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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
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December 31, 2020

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

Enclosed is the following report submitted in accordance with provisions of Act 177, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, Related to the East Hawaii Child Welfare Pilot Project.

In accordance with section 93-16, HRS, the report is available to review electronically at the Department's website, at <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Cathy Betts".

Cathy Betts
Director

Enclosure

c:
Governor's Office
Lieutenant Governor's Office
Department of Budget & Finance
Legislative Auditor
Legislative Reference Bureau Library (1 hard copy)

President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki

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Report to the Thirty-First Hawaii State Legislature 2021

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH ACT 177, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII
2018, RELATED TO THE EAST HAWAII CHILD WELFARE
SERVICES PILOT PROJECT**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Social Services Division, Child Welfare Services Branch
December 2020**

This report is submitted in accordance with provisions of Act 177, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018, related to the East Hawaii Child Welfare Pilot Project.

I. Purpose

Act 177, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018, established a five-year pilot project within the Department of Human Services (DHS) to ensure the safety and well-being of at-risk children and families in East Hawaii. The Legislature authorized and appropriated funds for four full-time (4.0 FTE) child-adult protective service specialists, administrative costs for the East Hawaii child welfare services section on Hawaii Island, and travel costs for the child welfare services branch to train new hires.

Act 177 (SLH 2018) Positions

Three units comprise the East Hawaii Child Welfare Services office: East Hawaii Child Welfare Services Unit 1/36 (EHCWSU1), East Hawaii Child Welfare Services Unit 2/37 (EHCWSU2), and East Hawaii Child Welfare Services Unit 3/72 (EHCWSU3). Two of the pilot positions are assigned to EHCWSU1. The third and fourth positions are assigned to EHCWSU2 and EHCWSU3, respectively.

East Hawaii Unit 1	East Hawaii Unit 2	East Hawaii Unit 3
Assigned 2 Positions	Assigned 1 Position	Assigned 1 Position
Pseudo/Position Number 91919K/122786 Hire Date: January 1, 2020	Pseudo/Position Number 91919K/122788 Hire Date: November 12, 2019	Pseudo/Position Number 91919K/122789 VACANT
Pseudo/Position Number 91919K/122787 Hire Date: October 1, 2019		

II. Current Position Status

As of December 28, 2020, the East Hawaii Unit 3 pilot position is vacant.

With the inclusion of the four pilot positions, now permanent positions, East Hawaii's December 2020 position inventory indicates a total of 45 positions with 11 vacancies, an increase by six vacancies in comparison to the 2019 position inventory.

III. Caseload Evaluation

As of December 28, 2020, the breakdown of cases managed per permanency social worker ranges from 10 to 18, a decrease by four cases compared to 2019 reporting, and the number of children on each caseload ranges from 21 to 46, no change in contrast to 2019 reporting.

In January 2021, DHS will meet with the Hawaii Child Welfare Continuous Quality Improvement Project to request assistance with data analysis of Hawaii's Federal Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR). DHS will request analysis to determine whether the reduction in caseload helps social workers better engage families, deliver higher quality services, and achieve more positive outcomes for children and families.

IV. Performance Evaluation

Unfortunately, DHS was unable to implement the performance evaluation as reported last year due in part to the impacts of managing the COVID-19 pandemic. DHS was unable to begin its data reporting and plans to utilize and analyze case review data to measure any change in performance. In 2021, DHS aims to provide data that will include children's re-entry into foster care, fatalities due to maltreatment, relative placement, timely response to new reports of harm, employee performance and satisfaction, caseload size, family court sanctions, and legal claims.

V. Employee Satisfaction Evaluation

DHS was not able to develop and conduct a survey of East Hawaii CWS employees to measure the change in satisfaction due to the impacts of managing the COVID-19 pandemic. In January of 2021, DHS will develop surveys to conduct every 6-months with East Hawaii CWS employees to see if the reduction in caseload affects employee performance, satisfaction, and attrition. This data will be provided to the Legislature, beginning in 2022.

VI. Court Sanctions

In 2020, there were no monetary sanctions imposed by the courts. Instead of being sanctioned, the Family Court ordered the Section Administrator to attend Periodic Review Hearings. At these hearings, the Section Administrator is available to explain why the assigned social worker was not visiting with the youth in foster care monthly and or why court reports were not timely filed.

Year	Number of Court Sanctions
2013	2
2014	0
2015	0
2016	1
September to December 2017*	5
2018	21
2019	6
2020	0

*information provided by East Hawaii Supervisors

VII. Legal Claims

Currently, there are two active civil lawsuits involving East Hawaii cases. CWS will research the

history of legal claims and their disposition.

VIII. Provider Experience

CWS will develop and conduct two surveys for 2021 to collect data on the pilot project's efficacy from service providers that work directly with children assigned to social workers in the East Hawaii Child Welfare Services section.

IX. Findings

In 2018, DHS had difficulty recruiting and filling the pilot positions because they were established only as temporary positions. After conversion to permanent status, the four positions added stability to East Hawaii, and employee morale appeared to have increased. There were no monetary court sanctions this past year. Caseloads continued to decrease per caseworker in comparison to 2019. CWS will collect data in the coming year to include caseload, performance, and employee satisfaction evaluations.