
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Act 171, Session
2 Laws of Hawaii 2023, expanded the preschool open doors program
3 to serve three-year-old children. Act 164, Session Laws of
4 Hawaii 2023, also approved a substantial increase to the funding
5 for the preschool open doors program. Currently, prioritizing
6 applications during each application period requires a start and
7 end date, and various other requirements that result in a one-
8 to two-month wait between application periods.

9 To preserve the legislature's intent to prioritize program
10 applications, amendments to the application process are needed
11 to explicitly establish that the priority application period is
12 between February 1 and the start of each program year and
13 specify that completed applications that meet program rules and
14 are received after the start of the program year through
15 January 31 of each year should be considered on a first-come,
16 first-served basis for the balance of the program year.



1 The legislature further finds that explicitly establishing
2 the priority of selection for preschool open doors program
3 participation will reduce the likelihood of waitlists, increase
4 accessibility to school readiness programs, and ensure that the
5 department of human services can maximize the funding
6 appropriated to the program to timely serve the greatest number
7 of three- and four-year-old children.

8 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to explicitly
9 establish that the priority of selection for preschool open
10 doors program participation applies only during the priority
11 application period between February 1 and the start of each
12 program year.

13 SECTION 2. Section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

15 "(b) Subject to the availability of funds, the program
16 shall serve three- and four-year-old children who are in the two
17 years prior to kindergarten entry pursuant to section 302A-411,
18 with priority extended in the following order [~~to~~] during a
19 priority application period established for each upcoming
20 program year:



- 1 (1) Children who are not eligible to attend public school
- 2 kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn
- 3 five years of age because their birth date occurs
- 4 after the kindergarten eligibility date pursuant to
- 5 section 302A-411;
- 6 (2) Underserved or at-risk four-year-old children who were
- 7 previously served as a three-year-old child, as defined
- 8 by rules adopted by the department;
- 9 (3) Four-year-old children who were previously served as a
- 10 three-year-old child;
- 11 (4) Four-year-old children;
- 12 (5) Underserved or at-risk three-year-old children, as
- 13 defined by rules adopted by the department; and
- 14 (6) Three-year-old children[-];

15 provided that applications received after the end of the
16 priority application period and through January 31 of each year
17 shall be processed on a first-come, first-served basis for the
18 remainder of that program year.

19 For purposes of this subsection, "program year" means the
20 state fiscal year."



1 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Department of Human Services; Preschool Open Doors Program;
Applications; Selection Priority

Description:

Specifies that the priority of selection for preschool open doors program participation applies only during the priority application period between February 1 and the start of each program year. Specifies that applications received after the priority application period shall be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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