
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS.

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 76-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by amending subsection (h) to read as follows:

3 "(h) The director shall establish rules to implement this
4 section that shall be in accordance with the following:

5 (1) Whenever a position exempted under subsection (b) or
6 (c) is no longer exempted from the civil service,
7 normal civil service recruitment procedures shall
8 apply, unless the incumbent is to be retained without
9 the necessity for examination by action of the
10 legislature; provided that in such event, the
11 incumbent shall be retained, but only if the incumbent
12 meets the minimum qualification requirements of the
13 position; ~~and~~

14 (2) The manner for setting the compensation of incumbents
15 upon their inclusion in the classification systems
16 shall be fair and equitable in comparison to the
17 compensation of other incumbents with comparable



1 experience in the same or essentially similar classes;
2 provided that the compensation of incumbents who are
3 in the same bargaining unit, prior to and after their
4 inclusion in the classification systems, shall be in
5 accordance with the applicable collective bargaining
6 agreement[-]; and

7 (3) Experience gained by an intern participating in the
8 internship program established pursuant to section
9 394-11 shall be applied towards the experience needed
10 to meet the minimum qualification requirements under
11 this chapter for civil service positions of a similar
12 level and scope to the internship."

13 SECTION 2. Section 394-10, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended to read as follows:

15 **"[+]§394-10[+] On-the-job training work experience**
16 **program; private sector.** (a) The department of labor and
17 industrial relations may enter into contracts with employers or
18 ~~[registered apprenticeship program]~~ sponsors and trade
19 organizations in the private sector to provide on-the-job
20 training to eligible interns; provided that any participating
21 ~~[apprenticeship program]~~ sponsor in the private sector shall



1 only offer to eligible interns on-the-job training in [~~public~~]
2 private sector projects. The department may provide to the
3 employers or sponsors up to \$20.00 per hour in reimbursements
4 for an intern's wages only for the costs of training and
5 supervising an intern. The employers or sponsors shall not be
6 required to provide documentation of these costs.

7 (b) Eligible employers or sponsors shall demonstrate
8 compliance with Hawaii compliance express or any successor
9 program established to facilitate compliance with
10 section 103D-310(c).

11 (c) Contracts with employers or sponsors under this
12 section shall be limited to a period of twelve weeks for college
13 or university students, with an extension of up to twelve
14 additional weeks if approved by the director of labor and
15 industrial relations, and six weeks for high school students,
16 with an extension of up to eight weeks during the summer break.
17 In determining the appropriate length of the contract, the
18 director shall consider the:

- 19 (1) Occupation's skill requirements;
20 (2) Intern's existing academic and occupational skill
21 levels; and



1 (3) Intern's prior work experience.

2 (d) The employer or sponsor shall comply with state and
3 federal employment laws pursuant to chapter 387 and the Fair
4 Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended.

5 (e) The department of labor and industrial relations shall
6 adopt interim rules, which shall be exempt from chapter 91, to
7 develop and implement the program; provided that the interim
8 rules shall remain in effect until the adoption of rules
9 pursuant to chapter 91 to allow the department to:

10 (1) Ensure that participating interns are eligible
11 pursuant to subsection (f) and participating employers
12 or sponsors are eligible pursuant to subsection (g);

13 (2) Ensure that interns are referred by the department to
14 employers or sponsors and not directly by the
15 employers or sponsors;

16 (3) Reimburse employers or sponsors up to \$20.00 per hour
17 for an intern's wages only for the extraordinary costs
18 of providing intern training and supervision;

19 (4) Develop a training plan for participating interns of
20 the program in collaboration with the intern and
21 employer or sponsor;



- 1 (5) Monitor each intern's progress in the program to
2 ensure that training plan objectives are being met;
- 3 (6) Consult with interns and onsite supervisors to address
4 any problems affecting the training plan;
- 5 (7) Terminate an internship, if necessary, due to problems
6 at the worksite caused by either the intern or the
7 employer or sponsor; and
- 8 (8) ~~[Limit]~~ Determine the maximum number of interns an
9 employer or sponsor ~~[participation to no more than~~
10 ~~five interns]~~ may retain at one time, as tracked by
11 the federal employer identification number of the
12 employer or sponsor.
- 13 (f) The department of labor and industrial relations shall
14 develop eligibility criteria for interns, including requirements
15 that the intern:
- 16 (1) Be sixteen years of age or older;
- 17 (2) Be a Hawaii resident;
- 18 (3) Be currently enrolled:
- 19 (A) In a public high school, or has earned a high
20 school diploma or its equivalent ~~[within one year~~
21 ~~of applying for the internship]~~; or



1 (B) In an accredited college or university, or has
2 earned a college or university degree [~~within one~~
3 ~~year of applying for the internship~~];

4 (4) Have, or has graduated with, a cumulative grade point
5 average of 2.5 or higher, on a scale of 4.0 or its
6 equivalent; and

7 (5) Is not an apprentice in a registered apprenticeship
8 program or journey worker;

9 provided that the department of labor and industrial relations
10 may conduct criminal history background checks as appropriate.

11 (g) The department of labor and industrial relations shall
12 develop eligibility criteria for employers or sponsors,
13 including requirements that the employer or sponsor:

14 (1) Provide onsite work experience that complies with each
15 intern's training plan and includes the daily
16 supervision, training, and guidance necessary to
17 enable each intern to develop work habits and
18 job-specific skills that are essential for employment;

19 (2) Provide interns with the same working conditions as
20 other employees in similar occupations;



- 1 (3) Consult the department to obtain assistance when an
2 intern requires support services to effectively
3 complete an assigned task;
- 4 (4) Pay [~~no~~] not less than \$20.00 per hour for a maximum
5 of thirty hours per week for high school students;
6 provided that the maximum hours may be increased to
7 forty hours during the summer break;
- 8 (5) Pay [~~no~~] not less than \$20.00 per hour for a maximum
9 of forty hours per week; provided that the maximum
10 hours for college or university students who are
11 enrolled in at least two college or university courses
12 shall not exceed twenty hours;
- 13 (6) Provide each intern with a mentor to give on-the-job
14 guidance and to answer routine questions about the
15 workplace;
- 16 (7) Ensure that interns do not displace currently employed
17 workers, reduce the hours of those currently employed,
18 infringe on the opportunities for promotion of regular
19 employees, or replace the work of employees who have
20 experienced layoffs;



- 1 (8) Ensure that interns' on-the-job training does not
- 2 impair existing contracts for services or collective
- 3 bargaining agreements;
- 4 (9) Ensure that the worksite, supervisor, and participants
- 5 are available for monitoring by the department;
- 6 (10) Ensure that the worksite complies with all
- 7 occupational safety and health standards established
- 8 under state and federal law;
- 9 (11) Maintain time sheets and attendance records for each
- 10 intern and prepare intern evaluations and any other
- 11 reports required by the department;
- 12 (12) Notify the department on a timely basis if an intern:
- 13 (A) Is injured at the worksite;
- 14 (B) Is absent without good cause;
- 15 (C) Performs poorly on job assignments;
- 16 (D) Refuses to participate in work or work-related
- 17 activities; or
- 18 (E) Is not making satisfactory progress in the
- 19 program or on the job;



1 (13) For [~~private~~] sponsors, contribute fifty per cent [~~in~~
2 ~~cost sharing benefits, including wages and fringe~~
3 ~~benefits,~~] of each intern's wages; and

4 (14) Indemnify and hold harmless the State of Hawaii and
5 its officers, agents, and employees from and against
6 any and all claims arising out of or resulting from
7 activities carried out or projects undertaken with
8 funds provided under this section and procure
9 sufficient insurance to provide this indemnification.

10 (h) The department of labor and industrial relations may
11 contract with trade organizations for different industry sectors
12 without regard to chapters 103D and 103F to:

13 (1) Coordinate internship placements with the department
14 of labor and industrial relations and employers or
15 sponsors; and

16 (2) Provide administrative support to employers or
17 sponsors who would otherwise lack the capacity to
18 participate in the program;

19 provided that each contract shall expressly state that the trade
20 organization shall indemnify and hold harmless the State of
21 Hawaii and its officers, agents, and employees from and against



1 any and all claims arising out of or resulting from activities
2 carried out or projects undertaken by the trade organization
3 with funds provided under this section and procure sufficient
4 insurance to provide this indemnification.

5 (i) As used in this section:

6 "Sponsor" means any person, employer, association,
7 committee, or organization operating an apprenticeship program
8 and in whose name the program is registered with the department
9 of labor and industrial relations.

10 "Trade organization" means a not-for-profit entity
11 registered with the division of business registration of the
12 department of commerce and consumer affairs, that supports and
13 represents companies in a particular industry."

14 SECTION 3. Section 394-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 **"[§]394-11[§] State internship and workforce development**
17 **program.** (a) There is established within the department of
18 labor and industrial relations the state internship and
19 workforce development program. The department of labor and
20 industrial relations shall collaborate with the department of
21 human resources development to process all public program



1 applications and place interns in temporary or permanent
2 positions at state executive branch departments, agencies, or
3 programs. The program shall:

4 (1) Provide paid internship opportunities within various
5 state departments and agencies;

6 (2) Prioritize placement in departments with significant
7 workforce shortages; and

8 (3) Include comprehensive training, mentorship, and
9 evaluation components.

10 (b) Selection of internship participants shall be based
11 upon:

12 (1) Academic achievement or relevant work experience;

13 (2) Interest in public service careers; and

14 (3) Alignment with departmental workforce needs.

15 (c) As part of the program, internship participants shall:

16 (1) Attend and actively participate in all required work
17 experience training sessions;

18 (2) Perform assigned duties and responsibilities in
19 accordance with program guidelines; and

20 (3) Adhere to workplace policies and procedures.



1 (d) As part of the program, coordinating agency work sites
2 shall:

3 (1) Provide meaningful and adequate work experience to
4 help interns meet the minimum qualification
5 requirements for employment in the relevant
6 position~~[+]~~, including employment pursuant to
7 chapter 76;

8 (2) Conduct regular performance evaluations of interns and
9 provide feedback to the coordinating agency;

10 (3) Collaborate with the department of labor and
11 industrial relations to create career pathways for
12 interns; and

13 (4) Ensure that viable and vacant positions relative to
14 the interns' field of study are available for them to
15 participate in this program.

16 (e) The department of ~~[labor and industrial relations]~~
17 human resources development shall:

18 (1) Ensure that the experience gained through the program
19 ~~[qualifies]~~ helps participants to ~~[apply]~~ qualify for
20 vacant positions of a similar level and scope within
21 the hosting department~~[+]~~, including recognizing the



experience as meeting part of the minimum
qualification requirements of employment in a position
pursuant to chapter 76;

(2) Develop standardized guidelines to align internship duties with the qualifications required for full-time employment;

(3) Provide ongoing support to coordinating agencies to ensure compliance with program objectives; and

(4) Collaborate with coordinating agencies to create career pathways for interns.

(f) As part of the program, participants shall receive opportunities for professional development and skills training.

(g) Before the first day of each internship, the department of labor and industrial relations shall provide the department of human resources development with:

(1) The name of the intern;

(2) The state executive branch department, agency, or program to which the intern is assigned;

(3) The expected start and end dates of the internship;

and



(4) Any other relevant information that the department of human resources development may require to assist the intern in pursuing future employment with the state executive branch.

(h) The department of labor and industrial relations and department of human resources development shall develop guidelines for participation in the program, including requirements that the intern:

(1) Be sixteen years of age or older;

(2) Be a Hawaii resident;

(3) Be currently enrolled:

(A) In a public high school, or has earned a high school diploma or its equivalent; or

(B) In an accredited college or university, or has earned a college or university degree;

(4) Have, or has graduated with, a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent; and

(5) Is not an apprentice in a registered apprenticeship program or journey worker;



1 provided that the department of labor and industrial relations
2 or department of human resources development may conduct
3 criminal history background checks as appropriate.

4 (i) The director of human resources development shall
5 apply the experience gained by an intern participating in the
6 program towards the experience needed to meet the minimum
7 qualification requirements under chapter 76 for civil service
8 positions of a similar level and scope to the internship.

9 ~~[(h)]~~ (j) For the purposes of this section:

10 "Coordinating agency" means the participating State of
11 Hawaii department, agency, or office hosting and employing an
12 intern program participant.

13 "Eligible participant" means an individual who meets
14 established guidelines for participation in the program~~[7]~~
15 developed pursuant to subsection (h), including [recent] public
16 high school students, high school graduates, college students,
17 and [post-graduate students, and individuals seeking to
18 transition into public service careers.] college graduates.

19 "Internship program" or "program" means the state
20 internship and workforce development program established
21 pursuant to this section.



1 "Minimum qualification" means the minimum experience,
2 education, licensing, or other special requirements essential to
3 performance in a class of work or a position.

4 "Participant" means an individual accepted into the
5 internship program."

6 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
8 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to be
9 allocated as follows:

10 (1) \$ for the implementation and operation of the
11 on-the-job training work experience program for the
12 private sector established pursuant to section 394-10,
13 Hawaii Revised Statutes, including contracting with
14 trade organizations; and

15 (2) \$ for the operation of the state internship
16 and workforce development program established pursuant
17 to section 394-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
19 labor and industrial relations for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
21 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

2

INTRODUCED BY: Nadine K. Parker
JAN 27 2026



Report Title:

DLIR; DHRD; Internship Programs; Workforce Development; Hele Imua; On-the-Job Training Work Experience Program; State Internship and Workforce Development Program; Minimum Qualifications; Civil Service; Appropriation

Description:

Expands the on-the-job training work experience program for the private sector by authorizing the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to enter into contracts with trade organizations to provide on-the-job training to participating interns. Removes the requirement that high school, college, or university graduates have graduated within 1 year of applying for the on-the-job training work experience program and state internship and workforce development program. Repeals the requirement that participating sponsors contribute 50 per cent of each intern's fringe benefits. Amends the state internship and workforce development program for the public sector by requiring the coordinating agency work sites to provide work experience that helps interns meet the minimum qualification requirements for employment in the relevant positions, including civil service positions. Transfers certain duties from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to the Department of Human Resources Development. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to apply the internship experience towards the minimum qualification requirements for similar civil service positions. Appropriates moneys.

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