

ACT 238

H.B. NO. 1146

A Bill for an Act Relating to Civil Service.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it is necessary to maintain an updated social worker series in the executive branch to make a positive difference in the provision of public social services. The department of human resources development conducted a classification study primarily to address the State's problems in recruiting and retaining social workers. Consequently, the department of human resources development established the social worker/human services professional series. Employees within this classification include both individuals who possess degrees in social work and those who do not.

The legislature finds that the importance of the social work profession should be recognized to facilitate the recruitment and retention of social workers in the executive branch. It promotes the maintenance of high standards of qualifications, education, and experience for those who hold themselves out to be social workers. The legislature also finds that it is in the best interest of the State to maintain an updated social worker series in the executive branch to provide essential social services to the State's most vulnerable populations.

As a result of discussions between the department of human resources development and the various stakeholders, the department shall maintain the social worker series and revise the minimum qualification requirements to require a social work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education,

the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or a comparable regional accreditation body. The department will also retain a separate human services professional series for employees who do not possess a social work degree. The department will inform affected employees of the actions to be taken prior to taking the actions. These actions will be taken as soon as possible, but no later than January 1, 2006.

The aforementioned actions will not affect positions and employees who have been reallocated from the social worker series to the parole officer series and the child and adult protective services specialist series.

SECTION 2. (a) On or before January 1, 2006, the department of human resources development, in consultation and coordination with the parties set forth below, shall develop a transition plan covering employees within the social worker series who do not possess a social work degree:

- (1) The Hawaii Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers;
- (2) The University of Hawaii School of Social Work;
- (3) Hawaii Pacific University School of Social Work;
- (4) Brigham Young University School of Social Work;
- (5) The Hawaii Government Employees Association;
- (6) The department of education;
- (7) The department of health;
- (8) The department of human services;
- (9) The department of public safety; and
- (10) Any other affected department or agency.

The plan may examine the intent of the legislature to require licensure for social workers employed by the executive branch and appropriate compensation for those who are licensed. The plan shall demonstrate the intent of the legislature to establish a preference for social workers in the provision of services to the public. The plan shall not apply to the judiciary, the Hawaii health systems corporation, or the counties.

(b) The department of human resources development shall submit a report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2006, which shall include the transition plan and actions taken to separate the social worker and human services professional series.

SECTION 3. Effective July 1, 2005, all persons who enter state service within the executive branch in the job classification series of social worker shall possess a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree in social work.

SECTION 4. Positions that were reallocated from the social worker series to the social worker/human services professional series that are still occupied by the incumbents of the positions when the reallocations took place shall be placed in a class within the social worker series. Employees who do not possess a social work degree shall be reallocated to a class within the human services professional series on July 1, 2010, if they do not obtain a degree in social work prior to that date. Effective July 1, 2010, all persons employed by the executive branch as a social worker, excluding the Hawaii health systems corporation, shall possess a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in social work. Those persons without social work degrees shall be human services professionals.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2005.

(Became law on July 12, 2005, without the Governor's signature, pursuant to Art. III, §16, State Constitution.)