

**ACT 155**

H.B. NO. 1283

A Bill for an Act Relating to Health.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a 2015 nationwide survey by Justice in Aging concluded that ten states have laws requiring dementia training for law enforcement personnel, and one state requires dementia training for emergency medical technicians.

The legislature notes that six in ten people with dementia will wander and a person diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease may not remember his or her name or address and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. When individuals with dementia are lost, they may show signs of anxiety, fear, or hostility, all of which can escalate to more aggressive behaviors. As the disease progresses and individuals with dementia forget family members and societal norms, there may be incidents of false police reports and victimization, indecent exposure, and shoplifting. People with Alzheimer's disease may appear uncooperative, disruptive, and combative when they have difficulty communicating and understanding what is happening. Furthermore, first responder personnel may not know how to assist people in these situations, leading to more confusion.

The legislature believes that providing education related to dementia and training in de-escalation tactics for firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other first responder personnel can often effectively address these types of situations and ensure the safety of the first responder personnel and the individuals with dementia.

The purpose of this Act is to authorize the development and provision of dementia training to first responder personnel.

SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part XVIII to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**“§321- First responder personnel; dementia training.** (a) The employers of first responder personnel may obtain dementia training for first responder personnel, which may include:

- (1) Recognizing the key signs of Alzheimer’s disease and related types of dementia;
- (2) Strategies for assessing cognition;
- (3) Best practices for interacting with persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related types of dementia; and
- (4) Strategies to best identify and intervene in situations where persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related types of dementia may be at particular risk of abuse or neglect.

(b) The training shall be offered at no cost to the applicable first responder personnel and shall be funded by private contributions from relevant non-profit organizations.

(c) The executive office on aging may coordinate the training schedules and standards, as necessary, with all public and private entities and agencies responsible for services provided by first responder personnel, including entering into agreements or memoranda of agreement with nonprofit organizations to provide funding pursuant to subsection (b).

(d) The employers of first responder personnel may utilize existing educational and training resources available in the public and private sectors when developing the training required under this section.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.<sup>1</sup>

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

(Approved July 1, 2021.)

#### Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.