

ACT 17

S.B. NO. 112

A Bill for an Act Relating to Police Reports.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the death of a family member where the incident led to law enforcement initiating an investigation may raise many questions for the surviving family members even years later. Law enforcement's investigation and the ensuing report may provide some answers and perhaps even closure for a family. The legislature further finds that obtaining this information can be difficult. For one Hawaii family whose son was murdered, it took seventeen years and repeated assistance from a state legislator's office to receive the closing report. For another family whose son was killed during an incident involving law enforcement, the family still has not received a copy of the report more than five years after the incident despite state legislator involvement.

The purpose of this Act is to allow surviving immediate family members of deceased persons for whom law enforcement initiated an investigation to receive a copy of the closing report prepared by the investigating police department after a specified period of time.

SECTION 2. Chapter 52D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§52D- Request for copy of police report by a surviving immediate family member. (a) Each surviving immediate family member of a deceased person for whom law enforcement initiated an investigation shall, upon request, be provided a copy of the closing report prepared by the investigating police department, upon the conclusion of any criminal proceedings related to the incident, the passage of five years after the report has been completed, or the passage of seven years after the underlying incident, whichever occurs first; provided that if the investigation has been reopened in the six months before the request, the investigating police department shall not be required to provide a copy of the report to the family member while the investigation is ongoing; provided further that upon the conclusion of the reopened investigation there shall be no further delay in providing a copy of the report to the requesting family member.

(b) The closing report shall be provided via electronic means or in physical paper form, at the requester's preference.

(c) All information pertaining to minors and confidential personal information shall be redacted from the closing report when the report is released.

(d) This section shall not diminish any right of a surviving immediate family member or any other person to receive a copy of any portion of a police report or any other government record at any other time.

(e) For the purposes of this section:

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“Closing report” means the final report or similar summary of the investigation that is prepared by the assigned police detective in the normal course of investigating the incident.

“Surviving immediate family member” means a person who is a surviving grandparent, parent, sibling, spouse or reciprocal beneficiary, child, or legal guardian of the deceased person.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 10, 2025.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.