

JAN 28 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FAMILY RESILIENCE PILOT PROGRAM.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that more programs and
2 resources are necessary to increase family resilience and reduce
3 the risk of child abuse or neglect. Many families at high risk
4 of entering the child welfare system are unaware of available
5 services or how to access them, or public benefits are not
6 available to address the economic or other fiscal challenge they
7 are facing.

8 The malama ohana working group was established by Act 86,
9 Session Laws of Hawaii 2023, within the office of wellness and
10 resilience to seek, design, and recommend transformative changes
11 to the State's existing child welfare system. In its report
12 submitted to the 2025 legislature, the malama ohana working
13 group stated there is a shortage of resources in Hawaii
14 dedicated to preventing children and families' involvement with
15 child welfare services, especially primary prevention and
16 universal support. The malama ohana working group recommended
17 the establishment of primary prevention and universal support



1 programs that are trauma-informed and culturally responsive in
2 an effort to divert children and families away from involvement
3 with the child welfare system.

4 The legislature finds that community- and school-based
5 organizations are safe, accessible, and non-judgmental spaces
6 where families can access formal and informal supports and
7 referrals. Providing family strengthening programming helps to
8 increase parents' protective factors, including: parental
9 resilience, social connections, concrete support, knowledge of
10 parenting and child development, and social-emotional competence
11 of children. Community- and school-based organizations, such as
12 family resource centers, have been successful in reducing the
13 number of families reported to the child welfare system.

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a one-
15 year family resilience pilot program within the office of
16 wellness and resilience.

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the office of
18 wellness and resilience a family resilience pilot program to
19 build family resilience and provide comprehensive specialized
20 support services to eligible families. The program shall:



- 1 (1) Hire and train five trauma-informed peer support
2 resource navigators to assist a total of eighty
3 families with enrollment in public or other benefits,
4 parenting classes and cultural family strengthening
5 program services; provided that each peer support
6 resource navigator shall be trained in alignment with
7 the recommendations of the peer support specialists
8 working group established by Act 88, Session Laws of
9 Hawaii 2024; provided further that each peer support
10 resource navigator shall use motivational interviewing
11 methods and serve not more than twenty families;
- 12 (2) Train program staff on eligibility screening to ensure
13 families meet temporary assistance for needy families
14 (TANF) or related eligibility criteria and connect
15 interested and eligible families with peer support
16 resource navigators;
- 17 (3) Assist families to identify goals and connect them to
18 community resources and supports and assist with
19 applications for public assistance benefits, housing,
20 education, or employment that are in alignment with
21 their identified goals; and



- 1 (4) Establish monthly parenting classes or cultural family
- 2 strengthening services offered by contracted or
- 3 subcontracted providers.

4 (b) The office of wellness and resilience may contract
5 with a third-party administrator to operate the family
6 resilience pilot program.

13 (1) Connected to and receiving community resources and
14 supports;

15 (2) That have applied for public assistance benefits,
16 housing, education, or employment;

17 (3) That participated in parenting classes and cultural
18 family strengthening services; and

19 (4) That reported favorable changes in their knowledge,
20 attitudes or beliefs, skill acquisition, behavior, and



1 relationships as a direct result of program
2 participation.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated or authorized from the
4 temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) funds the sum of
5 \$600,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
6 2026-2027 for the family resilience pilot program established
7 pursuant to section 2 of this Act, including the contracting of
8 services to implement and operate the program.

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

11 SECTION 4. If any part of this Act is found to be in
12 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed
13 condition for the allocation of federal funds to the State, the
14 conflicting part of this Act is inoperative solely to the extent
15 of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly
16 affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the
17 remainder of this Act in its application to the agencies
18 concerned.



1 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026, and
2 shall be repealed on June 30, 2027.

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INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SMA", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, open loop on the right side.

S.B. NO. 3204

Report Title:

OWR; Family Resilience Pilot Program; Peer Support Resource Navigators; TANF; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a one-year Family Resilience Pilot Program within the Office of Wellness and Resilience. Appropriates funds from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding. Sunsets the pilot program 6/30/2027.

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