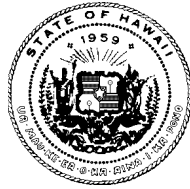


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



DEPT. COMM. NO. 254

CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
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KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
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TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

Dir 23.96

December 28, 2023

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

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-Second 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 section 346-7.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, on the Spouse And Child Abuse Special Fund.

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 read "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)
Hawaii State Public Library, System State Publications Distribution Center (2 hard copies, one electronic copy)
Hamilton Library, Serials Department, University of Hawaii (1 hard copy)

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-SECOND HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE 2024

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF
SECTION 346-7.5, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES,
ON THE SPOUSE AND CHILD ABUSE SPECIAL FUND

Social Services Division
Child Welfare Services Branch
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
December 2023

I. Background

Act 232 of the Seventeenth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, 1994, established the Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account (SCASA) in the Department of Human Services (DHS), codified as section 346-7.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). Act 232 specified, "the proceeds of the account shall be reserved for use by the department of human services for staff programs and grants or purchases of service . . . that support or provide spouse or child abuse intervention or prevention as authorized by law." Initial funds came from fees for marriage licenses. DHS Social Services Division, Child Welfare Services Branch (CWS) administers the fund. It is required to submit an annual report to the Legislature, providing an accounting of the receipts and expenditures from the account.

Act 216 of the Nineteenth Legislature, 1997, increased the DHS Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account by adding revenues from increased fees for certified copies of birth and death certificates and marriage licenses.

Act 177 of the Twenty-First Legislature, 2002, increased the DHS Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account by raising the funding ceiling from \$300,000 to \$450,000 to allow DHS to fund additional program needs. In 2008, Act 158 increased the ceiling to \$610,000.

In the State's Thirtieth Legislature, 2019, Act 84, SLH 2019, amended section 346-7.5, HRS, to allow the Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account (SCASA) to receive Title IV-E federal reimbursements received in the fiscal year following the year in which the Title IV-E funds were expended, up to \$3,000,000. The administration's [original ask](#) was to retain up to \$5,000,000, of federal Title IV-E reimbursement fund in SCASA. \$5,000,000 was the approximate average of the 4th quarter reimbursements received in the following fiscal year and deposited into the general fund.

The intent of Act 84 is to allow DHS to retain more federal reimbursements from child welfare expenditures and have a stable source of funding to use for child abuse and neglect prevention, intervention, and domestic violence services. Act 84 contemplated the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 (Family First), a part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, Public Law 115-123.

Family First changed how states may spend and claim funds under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Previously, Title IV-E funds could only be used for foster care maintenance, adoption assistance, kinship guardianship assistance, and related training and administrative expenses. Under Family First, states with an approved Title IV-E plan now have the option to use Title IV-E funds for prevention services that would allow children who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of being abused or neglected to remain with their parents or relatives. States can get reimbursed for certain twelve-month periods of prevention services. Using SCASF as part of the state-funded Family First services, the State can seek up to 50%

federal reimbursement for approved expenditures. CWS would not have to rely as heavily on state general funds, especially during economic downturns when state revenues are tight. Additionally, Act 84, SLH 2019, changed the fund's name from Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account (SCASA) to Spouse and Child Abuse Special *Fund* (SCASF).

In 2020, DHS requested a budget adjustment in the executive budget bill to raise the SCASF spending ceiling to match the \$3,000,000 amount the SCASF fund could retain per Act 84. The increased ceiling amount would allow DHS to spend up to \$3,000,000. However, during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic session, the Legislature did not make this change among all of the COVID-19 budget adjustments.

In 2021, DHS again requested that the SCASF spending ceiling be raised in the budget; similarly, the Legislature did not increase the SCASF ceiling. Notably, on August 11, 2021, the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) approved the Family First Hawaii Title IV-E Prevention Plan, effective January 1, 2021. Hawaii's Family First plan was the first in Region IX that ACF approved. CWS began implementing the Family First Hawaii plan by October 1, 2021.

In SFY 2022, per Act 250, the Legislature increased the amount of IV-E reimbursements the SCASF could retain up to \$5,000,000. Unfortunately, although DHS requested the SCASF spending ceiling be likewise adjusted in the budget bill in 2022 and 2023, the Legislature did not increase the appropriation ceiling.

In the 2024 executive budget, DHS again requests that the SCASF spending ceiling be increased to \$5,000,000 so that CWS can access SCASF, reinvest the funds in child abuse and prevention services, and reduce the need for a general fund appropriation.

Family First recognizes that families can often provide safe and loving care of their children with the necessary support and services. Additional and steady funding will support needed services and provide families, including expectant and parenting youth in foster care, access to evidence-based services in the areas of parenting skills and supports, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment.

II. SFY 2023 BUDGET

A. Balance on 7/1/22	\$336,606
B. SFY 2023 REVENUE	
Fees for certified copies of health statistics records	\$310,760
Miscellaneous	\$27,722
Fees for non-business licenses, permits, and marriage licenses	\$93,722
Subtotal Revenue	\$432,204

Total Revenue	\$768,810
C. SFY 2023 EXPENDITURES / ENCUMBRANCES	
1. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.	\$83,021
2. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors - Susannah Wesley Community Center	\$138,791
3. Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma Training Statewide	\$31,070
4. Hawaii State Citizens' Review Panel	\$3,863
5. CWS Management Leadership Team	\$8,294
6. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$30,645
7. Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC)	\$30,000
8. Intra-Familia Sex Abuse Treatment Services - Oahu	\$96,412
Total Expenditures/Encumbrances	\$422,096
D. Carry-over to SFY 2024	\$346,714

III. SFY 2024 BUDGET

E. Balance on 7/1/23	\$346,714
F. SFY 2024 PROJECTED REVENUE Projected Revenue all current sources	\$432,204
Total Projected Revenue	\$778,918
G. PLANNED EXPENDITURES for SFY 2024	
1. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.	\$ 233,049
2. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center	\$ 275,599
3. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide	\$30,000
4. Hawaii State Citizen's Review Panel	\$20,000
5. CWS Management Leadership Team	\$30,000
6. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$45,000
7. Domestic Violence Training	\$5,000
8. Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC)	\$30,000
9. Intra-Familial Sex Abuse Treatment Services - Oahu	\$110,270
Total Planned Expenditures	\$778,918

IV. SFY 2023 Outcomes

1. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc. (\$83,021)

Family Wrap Hawaii services are provided to families with children in foster care or who may be placed into foster care. The children may be able to be reunified or remain with their families. However, families need assistance and support to achieve this goal. The families involved in this program are engaged with multiple agencies that help serve their complex issues. Some parents struggle with stable housing, domestic violence, mental health issues, and/or substance use; others have children with behavioral challenges and physical and/or intellectual disabilities. Most of the children in these families are healing from physical and emotional trauma and additionally have learning differences that are difficult to address. Family Wrap Hawaii services bring agencies together to collaborate and overcome systemic barriers. It coordinates services with the providers and the family to develop creative ways to remove the barriers to reunification. CWS partners with the Departments of Education and Health, the Family Court, service providers, and others to "wrap" the family in supportive services, strengthening the family and enabling the children to return to their families safely.

As a result of Family Wrap Hawaii Services in SFY 2023, 20 children in foster care were able to reunify with their families, and 25 children never entered foster care and remained safely in the family home. Families expressed feeling profoundly supported by the Family Wrap Hawaii Services and that the services felt more respectful and empowering than other services they had previously received.

2. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center (\$138,791)

Federal Public Law 113-183, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (2014), requires CWS in all states to provide support services to minor victims of sex trafficking. Unfortunately, no federal funds accompanied the Act. CWS offers counseling, advocacy, and support to trafficked children throughout the State by trained and experienced individuals working with this specialized population.

In SFY 2023, CWS contracted services from Susannah Wesley Community Center that served forty-eight (48) minor trafficking survivors, as well as numerous family members of the victims. Without these supportive services, the trafficked individuals would likely suffer more emotional and physical trauma, as many would remain vulnerable to being trafficked.

3. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide (\$31,070)

In collaboration with the Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma (IVAT), Hawaii hosts an annual conference that features national and local experts presenting on a wide range of CWS-relevant topics, such as teen dating violence, commercial sexual exploitation of minors,

evidence-based practices in child welfare, culturally-informed service-delivery, and the use of psychotropic medication with youth in foster care. CWS support to bring this conference to its staff, resource caregivers, providers, and the community is essential to keep Hawaii's CWS staff and community partners at the forefront of development and research in child welfare practice, especially since Hawaii is geographically isolated and CWS staff, resource caregivers, and community providers cannot easily attend national conferences outside of Hawaii. Increasing staff's knowledge and experiences enables them to better serve Hawaii's children and families.

In SFY 2023, over 1,000 people attended the IVAT conference, including 20 CWS staff.

4. Hawaii State Citizens' Review Panel (\$3,863)

The Department supports the Citizen Review Panel (CRP), which the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires. The purpose of the CRP is to evaluate the extent to which the State is fulfilling its child protection responsibilities by (1) examining the policies, procedures, and practices of the State and (2) reviewing specific cases, where appropriate.

In SFY 2023, the CRP focused on CWS staff wellness and appreciation. To promote the well-being of CWS staff in the workplace, CRP distributed wellness packages for CWS staff statewide.

5. CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) (\$8,294)

The CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) brings together CWS Administrators and Supervisors statewide quarterly. At these meetings, CWS leadership 1) identifies, discusses, and develops plans to enhance services to CWS children and families; 2) shares local strategies to reach desired casework outcomes, reviews statewide and local data, and examines the implications for improving practice; and 3) reviews changes in federal and State law, governing rules, and procedures, and the impact on CWS practice.

In SFY 2023, in MLT meetings, CWS addressed a range of topics, including Family First Hawaii – Hawaii's prevention services under the federal Family First Prevention and Services Act, missing children protocols, data quality, minimizing children coming into foster care unnecessarily, use of the power of attorney in establishing child safety, in-home safety plans, informal placements with relatives, assessing a child's safety, telework policies, strengthening the workforce, and filling vacant positions.

The planned efforts and collaboration with the statewide CWS leadership will improve practice and services and ultimately benefit the children and families CWS serves.

6. Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) Special Fund Assessment (\$30,645)

In SFY 2023, DHS paid \$30,645 to the DAGS for the required Special Fund Assessment.

7. Hawaii Integrated State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC) (\$30,000)

CWS is part of a statewide multidisciplinary group of professionals, mainly from other State agencies, who work with children and their families. This group is working to break down systemic barriers so that collaboration across agencies occurs smoothly. CWS and the other member agencies contribute funds to this collaboration to ensure its continuation and to help families with needed services.

In SFY 2018, HISYNC proposed a resolution that was passed by the Legislature, urging the Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and the Judiciary to permanently establish and participate in the Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC) to better serve youth and families with complex needs in the State. This official recognition promotes the continuation of the HISYNC committee beyond the existing membership, directing efforts of all entities toward better coordination and collaboration.

In SFY 2023, CWS continued to fund facilitation services to support HISYNC jointly. In SFY 2023, HISYNC continued to meet monthly to discuss new and ongoing areas of need and collaboration regarding children's and families' physical and psychological health and safety. These discussions included responding to the Maui Wildfires, sharing updates from agencies on current and future activities, and working with the Data to Wisdom system of care expansion grant. This grant was funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and awarded to Hawaii's Department of Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division. The grant aims to meet the mental and behavioral health needs of children in Hawaii by reviewing current mental/behavioral health services provided to children by different agencies and creating opportunities for collaboration and enhancement of services.

8. Intra-Familial Sex Abuse Treatment Services – Oahu (\$96,412)

Hawaii CWS contracts with local community social service agencies to provide crucial sex abuse treatment services to CWS families in need. On Oahu, in SFY 2023, CWS contracted with Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH). The contract serves minor victims of parental sexual abuse, siblings of the victims, non-perpetrating parents, and parental perpetrators of minor sexual abuse. These services include assessment, skill building, individual therapy, group therapy, and family therapy, as clinically indicated. Offenders are held accountable for their actions. Child victim safety is the overarching goal of the services and interventions.

In SFY 2023, this contracted service on Oahu served 163 individuals, including victims, siblings of victims, and parents (perpetrators and non-perpetrators).

V. SFY 2024 Planned Use of Funds

1. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc. (\$233,049)

Please see the service description in Section IV.1. above.

In SFY 2024, CWS continues these crucial services and plans to serve approximately seventy-five families. Family Wrap Hawaii is engaging in concerted and creative efforts, together with families, to keep children safely in their family homes without entering foster care and to reunify children in foster care with their families of origin.

2. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center (\$275,599)

Please see Section IV.2. above.

CWS plans to serve approximately fifty minor trafficking victims, along with their families, through its contract with Susannah Wesley Community Center in SFY 2024.

3. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide (\$30,000)

Please see Section IV.3. above.

In SFY 2024, funding will be provided again for this vital annual conference, enhancing the knowledge of professionals and community members regarding the impact of violence, the destructive dynamics of abuse, trauma responses, and treatment/service/resource options. Approximately twenty CWS staff statewide will attend.

4. Hawaii State Citizens' Review Panel (\$20,000)

Please see Section IV.4. above.

In SFY 2024, three Panel Members will be traveling to the mainland to attend the national CRP conference in San Diego and then bring back ideas for actions to improve CRP work in Hawaii. Additionally, the panel supports Family First Hawaii Prevention Services Act efforts in creating and distributing public service announcements. In SFY 2024, the CRP is also working on creating wellness areas for CWS staff in each geographic region of the State.

5. CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) (\$30,000)

Please see Section IV.5. above.

The money will be used to pay for travel expenses for neighbor island CWS Section Administrators and Supervisors to join the rest of the team on Oahu for live quarterly leadership meetings.

In SFY 2024, in MLT meetings, CWS continues its focus on Family First Hawaii (FFH). CWS plans to roll out FFH prevention services to additional populations to prevent child abuse and neglect and to prevent children from entering foster care. These prevention services work with the families in their homes, providing direct and tailored support to parents and caregivers.

6. DAGS Special Fund Assessment (\$45,000)

To remain current with its fiscal obligation to the DAGS, DHS plans to pay \$45,000 to the DAGS for the required Special Fund Assessment in SFY 2024.

7. Domestic Violence Training (\$5,000)

Approximately 20% - 30% of the families involved in child welfare are identified as being impacted by domestic violence (DV). In SFY 2024, CWS will collaborate with other State agencies and community providers to build DV awareness through training to ensure the needed response to community domestic violence.

8. Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC) (\$30,000)

Please see the description in Section IV.7. above.

In SFY 2024, efforts are continuing in the areas of focus mentioned above. Additionally, HISYNC is engaged in strategic planning to meet the goals and desired outcomes of HISYNC.

9. Intra-Familial Sex Abuse Treatment Services – Oahu (\$110,270)

Please see the service description in Section IV.8. above.

CWS plans to continue to fund this crucial and well-utilized service in SFY 2024, serving approximately another 200 people on Oahu in need of sex abuse treatment.