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# 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 research on health  
2 and safety reveals that mental illness is one of the most  
3 pressing challenges humanity is facing today. The prevalence of  
4 both acute and chronic mental illnesses has been on the rise in  
5 the State and globally over the past two decades. Untreated  
6 mental illness is one of the top predictors of suicide,  
7 substance abuse, incarceration, and adult disability. This is  
8 especially concerning for historically marginalized and  
9 under-resourced communities, which are at significantly higher  
10 risk of mental illness and also have more limited access to  
11 mental health education, resources, and support. Mental illness  
12 at the individual level compounds across communities and leads  
13 to negative statewide outcomes, including increased joblessness,  
14 homelessness, domestic violence, violent crime, and school  
15 dropout rates.

16           The legislature further finds that research conducted over  
17 the past fifty years in the fields of psychology, public health,  
18 neuroscience, and organizational development demonstrate the



1 critical importance of a tiered approach to comprehensively  
2 address statewide mental health concerns and provide every  
3 individual with the skills and resources they need to take care  
4 of themselves, their families, and their broader ecosystems.  
5 Tier 1 mental health support services provide skills training,  
6 curricula, and programming to all stakeholders of an  
7 organization such as schools, community centers, police and fire  
8 departments, medical institutions, and other first responder  
9 facilities. Tier 1 mental health support services provide a  
10 common vocabulary and set of wellness practices that members of  
11 the organization collectively share to promote a safe and  
12 healthy organizational culture for everyone. Tier 2 mental  
13 health support services recognize that certain populations  
14 within an organization may be at higher risk for certain mental  
15 illnesses than others, and so these groups require specialized  
16 training, support, and skill-building that is culturally  
17 contextualized to best support the specific needs of the high-  
18 risk group. Tier 2 mental health support services therefore  
19 exist to provide additional specialized group support  
20 interventions. Taken together, these tiers of mental health



1 support services cover the core mental health needs of  
2 individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

3 The legislature further finds that a comprehensive system  
4 of mental health support services on a statewide level requires  
5 the seamless integration of tier 1 and tier 2 mental health  
6 support services. Tier 1 mental health support services benefit  
7 public institutions through whole-organization tier 1 mental  
8 health support training for students, school staff,  
9 firefighters, police officers, medical staff, and other first  
10 responder groups. Higher risk groups within each of these  
11 organizations benefit from tier 2 mental health support services  
12 that use culturally responsive approaches. Overall, mentally  
13 well individuals create safe and healthy communities, which  
14 further promote a safe and healthy state for all citizens.

15 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

16 (1) Establish the state of well-being project and a  
17 timeline for the project to:

18 (A) Assess current tiers of mental health support  
19 services; and

20 (B) Enhance existing well-being programming and, when  
21 non-existent, build out culturally grounded and



1 community-informed well-being programming to  
 2 establish mental health support services for key  
 3 stakeholder communities across the State; and  
 4 (2) Appropriate funds for mental health specialist  
 5 positions within the office of wellness and  
 6 resilience.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 27, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended  
 8 by adding a new section to part IX to be appropriately  
 9 designated and to read as follows:

10 **"§27- State of well-being project; established. (a)**  
 11 There is established within the office the state of well-being  
 12 project to assess and enhance tier 1 and tier 2 mental health  
 13 support services for key stakeholder communities across the  
 14 State. The project shall:

15 (1) Assess and enhance existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental  
 16 health training and ongoing support services to public  
 17 schools, public community centers, first responder  
 18 groups, police departments, fire departments,  
 19 hospitals, and medical staff and, when non-existent,  
 20 build out culturally grounded and community-informed  
 21 well-being programming;



- 1        (2) Track and measure aggregate mental health trends  
2        across all populations served by the project; and
- 3        (3) Hire and train mental health specialists and work with  
4        approved partner organizations identified by the  
5        office to lead project execution across tier 1 and  
6        tier 2 mental health support services in each key  
7        stakeholder community.
- 8        (b) The office shall administer the state of well-being  
9 project in accordance with the following timeline:
- 10       (1) Beginning in 2024, initiate a landscape assessment of  
11       existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental health support  
12       services by December 31, 2025; and
- 13       (2) Beginning in 2025, initiate the enhancement of  
14       existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental health support  
15       services and, when non-existent, build out culturally  
16       grounded and community-informed well-being  
17       programming, with statewide implementation to be  
18       achieved by December 31, 2027.
- 19       (c) For the purposes of this section:



1 "Tier 1 mental health support" means well-being service  
2 provisions that are aimed at the entire system and population  
3 within an organization.

4 "Tier 2 mental health support" means well-being service  
5 provisions that are aimed at populations within an organization  
6 that are at higher risk of mental health challenges."

7 SECTION 3. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
8 amended by adding a new section to part XXI to be appropriately  
9 designated and to read as follows:

10 **"§346- State of well-being project; established. (a)**

11 There is established within the office the state of well-being  
12 project to assess and enhance tier 1 and tier 2 mental health  
13 support services for key stakeholder communities across the  
14 State. The project shall:

15 (1) Assess and enhance existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental  
16 health support training and ongoing support services  
17 to public schools, public community centers, first  
18 responder groups, police departments, fire  
19 departments, hospitals, and medical staff and, when  
20 non-existent, build out culturally grounded and  
21 community-informed well-being programming;



- 1        (2) Track and measure aggregate mental health trends
- 2            across all populations served by the project; and
- 3        (3) Hire and train mental health specialists and work with
- 4            approved partner organizations identified by the
- 5            office to lead project execution across tier 1 and
- 6            tier 2 mental health support services in each key
- 7            stakeholder community.

8        (b) The office shall administer the state of well-being  
9 project in accordance with the following timeline:

- 10        (1) Beginning in 2024, initiate a landscape assessment of
- 11            existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental health support
- 12            services by December 31, 2025; and
- 13        (2) Beginning in 2025, initiate the enhancement of
- 14            existing tier 1 and tier 2 mental health support
- 15            services and, when non-existent, build out culturally
- 16            grounded and community-informed well-being
- 17            programming, with statewide implementation to be
- 18            achieved by December 31, 2027.

19        (c) For the purposes of this section:



1       "Tier 1 mental health support" means well-being service  
2 provisions that are aimed at the entire system and population  
3 within an organization.

4       "Tier 2 mental health support" means well-being service  
5 provisions that are aimed at populations within an organization  
6 that are at higher risk of mental health challenges."

7       SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$876,000 or so much  
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the  
10 establishment and implementation of the state of well-being  
11 project, to be expended as follows:

12       (1) \$475,000 to establish six full-time equivalent (6.0  
13 FTE) mental health specialist positions within the  
14 office of wellness and resilience; and

15       (2) \$401,000 for the office of wellness and resilience to  
16 implement this Act.

17       The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of  
18 wellness and resilience for the purposes of this Act.

19       SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

20       SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024;  
21 provided that:





- 1           (1) Section 2 of this Act shall be repealed on June 30,  
2                           2025; and  
3           (2) Section 3 of this Act shall take effect on July 1,  
4                           2025.



**Report Title:**

OWR; State of Well-Being Project; Tier 1 and Tier 2 Mental Health Support Services; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes within the Office of Wellness and Resilience the State of Well-Being Project to assess and enhance Tier 1 and Tier 2 mental health support services for all key stakeholder communities across the State. Makes appropriations to implement the State of Well-Being Project including for the establishment of six full-time equivalent mental health specialist positions within the Office of Wellness and Resilience. (CD1)

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

