
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a severe
2 shortage of mental health providers in the State. This shortage
3 is due to a lack of appropriately educated individuals and high
4 rates of turnover in the field, which is exacerbated by
5 compassion fatigue, burnout, and inadequate preparation for
6 mental health serving positions. The legislature therefore
7 finds that the mental health provider shortage in the State
8 addressed by this measure is a matter of statewide concern.

9 The legislature further finds that the university of Hawaii
10 Windward community college, in collaboration with the Hawaii
11 state hospital, has developed a mental health technician
12 certificate of competence program. The coursework for the
13 certificate program addresses the immediate and critical
14 workforce needs of preparing potential employees and upskilling
15 existing employees. These certificates are also a foundation to
16 increasingly higher qualifications, as the initial certificate
17 of competence opens a pathway to further training and



1 development. A one-year certificate program currently under
2 development will build on the skills developed by the existing
3 mental health technician certificate of competence program by
4 adding clinical skills and knowledge necessary to perform higher
5 job requirements in more advanced clinical settings. The
6 coursework can also be applied toward baccalaureate degrees.
7 These programs help to grow the State's overall capacity to
8 address the mental health challenges and needs of Hawaii's
9 residents.

10 The mental health technician certificate of competence
11 program consists of three approved courses, which provide a
12 basic foundation in mental health knowledge in a short-term,
13 focused program of study available in person and online. The
14 asynchronous online courses can be offered to mental health
15 workers and students across the State, with Windward community
16 college coordinating with other community colleges in the
17 university of Hawaii system. In order for the program to be
18 offered statewide, additional resources are needed to provide
19 for key personnel and establish a scholarship program to
20 increase access to the mental health technician certificate of
21 competence program for individuals who are unemployed,



1 underemployed, or low-wage earners, and others interested in
2 pursuing a career pathway in mental health.

3 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support
4 the statewide expansion of the university of Hawaii Windward
5 community college's mental health-related programs.

6 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$210,150 or so much
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 to support
9 the statewide expansion of the university of Hawaii Windward
10 community college's mental health-related programs, to be
11 expended as follows:

12 (1) \$75,000 for the establishment of one temporary full-
13 time equivalent (1.0 FTE) faculty instructor position
14 to develop and administer curriculum;

15 (2) \$75,000 for the establishment of one temporary full-
16 time equivalent (1.0 FTE) faculty outreach position to
17 onboard new cohorts, grant scholarships, and carry out
18 any other necessary administrative tasks; and

19 (3) \$60,150 for the establishment of a scholarship
20 program, the granting of scholarships, and other
21 necessary administrative costs.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of
2 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



Report Title:

Mental Health Professionals; University of Hawaii Windward
Community College; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for temporary positions to support the
expansion of the University of Hawaii Windward Community
College's mental health-related programs. (CD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

