

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EARLY CHILD INTERVENTION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State continues
2 to face various challenges when addressing the needs of children
3 with special needs under the age of three. One of these
4 challenges includes significant vacancy rates for the State's
5 early intervention providers, as Hawaii has a thirty to forty-
6 two per cent vacancy rate across all early intervention
7 programs. The impacts of these challenges include infant and
8 toddler development and the State's ability to be in compliance
9 with certain federal mandates.

10 The legislature further finds that addressing recruitment
11 and retention of certain early intervention specialists will
12 allow the State to fill vacant positions and ensure that infants
13 and toddlers with special needs receive the services they are
14 entitled to. Additionally, establishing mental health
15 specialist positions will help increase the State's resources to
16 meet infant and early childhood mental health needs.

17 The purpose of this Act is to:



1 (1) Require the department of human resources development
2 to reclassify certain positions within the early
3 childhood services unit of the department of health
4 early intervention section; and

5 (2) Appropriate funds for the reclassification of certain
6 positions and establishment of mental health
7 specialist positions within the early childhood
8 services unit of the department of health early
9 intervention section.

10 SECTION 2. The department of human resources development
11 shall reclassify the following positions within the early
12 childhood services unit of the department of health early
13 intervention section as follows:

- 14 (1) Physical therapist III to physical therapist IV;
15 (2) Special education teacher III to special education
16 teacher IV; and
17 (3) Occupational therapist III to occupational therapist
18 IV.

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$48,000 or so much
21 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the



1 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
2 2026-2027 for the reclassification of certain positions within
3 the early childhood services unit of the department of health
4 early intervention section pursuant to section 2 of this Act.

5 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
6 of health for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$142,032 or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
11 2026-2027 for the establishment of two full-time equivalent
12 (2.00 FTE) permanent mental health specialist positions within
13 the early childhood services unit of the department of health
14 early intervention section; provided that the salary schedule
15 for each position shall be set at a mental health specialist
16 salary schedule.

17 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
18 of health for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



S.B. NO. 823

Report Title:

Early Intervention Services; Early Intervention Specialists;
Department of Health; Positions; Reclassification; Department of
Human Resources Development; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to reclassify certain early intervention specialist positions within the Early Childhood Services Unit in the Department of Health. Appropriates funds for the reclassification of certain positions and establishment of new positions within the early childhood services unit.

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