

**A BILL FOR AN ACT
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

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

SECTION 1. Purpose.

The purpose of this Act is to extend the statutory deadline for law enforcement officer certification from July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2028, and to exempt all newly created positions of the Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB) from civil service requirements. This ensures sufficient time for phased funding, recruitment, and onboarding of staff, and provides the flexibility necessary to establish operational capacity consistent with the legislative mandate of chapter 139, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

SECTION 2. Section 139-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

“(a) No person may be appointed as a law enforcement officer after June 30, [2026] 2028, unless the person:

- (1) Has satisfactorily completed a basic program of law enforcement training approved by the board;
- (2) Has received training designed to minimize the use of excessive force, including legal standards, de-escalation techniques, crisis intervention tactics, mental health response, implicit bias, and first aid; and
- (3) Possesses other qualifications as prescribed by the board.

(b) Beginning on July 1, [2026] 2028, the board shall issue a certification to an applicant who meets the requirements of subsection (a).”

SECTION 3. Section 139-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§139-7 Employment of law enforcement officers. (a) No person shall be appointed or employed as a law enforcement officer by any county police department, the department of law enforcement, the department of land and natural resources, the department of taxation, or the department of the attorney general, after June 30, [2026] 2028, unless the person possesses a valid certification issued by the board pursuant to section 139-6(b).”

SECTION 4. Section 76-16(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“(37) All positions established under chapter 139, Law Enforcement Standards Board, shall be exempt from this chapter.”

SECTION 5. Section 139-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§139-3 Powers and duties of the board. ...

(6) Employ, without regard to chapter 76, an administrator and other persons necessary to carry out its duties under this chapter.”

SECTION 6. Severability.

If any provision of this Act, or its application to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of the Act shall not be affected.

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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