
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "State Internship and Workforce Development Act."

3 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that state departments
4 and agencies face significant challenges in filling vacant
5 positions with qualified candidates. These staff shortages lead
6 to inefficiencies and prevent the State from optimally
7 fulfilling its public duties.

8 The legislature further finds that many individuals,
9 particularly recent graduates and those pursuing new career
10 paths, lack opportunities to gain hands-on work experience in
11 public service roles. This presents an opportunity for the
12 State to support workforce development while addressing
13 vacancies in public service positions. The legislature
14 recognizes that a structured, state-funded internship program
15 can serve as a pipeline for recruiting and retaining skilled
16 workers in state government.



1 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
2 state-funded internship program that provides participants with
3 practical work experience, fosters interest in public service
4 careers, and helps address workforce shortages in state
5 departments and agencies.

6 SECTION 3. Chapter 78, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
7 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
8 read as follows:

9 "**§78- State internship and workforce development**

10 **program.** (a) There is established within the department of
11 human resources development the state internship and workforce
12 development program. The department shall administer the
13 program in conjunction with a designated coordinating agency.

14 The program shall:

15 (1) Provide paid internship opportunities within various
16 state departments and agencies;

17 (2) Prioritize placement in departments with significant
18 workforce shortages;

19 (3) Offer internships ranging in length from eighty-nine
20 days to no longer than twelve months; and



1 (4) Include comprehensive training, mentorship, and
2 evaluation components.

3 (b) The program shall be funded through annual
4 appropriations by the legislature; provided that state
5 departments utilizing interns shall contribute a portion of
6 program costs based on the number of interns placed within the
7 department, as determined by the department of human resources
8 development.

9 (c) Eligibility for the program shall be open to anyone
10 who:

11 (1) Is a resident of the State;
12 (2) Is eighteen years of age or older; and
13 (3) Meets specific criteria established by the department
14 of human resources development and respective
15 coordinating agencies.

16 (d) Selection of internship participants shall be based
17 on:

18 (1) Academic achievement or relevant work experience;
19 (2) Interest in public service careers; and
20 (3) Alignment with departmental workforce needs.

21 (e) As part of the program, internship participants shall:



- 1 (1) Attend and actively participate in all required work
2 experience training sessions;
- 3 (2) Perform assigned duties and responsibilities in
4 accordance with program guidelines; and
- 5 (3) Adhere to workplace policies and procedures.
- 6 (f) As part of the program, coordinating agency work sites
7 shall:
- 8 (1) Demonstrate need and an ability to employ participants
9 following program completion;
- 10 (2) Implement work experience training to ensure effective
11 integration of interns into the workplace;
- 12 (3) Abide by all rules and requirements of the program;
- 13 (4) Ensure sufficient supervision and mentorship of
14 interns to facilitate professional growth and
15 development;
- 16 (5) Provide meaningful and adequate work experience to
17 help interns meet the requirements for employment in
18 the relevant position;
- 19 (6) Conduct regular performance evaluations of interns and
20 provide feedback to the coordinating agency;



- 1 (7) Collaborate with the department of human resources
2 development to create career pathways for interns; and
- 3 (8) Ensure that viable and vacant positions relative to
4 the interns' field of study are available to
5 participate in this program.
- 6 (g) The department of human resource development shall:
- 7 (1) Ensure that the experience gained through the program
8 qualifies participants to apply for vacant positions
9 of a similar level and scope within the hosting
10 department;
- 11 (2) Develop standardized guidelines to align internship
12 duties with the qualifications required for full-time
13 employment;
- 14 (3) Provide ongoing support to coordinating agencies to
15 ensure compliance with program objectives; and
- 16 (4) Collaborate with coordinating agencies to create
17 career pathways for interns.
- 18 (h) As part of the program, participants shall receive:
- 19 (1) A stipend or hourly wage commensurate with the role
20 and duration of the internship;



1 (2) Opportunities for professional development and skills
2 training; and

3 (3) Priority consideration for full-time employment in
4 state government.

5 (i) Each coordinating agency shall:

6 (1) Develop performance metrics to evaluate the program's
7 effectiveness in reducing workforce shortages;

8 (2) Provide data on intern performance and retention rates
9 for program evaluation; and

10 (3) Submit an annual report to the legislature no later
11 than twenty days before the convening of each regular
12 session, detailing program participation, costs, and
13 outcomes.

14 (j) As used in this section:

15 "Coordinating agency" means the participating State of
16 Hawaii department, agency, or office hosting and employing an
17 intern program participant.

18 "Eligible participant" means an individual who meets
19 established guidelines for participation in the program,
20 including recent high school graduates, college students,



1 post-graduate students, and individuals seeking to transition
2 into public service careers.

3 "Internship program" or "program" means the State
4 internship and workforce development program established
5 pursuant to this section.

6 "Participant" means an individual accepted into the
7 internship program."

8 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

10

INTRODUCED BY: _____



JAN 22 2025



H.B. NO. 1211

Report Title:

DHRD; State Internship and Workforce Development Act;
Internships; Public Service; State Departments and Agencies;
Workforce Development; Vacancies; Shortages; Experience

Description:

Establishes within the Department of Human Resources Development the state internship and workforce development program.

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