
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ASSESS THE REGISTRATION
AND MONITORING OF CLEAN AND SOBER HOMES.

1 WHEREAS, the legislature enacted Act 193, Session Laws of
2 Hawaii 2014 (Act 193), to develop a process for the management
3 and support for clean and sober homes, also known as sober
4 living recovery homes/residences, which are located in
5 communities throughout the State, to provide housing for
6 individuals suffering from substance use, including people who
7 may have co-occurring mental health issues, as they transition
8 from the treatment setting to life in the community; and
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10 WHEREAS, Act 193 incorporated clean and sober home
11 operating standards based on the National Alliance for Recovery
12 Residences; and
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14 WHEREAS, to increase the number of homes that maintain
15 appropriate living conditions, Act 193 established a voluntary
16 registry to set minimum operating standards and give special
17 advantages to homes on the registry, such as technical support
18 and preferred referral status as well as the ability to monitor
19 residences that provide the necessary support for recovery
20 efforts; and
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22 WHEREAS, Act 193 amended section 46-4, Hawaii Revised
23 Statutes, to clarify the conditions under which the counties
24 shall not prohibit registered clean and sober homes that have up
25 to eight unrelated persons in a dwelling unit, as well as
26 eliminate any conflict with the federal Fair Housing Amendments
27 Act by deleting the requirement for a public informational
28 meeting; and
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30 WHEREAS, the public may report concerns regarding clean and
31 sober homes to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division of the
32 Department of Health by email or make a toll-free call to 1-877-
33 877-1716; and



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WHEREAS, the primary goals of rehabilitation and recovery are to restore social, family, lifestyle, vocational, and economic support by stabilizing an individual's physical and psychological functioning; and

WHEREAS, alcohol and drug-free environments that are safe, sanitary, and secure promote recovery and assist individuals in becoming self-supporting; and

WHEREAS, recovery residences support recovery of individuals with substance use disorders and help prevent relapse, criminal justice system involvement, and overdose; and

WHEREAS, recovery residences are designed to address the needs of individuals in recovery from substance use disorders through the provision of a safe and healthy living environment and a community of supportive recovering peers to which the residents are accountable, without the rigid and more expensive structure of a licensed therapeutic living program; and,

WHEREAS, the support of a home environment fulfills a need for those who are reintegrating into the community while maintaining sobriety; and

WHEREAS, the State's recovery homes are monitored by agencies that contract for its services, but the level of oversight for clean and sober homes varies, depending on the referral source as well as independent operation; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of clean and sober homes are independently owned and have a landlord-tenant relationship with house rules where the tenants generally govern themselves such that the housing is considered independent living; and

WHEREAS, alcoholism and past illicit drug use are considered disabilities, and those with such disabilities are protected under the Federal Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and

WHEREAS, Act 193 developed procedures intended to ensure that clean and sober homes owners and operators who volunteer to

1 apply to be on the current registry are properly monitored and
2 accountable to meet occupancy, zoning, and permitting
3 requirements, as well as quality standards while not violating
4 protection laws such as the FHA and ADA; and
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6 WHEREAS, most clean and sober homes on the voluntary
7 registry are well-run; however there are concerns that other
8 homes not on the registry are overcrowded and not well-managed,
9 and some owners/lessors violate their county land use permits by
10 overcrowding, which results in noise and parking complaints from
11 neighbors; and
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13 WHEREAS, notwithstanding the needs of those who benefit
14 from these homes, neighboring residents have expressed concerns
15 over the legality of the operation of clean and sober homes in
16 their immediate vicinity and the poor conduct and lack of
17 neighborly behavior of some residents; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division has not
20 received any complaints of so-called "harm reduction" homes
21 where occupants continue to use alcohol and drugs while seeking
22 recovery; and
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24 WHEREAS, various types of group homes are defined in
25 section 46-4(d), Hawaii Revised Statutes, relating to county
26 zoning--section 45-4(d), Hawaii Revised Statues, defines terms
27 that are now consistent with the federal FHA, because Act 193
28 did not include language that required a public informational
29 meeting be held in the affected community before a clean and
30 sober home, or drug rehabilitation home, is located in that
31 community; and
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33 WHEREAS, Act 193 intended to balance the needs of those
34 requiring the support of group homes and the concerns of the
35 community members, by helping prospective residents of clean and
36 sober homes to access a stable, alcohol and drug-free, home-like
37 living environment in residences that comply with federal,
38 state, and county requirements and minimum quality standards;
39 and
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41 WHEREAS, it is recognized that there is a need to improve
42 the operation of clean and sober homes if these homes are to



1 achieve their intended purposes, including that they are well-
2 run; and

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4 WHEREAS, the counties are the proper agency to issue
5 permits according to zoning ordinances, encourage the orderly
6 development of land resources within their jurisdictions, and
7 enforce compliance by appropriate fines and penalties; and

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9 WHEREAS, a collaborative effort among the Department of
10 Health to register and monitor, the counties to enforce
11 permitting and zoning ordinances, and the State and providers to
12 give preference to compliant clean and sober homes would ensure
13 an accountability process by which the homes would be monitored
14 in such a way to address the concerns of those requiring the
15 support of the homes, without using direct government oversight
16 that is inconsistent with the protection laws; now, therefore,

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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
20 Session of 2024, that this body urges the Department of Health
21 to convene and lead an informal working group to discuss the
22 management of clean and sober homes and discuss possible
23 collaboration with the counties and other affected regulators to
24 ensure clean and sober homes comply with county regulations and
25 to encourage registration without using restrictions that are
26 discriminatory; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the informal working group
29 should include input from the Hawaii Paroling Authority; the
30 Judiciary's Adult Client Services Branch; the Department of the
31 Attorney General; and any others, as appropriate, as determined
32 by the Director of Health or their designee; and

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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group should
35 discuss legal issues pertaining to protective FHA and ADA laws,
36 how the Department of Health and pertinent county agencies can
37 work more closely together to resolve problems and complaints
38 received by either the State or counties regarding clean and
39 sober homes; the Department's efforts to educate the public,
40 expand the current registry membership, and expand complaint
41 response; how the Department keeps an inventory of homes
42 throughout the State including those not on the registry; and



1 establish processes to ensure that functions are aligned between
2 the State and county for accountability, community education,
3 and advocacy; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
6 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health, Director of
7 Public Safety, Administrator of the Hawaii Paroling Authority,
8 Chief Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court, Attorney General, and
9 Mayors of the City and County of Honolulu, County of Maui,
10 County of Kauai, and County of Hawaii.

