongoing care needs; and

13 (D) Improving and expanding the use of tele-crisis  
14 support technology;

15 (2) Expanding and enhancing crisis mobile outreach  
16 services in each county by:

17 (A) Adding a registered nurse, emergency medical  
18 technician, or paramedic to the crisis mobile  
19 outreach teams; and

20 (B) Establishing preventive youth crisis teams that  
21 respond to calls from law enforcement personnel





1 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
2 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
3 year 2024-2025 to fund the expansion and enhancement of the  
4 suicide crisis hotline and crisis management services provided  
5 by contracted service providers through the Hawaii CARES crisis  
6 helpline. The funding shall be used to cover expenses for  
7 services, including the provision of high-quality crisis  
8 counseling and in-person intervention by trained mental health  
9 professionals as an alternative to law enforcement personnel;  
10 improvement of coordination with individuals who contact the  
11 Hawaii CARES crisis helpline directly or through the 988 Suicide  
12 and Crisis Lifeline with ongoing care needs; and enhancement and  
13 expansion of the use of tele-crisis support technology.

14 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
16 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
17 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
18 year 2024-2025 for the expansion and enhancement of the crisis  
19 mobile outreach services provided by contracted service  
20 providers through the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline; provided  
21 that, of the sums appropriated:



1 (1) \$ shall be expended for the addition of a  
2 registered nurse, emergency medical technician, or  
3 paramedic to crisis mobile outreach teams; and

4 (2) \$ shall be expended for the establishment of  
5 preventive youth crisis teams that respond to calls  
6 from law enforcement personnel requesting behavioral  
7 health assessment, referral, and crisis care for youth  
8 who witnessed or participated in potentially traumatic  
9 events.

10 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
13 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
14 year 2024-2025 for the expansion of licensed crisis residential  
15 shelter services provided by contracted service providers  
16 through the Hawaii CARES crisis helpline, by acquiring a  
17 facility to house sixteen sub-acute beds to help stabilize  
18 youth, improve their condition, and prevent future  
19 decompensations, homelessness, hospitalizations, and involvement  
20 of law enforcement agencies.



1 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
4 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
5 year 2024-2025 to fund the expansion of bed stabilization  
6 services provided by contracted service providers through the  
7 Hawaii CARES crisis helpline, by adding forty adult  
8 stabilization beds across all counties.

9 SECTION 6. The sums appropriated in sections 2 through 5  
10 of this Act shall be expended by the department of health for  
11 the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on December 31,  
13 2050.



**Report Title:**

Behavioral Health; Mental Health; Crisis Services; National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline; Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration; Hawaii CARES Crisis Helpline

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for the: expansion and enhancement of the suicide crisis hotline and crisis management services provided by contracted service providers through the Hawaii Coordinated Access Resource Entry System (CARES) Crisis Helpline; expansion and enhancement of the crisis mobile outreach services provided by contracted service providers through the Hawaii CARES Crisis Helpline; expansion of licensed crisis residential shelter services provided by contracted service providers through the Hawaii CARES Crisis Helpline; and expansion of bed stabilization services provided by contracted service providers through the Hawaii CARES Crisis Helpline. Effective 12/31/2050. (SD2)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

