JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

DEPT. COMM. NO. 270

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

MARTHA TORNEY

HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ
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January 2, 2026

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

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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

In accordance with Chapter 353L-6, I am submitting the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission's 2025 Annual Report. This report includes a full and complete statement of actions taken by the commission for the preceding year, and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, that the commission deems necessary or desirable. This report may be reviewed electronically at http://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/reports. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at 808-849-3580.

Thank you,

Mark K. Patterson
Chair

Enclosure



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission

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Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission
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TO OUR READERS

This annual report reflects a year of serious reflection, persistent effort, and continued commitment by the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission to carry out its mandate with transparency, independence, and integrity. In 2025, the Commission toured every correctional facility in the state, convened monthly public meetings, issued facility-specific and system-wide reports, and engaged directly with people in custody, correctional staff, service providers, advocates, and policymakers. What we observed was consistent across facilities: a system under strain. Aging infrastructure, chronic staffing shortages, overcrowding, limited access to programming, and gaps in medical, mental health, and reentry services continue to affect daily life inside our institutions.

In response, the Commission issued more than 45 recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, grounded in firsthand observations and in the experiences shared with us. These recommendations focus on improving safety, expanding out-of-cell time and meaningful programming, strengthening grievance access, increasing the use of diversion and furloughs, and supporting successful reentry. While progress has been made in some areas, many longstanding challenges remain and require sustained, coordinated action across the justice system.

One of the most difficult aspects of the Commission’s work is reporting on deaths in custody. In 2025, sixteen individuals died while in the care of the State. Behind each number is a human life and a family left seeking answers. By publicly reporting this information, the Commission continues to affirm that transparency is essential to accountability, prevention, and respect for human dignity.

This year also brought greater attention to the experiences of correctional staff. Through the *Correctional Staff Survey Findings and Recommendations Report*, staff shared candid accounts of unsafe conditions, burnout, and their desire to be supported in building a system that is truly rehabilitative. Their voices are critical, and meaningful reform is not possible without investing in the well-being of those who operate our facilities every day.

Reentry remained a central focus of the Commission’s work. Through our first reentry report, *Hoe Amau: The current state of reentry in Hawaii*, and through visits to community-based programs across Hawai‘i, we saw both the gaps in the current system and the promise that exists when care, culture, and coordination come together. Successful reentry begins well before release and continues long after, and strengthening this continuum is essential for individuals, families, and public safety.

Despite the challenges documented in this report, there is reason for hope. Across the state, we witnessed programs that foster healing, education that opens doors, family connections that restore purpose, and community partnerships that create real pathways forward. We saw individuals in custody striving for growth, staff committed to doing their best under difficult conditions, and partners working toward solutions rooted in compassion and accountability.

Change in complex systems is not quick, but it is possible. With continued transparency, collaboration, and the courage to confront hard truths, Hawai‘i can move closer to a correctional system that reflects its values – one that prioritizes safety, rehabilitation, and the belief that people are more than the worst moments of their lives.

Mahalo for taking the time to read this report and for being part of the ongoing effort to build a more just, humane, and hopeful correctional system for Hawai‘i.

Mark Patterson
Chairman
Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission

INTRODUCTION

The Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) was created by Act 179, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2019, to "ensure transparency, support safe conditions for employees, inmates, and detainees, and provide positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system." The establishment of the Commission was a result of recommendations provided by the Task Force on Prison Reform to the Hawai‘i State Legislature. Part I of Act 179, 2019 (codified in Chapter 353L, Hawai‘i Revised Statute), not only established the HCSOC, but also consolidated two existing commissions into HCSOC: the Reentry Commission and the Corrections Population Management Commission.

Although the Commission was established in 2019, it did not receive initial funding until 2022, when the first Oversight Coordinator was hired and office operations formally began.

The Commission's mandate includes four core functions:

1) Oversee the State's correctional system and have jurisdiction over investigating complaints at correctional facilities and facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model;

2) Establish maximum inmate population limits for each correctional facility and formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each correctional facility;

3) Work with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawai‘i paroling authority's oversight of parolees. The Commission may make recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Hawai‘i paroling authority, and the legislature regarding reentry and parole services; and

4) Ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole when the maximum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services.

Meet the Commission

The Oversight Commission consists of five members who are appointed as follows:

1) One member shall be appointed by the Governor;
2) One member shall be appointed by the President of the Senate;
3) One member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
4) One member shall be appointed by the Chief Justice; and
5) One member shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

- **Office of Hawaiian Affairs Designee – Mark Patterson, Chair**
  2019 to Present
  Appointed by Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chair Colette Machado, Chair Mark Patterson began his corrections career in 1987 as an Adult Corrections Office at the Halawa Correctional Facility. He served as Captain at the Oahu Community Correctional Center and Halawa Correctional Facility and as Warden of the Women's Community Correctional Center before retiring as the Administrator of the Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility. He is recognized for his leadership in advancing Trauma-Informed Care within correctional environments.

- **Chief Justice Designee – Honorable Ronald Ibarra (retired), Commissioner**
  2019 to Present
  Appointed by Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald, Judge Ronald Ibarra began his judicial career in 1989 as a Circuit Court Judge. He served as the Third Circuit's Administrative Judge beginning in 1993 and later became its first Chief Judge before retiring in 2017. In addition to presiding over civil and criminal matters, Judge Ibarra served on numerous judicial and State Bar committees and established two significant courts: the Big Island Drug Court (2002) and the Veterans Treatment Court (2015). He continues to serve on various judiciary, county, and state commissions and remains active with the Bar Association.

- **Speaker of the House Designee – Martha Torney, Commissioner**
  2019 to Present
  Appointed by Speaker of the House Scott Saiki, Commissioner Martha Torney previously served as the Executive Director of the Office of Youth Services and as the Deputy Director of Administration for the Department of Public Safety. Her extensive professional career has been dedicated to the field of juvenile and adult corrections.

- **Senate President Designee – Honorable Michael Town (retired), Commissioner**
  2019 to Present
  Appointed by Senate President Ronald Kouchi, Judge Michael A. Town retired in 2010 after more than 30 years as a trial judge—14 years in Family Court and 16 in Circuit Court, including 3 years as Senior Judge. He presided over a wide range of criminal and civil cases and taught for approximately 20 years as an adjunct law professor at the University of Hawai'i, offering courses such as Criminal Law, Restorative Justice, and Family Law. Judge Town has published articles on topics including unified family courts and the role of the judge as coach, and he has conducted workshops nationally and internationally. A graduate of Stanford University, Hastings College of the Law, and Yale School of Law, he has been active in community service, serving on various boards and committees and receiving awards for his contributions. He was selected as a 2008 Sports Ethics Fellow and served in the U.S. Peace Corps in Colombia. Judge Town also served as a Parole Board Commissioner from 2011 to 2019.

- **Governor's Designee – Honorable R. Mark Browning (retired), Commissioner**
  2024 to Present
  Appointed by Governor Josh Green, Judge R. Mark Browning brings a distinguished legal and judicial career to the Commission. Prior to his appointment, he served as a First Circuit Court Judge beginning on May 6, 2010. His judicial service began in 1997 as a District Family Court Judge, where he notably presided over the juvenile drug court from 2002 to 2010. Judge Browning has also been actively involved in numerous professional and community initiatives, serving on boards and committees such as the Project Visitation Advisory Committee, Friends of Foster Kids Board, and the Judicial Education Committee, among others.

Former Commissioner

- **Theodore (Ted) Sakai – Founding Commissioner**
  2019 to 2023
  Commissioner Sakai brought nearly five decades of corrections and public service experience to the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission, where he was appointed in October 2019. Drawing on his extensive background – including prior leadership as Director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – he played a central role in shaping the Commission's early work. Commissioner Sakai was an active participant in public meetings, conducted comprehensive facility tours with the Oversight Coordinator, and consistently emphasized the need for meaningful improvements to Hawai'i's reentry system.

  His resignation on December 4, 2023, marked the close of a distinguished career defined by commitment to public safety, compassion for incarcerated individuals, and steadfast advocacy for systemic improvement. The Commission expresses its sincere gratitude for his service and his substantial contributions to building a more effective and accountable correctional system in Hawai'i.

Meet the Staff

- **Christin M. Johnson, Oversight Coordinator**
  Appointed by Governor Ige in July 2022, Christin M. Johnson serves as the State's first Oversight Coordinator for the Commission. She brings an extensive background in corrections reform, with previous oversight roles in Michigan and New York City. As a Standards Specialist for the New York City Board of Correction, she focused on improving conditions for individuals in custody and staff at Rikers Island. Christin began her career as an Analyst with the Michigan Legislative Corrections Ombudsman, where she oversaw and investigated complaints within the state prison system.

  Christin is a nationally recognized Certified Practitioner of Oversight and co-chairs the Jail and Prison Oversight Committee at the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). She holds a Master's degree in Criminal Justice with concentrations in Analysis of Criminal Behavior and Corrections and Rehabilitation from the University of Cincinnati, and a Bachelor of Science in Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice from Central Michigan University.

- **George Choe, Special Assistant to the Oversight Coordinator**
  George Choe has extensive clerical and leadership experience, previously serving in the Attorney General's Office as the Assistant to the Special Assistant to the Attorney General and working for many years as a District Manager at Hertz. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Travel Industry Management from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. George has developed a strong interest in law and is currently furthering his education by pursuing an Associate's degree in paralegal studies while serving the Commission.

- **Alec Jamerson, Jail Oversight Specialist**
  Alec Jamerson, who spent much of his childhood in Honolulu, brings a decade of investigative experience to the HCSOC. His background includes investigating policy violations; Title IX and Title VII violations; criminal and civil misconduct; workplace misconduct; sexual misconduct; alcohol consumption and diversion; fraud; nursing violations; use of force; and misuse of information technology systems. This work has deepened his understanding of the need for policy and systemic reform.

  After earning his Bachelor of Arts from the University of New Mexico, he served as an Investigation Analyst in 2014, conducting investigations that protect national security. He became a credentialed Investigator in 2017. Alec's professional journey has led him to ho'opili hou—return home—to Hawai'i, where he is committed to serving the community that remains an essential part of his 'ohana.

- **Christopher Albritton, Prison Oversight Specialist**
  Christopher (Chris) Albritton brings a commitment to positive reform as well as professional experience in research, public policy, and corrections administration. During his studies, Chris interned at the Hawai'i State Legislature and later worked for the Department of Public Safety, managing recruitment and promotion for all uniformed personnel statewide. In 2023, his responsibilities expanded to overseeing and managing the newly sanctioned Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's internal employee disciplinary process as a Departmental Hearings Officer. In this role, he worked through a backlog of cases, identified and resolved systemic and procedural issues, and provided recommendations for disciplinary action on sensitive matters, including incidents of workplace violence and deaths in custody.

  Chris holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Hawai'i Pacific University, where he received formal training in research and policy analysis. Chris intends to further his education by attending law school.

- **Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist**
  Kimmy Takata brings both professional expertise and lived experience to the Oversight Commission. Having navigated the criminal justice system firsthand, she has dedicated her career to supporting justice-involved individuals through advocacy, peer support, and systemic reform. For more than a decade, Kimmy worked with the Pu'a Foundation, providing direct support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women. She is a Certified Peer Support Specialist through the Department of Health and now serves as a trainer, preparing others to support individuals transitioning through reentry.

Her lived experience, combined with her professional background, provides her with unique insight into the challenges and gaps within the system. Kimmy is committed to advancing meaningful, trauma-informed reforms that promote successful reintegration and reduce recidivism in Hawai‘i.

After reentering society, Kimmy pursued higher education, earning an Associate’s degree in Hawaiian Studies, a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science, and her Master’s degree in Criminal Justice.

OVERSIGHT AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Public Meetings

In accordance with §353L-3, the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission shall meet with the Oversight Coordinator not less than once each quarter to make recommendations and set policy, receive reports from the oversight coordinator, and transact other business properly brought before the Commission. The Commission surpasses the legislative requirement and instead meets on the second Thursday of every month at 9am. The monthly meeting is offered as a hybrid meeting where Commissioners and members of the public can participate in person, or via teleconference. The meetings cover various applicable topics including what Commission-specific events or activities occurred in the previous month, what issues the Commission is most concerned over, various recommendations offered from the Commission to the Department, legislative priorities, and the Commission also invites subject-matter experts to present to the Commission and to the public on matters important to corrections.

In the past year, the Commission has hosted 14 meetings including 12 regular monthly public meetings, one legislative priority meeting, and one meeting to vote on touring the Hawai'i State Hospital. All agendas, meeting minutes, and meeting recordings are available on the Commission's website.

Public Reports

In accordance with §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. Additionally, in alignment with transparency being a core value of oversight, the Commission continues to report on facility conditions after touring each facility. All reports are available on the Commission's website.

In the past year, the Commission has posted 18 public reports including 11 monthly reports and seven facility-specific reports. All reports are noted below and in the appendix of this report.

- **2025 Monthly Reports**
  - January 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - February 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - March 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - April 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - May 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - June 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - July 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - August 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - September 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - October 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report
  - November 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report

❖ **2025 Facility-Specific Reports**

- HCCC April 2025 Commissioner Tour Report
- KCCC May 2025 Commissioner Tour Report
- MCCC June 2025 Commissioner Tour Report
- WCCC September 2025 Commissioner Tour Report
- OCCC September 2025 Commissioner Tour Report
- HCF October 2025 Commissioner Tourt Report
- KCF November 2025 Commissioner Tour Report

❖ **2025 House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force Report**

During the 2023 Legislative Session, House Concurrent Resolution No. 23 was passed requesting the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission to convene a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment. The resolution aimed to explore parole models from other states and determine whether minimum sentencing responsibilities should be removed from the Paroling Authority. The task force included representatives from various sectors, including the judiciary, executive branch, legislature, and victims' advocates. Ultimately, the group did not collectively agree on legislation or recommendations for the legislature. The report was released on January 21, 2025, with all the information collected from the meetings.

The report can be found at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports and in the appendix of this report.

❖ **Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report**

On January 22, 2025, the Commission released its report on the correctional staff survey, findings, and recommendations. The Commission deliberately undertook this staffing survey and report as the Commission's first system-wide report due to the concerning conditions that staff are expected to work in. For years, the Commission has heard devastating stories from uniform and civilian correctional staff regarding their working conditions whether it be in-person during facility tours, or through correctional staff contacting the Commission directly. Corrections staff are desperate to be heard and for meaningful change to occur. This report was intentionally prioritized by the Commission to address the critical issues outlined by staff.

The report can be found at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports and in the appendix of this report.

❖ **Hoe Amau – The current state of reentry in Hawai'i**

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to monitor and review the reentry system and comprehensive offender reentry program, the Commission has published its inaugural reentry report, *Hoe Amau: The current state of reentry in Hawai'i*. Hoe amau (pull for the shore) represents the desperate effort to reach a safe and stable place, symbolizing the hope for salvation and opportunity for a new beginning.

Hawai‘i’s correctional and reentry system stands at a pivotal moment, with a clear path forward toward a rehabilitative and therapeutic model. While significant challenges remain—including staffing shortages, gaps in reentry services, and delays in parole releases—this report highlights both the barriers and the opportunities for meaningful reform. Addressing systemic issues such as inadequate reentry planning, limited program availability, and inconsistent implementation of statutory mandates will be critical in improving outcomes for individuals in custody and enhancing community safety.

This report was presented during the March 13, 2025, Commission meeting and can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports and in the appendix of this report.

REPORTING ON DEATHS IN CUSTODY

Total Number of Deaths in 2025 – 16

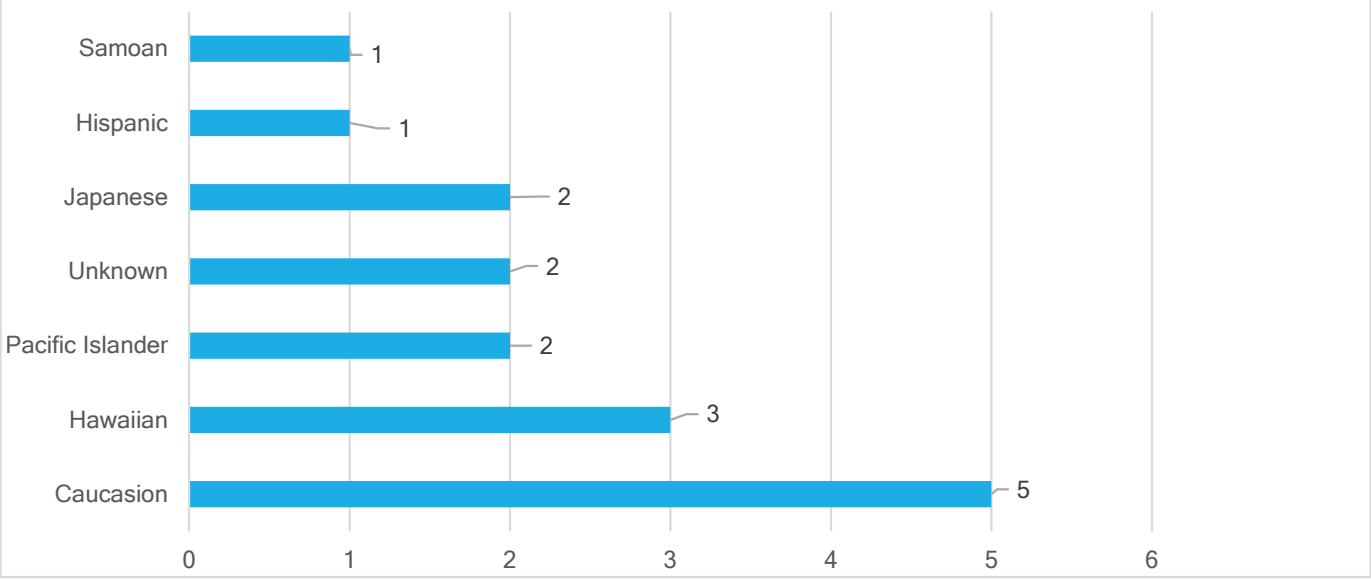
Since October 2022, the Commission has reported within its monthly reports deaths that occur while individuals are in custody. The Commission was the first entity in the state to publicly report on deaths in custody and is the only entity in the state to report on the date, time, location, demographics of the individual, and initial cause of death.

After securing additional staff and expanding the office's capacity, the Oversight Commission has prioritized gathering historic data on deaths in custody. A comprehensive death in custody report is expected in 2026, and will include additional details from autopsy reports that are still being obtained by the Commission, such as manner and cause of death, data from toxicology reports, sentence lengths, highest charges, and much more. This information is expected to guide life-saving initiatives, such as improved suicide prevention assessments and other measures designed to enhance safety and well-being within correctional facilities.

This first statistical review of deaths that occurred in 2025 includes demographic information such as ethnic group, custody classification, custody status, length of stay, facility, and age.

2025 Deaths in Custody by Ethnicity

Tracking ethnicity in deaths in custody is essential for identifying potential disparities and ensuring accountability. By analyzing these patterns, oversight agencies can detect systemic issues, address inequities, and develop targeted interventions to improve safety and fairness within correctional facilities. This data helps promote transparency and informs policies aimed at reducing preventable deaths across all communities.



The above chart illustrates the 16 deaths that occurred this year broken down by ethnicity. Five individuals identified as Caucasian, three identified as Hawaiian, two identified as Pacific Islander, two identified as Japanese, one identified as Hispanic, one identified as Samoan, and two ethnicities were unknown.

2025 Deaths in Custody by Age

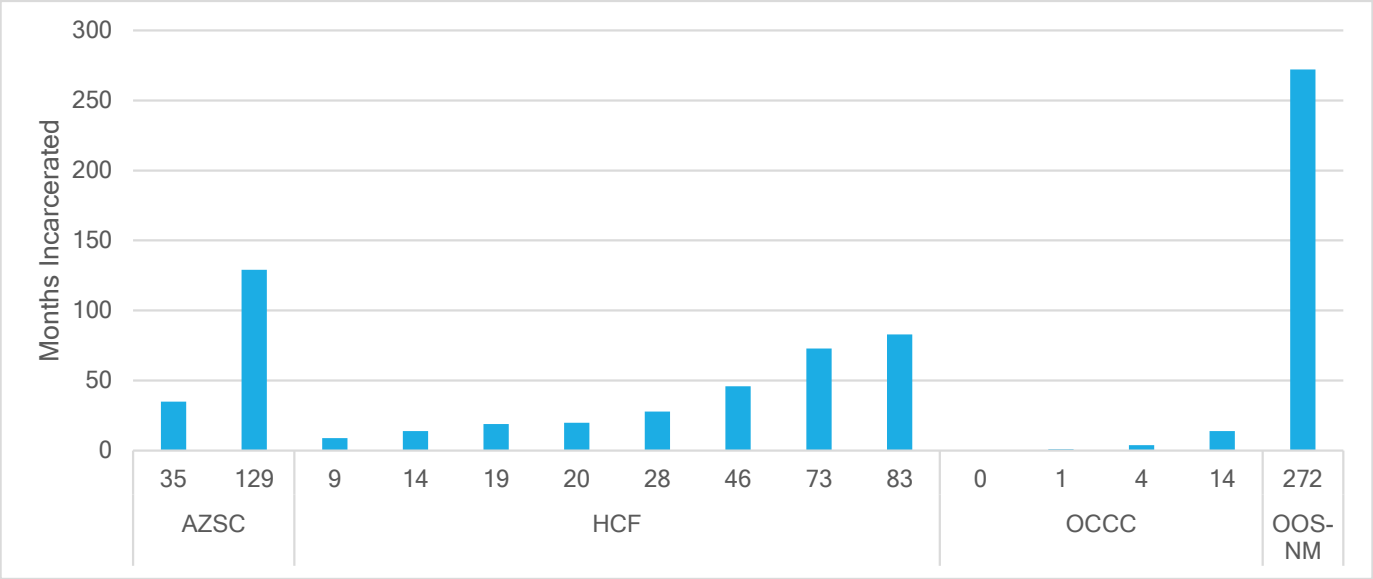
When looking at deaths in custody, tracking age is critical for understanding risk factors and improving prevention strategies. Age data helps identify whether certain age groups are disproportionately affected, which can point to underlying health vulnerabilities, facility conditions, or gaps in medical care. By analyzing these trends, oversight agencies can recommend interventions—such as enhanced healthcare for older populations or mental health support for younger individuals—ultimately reducing preventable deaths and promoting safer correctional environments.

Age	Number of Deaths
24	1
29	1
33	1
34	1
37	1
38	1
45	1
48	2
56	2
62	2
63	1
66	1
74	1
Total	**16**

The above table illustrates the ages of the 16 individuals who died in custody this year. Two individuals were between ages 20-29, four individuals were between ages 30-39, three individuals were between ages 40-49, two individuals were between ages 50-59, four individuals were between ages 60-69, and one individual aged between 70-79.

2025 Deaths in Custody by Facility and Length of Stay in Months

Tracking deaths in custody by facility and length of stay is vital for identifying patterns and addressing systemic issues. Facility-level data helps pinpoint locations with higher mortality rates, which may indicate resource gaps, operational challenges, or policy shortcomings. Similarly, analyzing deaths by length of stay reveals whether individuals are at greater risk during intake, short-term confinement, or extended incarceration. These insights allow oversight agencies to implement targeted interventions—such as improving intake screening, enhancing medical care, or reviewing facility practices—to reduce preventable deaths and promote safer environments across the correctional system.



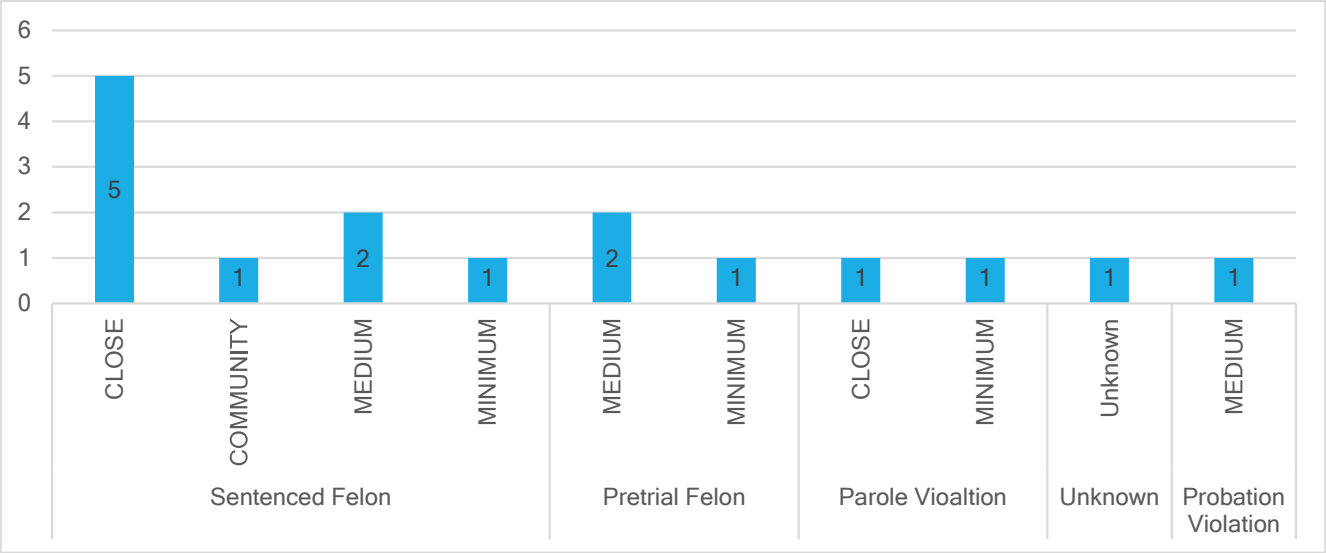
The above chart illustrates that the 16 deaths that occurred this year were at 4 facilities:

1) Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona (AZSC), Prison
   2 deaths
2) Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), Prison
   8 deaths
3) Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), Jail
   4 deaths
4) Out of state compact with Northeast New Mexico Correctional Facility in Clayton, NM (OOS-NM), Prison
   1 death

The chart also shows that one of the decedent was in OCCC's custody for less than a month before perishing, marking the shortest length of stay. The circumstances leading to the cause of death are still being investigated. The longest length of stay was 272 months (more than 5 years).

2025 Deaths in Custody by Classification and Custody Status

Tracking deaths in custody by classification and custody status is essential for understanding risk factors and improving oversight. Classification data (such as close, maximum, medium, minimum, and community) helps identify whether security level or housing conditions contribute to mortality trends. Similarly, custody status information–such as sentenced felon, pretrial felon, parole violation, or probation violation–reveals whether individuals awaiting trial or serving sentences face different risks. These insights allow oversight bodies to target interventions, adjust policies, and make recommendations for allocating resources effectively to reduce preventable deaths and promote fairness across all custody categories.



The above chart illustrates the 16 deaths that occurred this year by **classification** (close, maximum, medium, minimum, and community) and **custody status** (e.g. sentenced felon, pretrial felon, parole violation, and probation violation).

Description of Individual Deaths

In 2023, there were 17 deaths in custody. In 2024, there were 12 deaths in custody. In 2025, there were 16 deaths in custody, and the details of the deaths that occurred in 2025 are below:

1) On February 5, 2025, around 1:00am at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), a corrections officer responded to commotion coming from a cell, immediately gave direct orders for two cellmates to get away from each other, and then immediately called for backup. Backup arrived, the cellmates were removed, and staff began administering CPR on a 33-year-old male. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived at the facility and assumed CPR and life-saving measures. Around 1:50am, the individual in custody was pronounced deceased. This death appears to be a homicide.

2) On April 12, 2025, at approximately 1:03am, a 24-year-old Hawaiian male in custody was found unresponsive at Halawa Correctional Facility. 911 Emergency Services was called and ACOs immediately administered CPR. At approximately 2:01am, EMS arrived and continued to administer CPR until approximately 2:28am when the individual was unfortunately pronounced deceased. The incident appears to be a suicide, which is the first apparent suicide this year. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

3) On May 17, 2025, at approximately 6:50am, a 29-year-old Micronesian male in custody was found unresponsive at the Halawa Correctional Facility. The responding ACO immediately administered CPR while 911 Emergency Services was called. At approximately 7:17am, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived at the facility. Unfortunately, at 7:54am, the individual was pronounced deceased. The incident

appears to be a suicide. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

4) On May 29, 2025, at approximately 10:12am, DCR was notified that a 37-year-old Hawaiian male in custody was pronounced deceased while hospitalized at Pali Momi Hospital in the ICU. The deceased was in the custody of the Halawa Correctional Facility and was hospitalized after staff found him in his cell on May 27, 2025, under the influence of an unknown substance. CPR was conducted until EMS arrived and transported the individual to the hospital. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

5) On August 9, 2025, at approximately 8:46am, a 63-year-old Asian male in custody was found unresponsive at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). At approximately 8:55am, on-site medical staff responded and administered CPR. At approximately 9:11am, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived and continued CPR. The patient appeared to regain a pulse and was transported to Queens medical hospital. On August 11, 2025, at approximately 4:20pm, medical staff at the hospital pronounced the patient deceased with the family present. The incident appears to be a suicide. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which can include toxicology testing.

6) On September 2, 2025, at approximately 8:24pm mountain standard time (MST), a 49-year-old male in custody was found injured on a cell floor at the Northeast New Mexico Correctional Facility in Clayton, NM (interstate compact facility). At approximately 8:29pm MST, medical staff entered the pod with a gurney and removed the individual. Medical staff performed chest compressions until emergency medical services (EMS) arrived and assumed life saving measures. The male was transported by ambulance to Union County General Hospital where he was pronounced deceased at 9:13pm MST. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy.

7) On September 25, 2025, at approximately 5:00pm, security staff were alerted that a 62-year-old male in custody needed assistance at Halawa Correctional Facility. Security staff called for medical backup, who arrived at approximately 5:10pm before EMS arrived and assumed life saving measures. The decedent was transported to Pali Momi Medical Center's emergency room where he was pronounced deceased at approximately 6:18pm. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy.

8) On Thursday November 6, 2025, at approximately 9:12am, a male in custody 62 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona. 911 was called, CPR was immediately conducted, and around 9:34am, Eloy EMS took over life saving measures. Unfortunately, at 9:50am, the individual was pronounced deceased. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

9) On Thursday, November 6, 2025, at approximately 2:33pm, a Hawaiian male, 38 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at Halawa Correctional Facility. Staff immediately responded, conducted CPR, and alerted 911 emergency services. EMS arrived around 2:56pm and continued life saving measures. Unfortunately, at 3:51pm, this individual was pronounced deceased. This death appears to be a suicide. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

10) On Sunday, November 16, 2025, at approximately 2:20pm, a male in custody, 56 years old, at Halawa Correctional Facility was found by medical staff in the infirmary unresponsive and not breathing when conducting a routine check for vital signs. Medical staff immediately checked for a pulse, but no pulse was detected. The decedent was pronounced deceased by medical staff at 3:30pm. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

11) On Wednesday November 19, 2025, at approximately 3:53pm, a male in custody, 66 years old, at Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona was pronounced deceased at a hospital in Tucson, AZ. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations (DCR) records indicate that the decedent was hospitalized on October 11, 2025, for abdominal pain. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

12) On Saturday, November 29, 2025, at approximately 4:50am, a male in custody, 56 years old, at Halawa Correctional Facility was found by medical staff in the infirmary with no pulse. Medical staff immediately attached an AED, started CPR, and alerted 911 emergency services. EMS arrived around 4:59am and continued life saving measures. At approximately 5:35am, EMS transported the patient to the hospital. At approximately 5:48am, DCR security were informed that the patient was pronounced deceased by medical staff. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

13) On Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at approximately 9:20am, a male in custody, 45 years old, was found unresponsive on suicide watch at Oahu Community Correctional Center. Medical staff were immediately informed and directed staff to call 911. DCR records indicate that HFD arrived at 9:38am, and EMS arrived at 9:45am. DCR records indicate that the decedent was transported to the hospital at 9:57am and was pronounced dead at 10:39am in emergency room at the hospital. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death and time of death.

14) On Friday, December 5, 2025, at approximately 11:46am, a male in custody, 48 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at Halawa Correctional Facility. Security staff immediately began CPR until medical staff arrived and continued CPR. At approximately 12:17pm, EMS arrived on the scene and transported the decedent to the hospital emergency room at approximately 12:26pm. The cause of death appears to be a suicide. An autopsy will determine the official cause and time of death.

15) On Friday, December 19, 2025, at approximately 6:20pm., a white male in custody, 34 years old, at Halawa Correctional Facility was found unresponsive in his cell. Security personnel immediately responded, conducted CPR, and alerted 911 emergency

services. EMS arrived on scene at approximately 7:15pm. At approximately 7:46pm. the individual was pronounced deceased. The death appears to be a suicide. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

16) On Thursday, December 25, 2025, at approximately 1:51pm., a male in custody, 74 years old, was pronounced dead, after being booked into the DCR custody on December 22, 2025. The circumstances leading up to the decedent's death are unclear and still being investigated. An autopsy will determine the official cause and time of death.

PRESS RELEASES AND LETTERS

The Commission sent two letters to stakeholders pertaining to specific issues the Commission would like to see addressed. The full letters are linked below and posted in the appendix of this report.

2025 Correspondences

- Letter to Governor: Urgent Call for a System Wide Plan Before Proceeding with New Jail Construction
  On January 3, 2025, the Commission sent a letter to Governor Green and the Hawai'i State Legislature, expressing conditional support for constructing a new jail to replace the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). The letter raises concerns that the DCR is focusing too narrowly on building the facility without addressing broader, systemic issues in Hawai'i's correctional system, including inadequate rehabilitative programming, mental and physical healthcare, and reentry services. The letter highlights the need for evidence-based, culturally competent programs, trauma-informed design, and robust community-based alternatives to incarceration.

- Letter to Governor: Director of DCR Engagement and Participation with the Commission
  On January 14, 2025, the Commission sent a letter to Governor Green requesting assistance in ensuring that Director Tommy Johnson of the DCR attends future Commission meetings, as his presence is essential for fostering collaboration and progress on reforms to Hawai'i's correctional system. The Commission highlights that past DCR administrations consistently attended meetings and stresses the importance of open communication, accurate information, and mutual engagement. It also raises concerns over recent comments by Director Johnson that questioned the Commission's expertise, calling for an end to divisive rhetoric and a focus on building trust and collaboration. The Commission seeks the Governor's support in encouraging the Director to actively engage and work collectively toward meaningful corrections reform.

In the Media

In the last year, the Commission has been cited in at least nine media articles. All media coverage can be found on the Commission's website.

Media Highlight - *Civil Beat Editorial Interview*

On November 4, 2025, Chair Patterson and Oversight Coordinator Johnson participated in the "Sunshine Interview" series hosted by Honolulu Civil Beat. The two discussed funding challenges, staffing shortages, safety issues, investigations and rehabilitation at the state's prisons and jails.



The Commission appreciated the opportunity for the interview. Many key points were discussed, including the Commission's capacity. While the office became fully operational in mid-2022, it has made significant strides in building capacity, securing stable funding, and expanding staffing. Notably, the Commission has added a jail oversight specialist and plans to hire a prison oversight specialist to enhance investigative and oversight capabilities.

During the interview, Commission leaders highlighted systemic challenges within the corrections system, including bottlenecks in inmate movement through custody levels, overcrowding in front-end facilities, and underutilization of minimum-security beds. These issues underscore the need for more effective programming, timely transfers, and improved reentry support to facilitate rehabilitation and reduce system strain.

The discussion also emphasized the Commission's ongoing focus on reforming the correctional system to prioritize rehabilitation, therapeutic programming, and compliance with statutory mandates. The Commission's oversight work continues to identify areas where innovation and improved management are needed to ensure that individuals in custody receive appropriate services and that facilities meet state standards.

The Commission remains committed to transparency and public accountability and appreciated the opportunity to share its work through this interview. The Commission is dedicated to monitoring Hawai'i's correctional system, advocating for necessary reforms, and keeping the public informed about progress and challenges within the system.

The article was posted on November 9, 2025 and can be read here or at civilbeat.org.

TOURS AND IMPRESSIONS

General Facility Tours

An important part of the Commission's work is consistently touring all correctional facilities to monitor conditions of confinement, and to receive complaints. Tours completed by Commission staff allow staff to write thorough reports and recommendations based on what they see, hear, and experience during the tour. The Commission would like to thank all corrections staff who are an integral part of understanding the innerworkings of the correctional system.

Special Tours

Below are notable tours of either community-based programming or correctional facilities that had a special purpose:

- **He Ala Hou O Ke Ola Inc.**
  On March 27, 2025, Commission staff attended a site visit with David Makilan, founder of He Ala Hou O Ke Ola (HAHOKO). The program supports men transitioning from OCCC by providing stable housing, meals, and a path to recovery and personal development. HAHOKO currently operates five clean and sober homes and offers a structured program at the main facility, where participants can earn their clinical certification upon completion. One of the ongoing challenges HAHOKO faces is securing sustainable funding to continue and expand their efforts. The visit highlighted the importance of community-based reentry programs that provide both practical support and opportunities for personal growth. The Commission thanks David Makilan for his time in highlighting this important program.

- **Hawai'i State Hospital**
  On April 15, 2025, Chair Patterson and Commission staff toured the Hawai'i State Hospital (HSH) to better understand the overlap between the population incarcerated in the jails and the population held at the hospital.



It was an insightful visit which included a thorough presentation of the population and a tour of the newly constructed hospital. The Commission plans to tour the Hawai'i State Hospital collectively in August 2025 after the Commission meeting. The Commission thanks Mark Linscott, Administrator, Terrance Cheung, Chief Strategy Officer, and all HSH staff for their warm welcome and expertise.

- **HAHOKO Impact Center**

  On April 17, 2025, DCR joined Commission staff for a visit to the He Ala Hou O Ke Ola (HAHOKO) program, a nonprofit organization operating as a community reintegration program. HAHOKO provides Clean and Sober Housing, a Therapeutic Living Program, and supportive services for individuals who are justice-involved, homeless, or struggling with addiction and mental health challenges. This visit marked the beginning of a positive connection between DCR and HAHOKO, and the Commission appreciated DCR's collaboration in visiting the program together.

- **Hope Center Ministries Kailua**

  On May 20, 2025, Commission staff visited Hope Center Ministries in Kailua, a deeply spiritual and uplifting faith-based residential recovery program. The center offers a structured 12-month model that includes 24/7 peer-led support, vocational training, and court liaison services. It provides a supportive pathway for men transitioning from incarceration or homelessness and is soon expanding to welcome women. This visit highlighted the program's powerful role in helping individuals begin their healing journey and rebuild their lives with purpose and faith.

- **Hawai'i State Hospital Resource Fair & Blessing of Kahua Ola**

  On May 30, 2025, Commission staff attended the Hawai'i State Hospital Resource Fair, which began with a cultural blessing at Kahua Ola – a transitional housing space on campus where residents live independently as they prepare to return to the community. The blessing included traditional Hawaiian practices using pa'akai and wai, setting the tone for the day. The fair featured community vendors like the Institute for Human Services (HIS) and Project Vision, music by patients, and activities such as sand art and plant medicine education. The event highlighted the healing environment at the Hawai'i State Hospital and helped reduce stigma around mental health by showcasing patient talent, recovery, and community integration.



This is a photo of the sand art that everyone at the event participated in creating. It was a meaning opportunity for everyone – patients, volunteers, guests, and providers – to come together and work on a single project. The sand art was designed and run by the art teacher at the Hawai'i State Hospital.

- **OCCC Tour with DC Information Council**

  On, June 10, 2025, HCSOC hosted District of Columbia Corrections Information Council's Senior Program Analyst, Patricia Marks. The DC Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent monitoring body mandated by the US Congress and the DC Council to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement at facilities where DC residents are incarcerated including facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP), the DC Department of Corrections (DOC), and private contractors.

  Patricia Marks toured Oahu Community Correctional Center with HCSOC staff which allowed the Commission and DCR staff to hear her insights and experience. The visit was informative and supportive of better understanding the operation and the administration of correctional systems in other jurisdictions.

- **Dynamic Healing Center**

  On July 15, 2025, Commission staff visited the Dynamic Healing Center, met with the director Dr. Annie Anderson, and toured the facility. This program provides culturally grounded, trauma-informed care designed for both men and women in their journeys. In addition to its impactful programming, the center operates two well maintained clean and sober houses in Kalihi and Ewa Beach, offering safe, supportive housing that help bridge the gap between treatment and independent living. The visit allowed staff to observe effective reentry practices, strengthen community partnerships, and better understand how culturally rooted care supports successful reentry.

- **Hawai'i State Hospital**

  On August 14, 2025, directly following the monthly Commission meeting, Chair Patterson, Commissioner Browning, Commissioner Torney, the Oversight Coordinator and staff attended a tour of the Hawai'i State Hospital (HSH) hosted by Hawai'i State Hospital Administrator, Mark Linscott. Dr. Michael Champion, Senior Advisor for Mental Health and the Justice System, also accompanied the Commission on the tour. The tour was extremely helpful in understanding how mental health intersects with the justice system, and the care offered by the state hospital. The Commission would like to thank Mark Linscott, HSH Administrator for his invitation and hospitality, and Dr. Meghan Brearty for presenting during the August Commission meeting.

- **Waikiki Health Center**

  On September 4, 2025, Commission staff visited the Waikiki Health Center where Director of Native Hawaiian Healing/Pu'uhonua Prison program, Francine Dudoit-Tagupa, shared the history and mission of the center. As the first health clinic in Waikiki and a federally Qualified Health Center, Waikiki Health provides medical, dental, behavioral health, and shelter services across eight sites on O'ahu. Unique among health centers, it is the only one focused on reentry, offering prison classes, pre-release support for SNAP and Med-Quest, and traditional Hawaiian healing practices like Ho'oponopono and Lomi to foster whole person and family care. Waikiki Health plays a critical role in Hawai'i's reentry system, with its work aligning closely to the upcoming 1115 waiver set to begin in January 2026.

- **Hale Kipa**

  On September 30, 2025, Commission staff visited Hale Kipa in ʻEwa Beach and met with Executive Director Venus Rosete-Medeiros, who shared the facility's innovative and community-focused programs. Highlights included an aeroponics project where one container equals 3–5 acres of food production, with the first harvest donated to kūpuna, as well as shelters and services for youth up to age 25. Hale Kū Ola provides housing for mothers with children, and the Executive Director hopes to extend this resource to women leaving prison, especially those under 26 who may also access program funding and Housing First vouchers. Hale Kipa also offers the 10-week Kamalama parenting program, currently taught inside WCCC. Despite funding challenges and staff shortages, Hale Kipa remains a vital resource for transition-age youth and holds strong potential to support reentry for justice-involved women.

- **WCCC Transforming Animal and Incarcerated Individuals' Lives (TAIL) Pilot program**

  On October 6, 2025, Commission staff visited the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) Hoʻokipa Cottage to observe the Transforming Animal and Incarcerated Individuals' Lives (TAIL) pilot project. The visit highlighted how animal-assisted programs can promote healing, responsibility, and emotional well-being for incarcerated women. Two participants shared that caring for the kittens has helped them build new relationships and connect with people they had never spoken to before. Staff and residents expressed that the program has been heartwarming, bringing a sense of calm, unity, and purpose to the cottage. The Department received $50,000 in funding for WCCC to support cat care and food, helping sustain this positive initiative. The women appear to genuinely enjoy the program, which reflects how compassion-based approaches can strengthen rehabilitation and community within correctional settings.

- **Tour of OCCC with the ACLU Hawaiʻi**

  On November 18, 2025, the ACLU of Hawaiʻi joined the Commission's Oversight Coordinator to tour the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC).



Photo from the ACLU Hawaiʻi standing in front of OCCC

The ACLU was able to see the deteriorating conditions of OCCC firsthand and speak to people in custody and staff about their experiences within the facility. The Oversight Coordinator would like to thank OCCC's Warden and the ACLU for touring OCCC and continuing to foster a collaborative relationship with the Commission in finding better solutions for staff and those in custody.

EVENTS ATTENDED

It is essential for Commissioners and staff to attend events and engage with community groups because these interactions foster transparency, build public trust, and provide first-hand insight into the concerns and experiences of Hawai'i residents. By participating in community forums, workshops, and stakeholder meetings, Commissioners and staff gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by individuals impacted by the correctional system, as well as the perspectives of advocates, service providers, and local leaders. These connections help guide informed decision-making, promote accountability, and strengthen the Commission's ability to recommend meaningful reforms that reflect the needs of the communities it serves. Below are various events the Commission has attended:

- **16th Annual Parole Completion Celebration**

  On March 27, 2025, Commissioners and staff attended the 16th Annual Parole Completion Celebration. The Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, Kimmy Takata, was honored and recognized at this event for her achievements and the positive impact she has made throughout the State of Hawai'i. It was a meaningful moment to celebrate her hard work, dedication, and personal growth. Commissioner Torney and Commissioner Town joined the event alongside friends and supporters from the Governor's Office, making the celebration even more special. Congratulations, Kimmy!



From left to right: Naomi Leipold, Project Manager, Office of Wellness and Resilience, Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist, HCSOC, and Martha Torney, Commissioner of HCSOC.

- **WCF Keiki Day**

  On April 6, 2025, Commission staff attended the Easter Keiki Day event hosted by the Waiawa Correctional Facility in collaboration with Keiki O Ka 'Āina (KOKA) Family Learning Centers. Sixteen fathers, 23 children, six adult children, and thirteen caregivers attended the event in addition to nearly a dozen volunteers. During the three-hour event, fathers and their children played activities and games. Families also decorated egg-and-bunny-shaped sugar cookies, participated in an Easter egg hunt, and took photos with the Easter Bunny.



The Commission congratulates the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on its commitment to hosting 10 successful Keiki Days at the Waiawa Correctional Facility, the Women's Community Correctional Center, the Halawa Correctional Facility, and an upcoming event for the Kulani Correctional Facility.

- **Dismas Charities Honolulu Community Relations Board Meeting**
  On April 24, 2025, Commission staff attended the Quarterly Community Relations Board meeting hosted by Dismas Charities in Honolulu. The event brought together federal agencies, community organizations, and reentry partners to share updates, resources, and collaboration opportunities. Key topics included federal reentry efforts, plans for a new reentry facility (on the federal side), and success stories from individuals on probation. The meeting provided valuable insight into the more structured federal reentry system and highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen community support for returning citizens.

- **Halawa Correctional Facility Graduation Ceremony**
  On May 8, 2025, Commission staff attended a graduation ceremony at Halawa Correctional Facility, where nine incarcerated men received their Associate of Arts degrees in Business from Chaminade University. The event, filled with emotion and support from families, DCR, and Chaminade staff, highlighted the power of education. A special moment was held for a graduate in Protective Custody, who had to be separated from other graduates and people in custody, to ensure he was also celebrated. The day was a reminder that education can spark hope and transformation within a prison setting.

- **Hale Nani Resource Fair**
  On May 15, 2025, Commission staff attended a reintegration resource fair at Hale Nani Correctional Facility, where 26 justice-involved individuals prepared for reentry by connecting with community organizations offering services such as job training, DMV support, and housing resources. This was the first event of its kind held at Hale Nani. The event was well received, with participants expressing appreciation for the

opportunity to learn about vocational training, financial literacy, and dental support. The fair created a positive environment for collaboration and highlighted the importance of continued efforts to bring meaningful, participant-centered reentry support to Hale Nani. DCR is also planning a resource fair to be held at HCCC (main) soon.

- **Presentation to the Annual Office of the Public Defender Training Seminar**
  On May 23, 2025, the Commission's Chair and Oversight Coordinator presented to a large group of public defenders during the Annual Office of the Public Defender Training Seminar. The presentation covered an overview of oversight, a brief history of the Commission and the work the Commission prioritizes today, and the current state of the system to highlight the importance of the Office of the Public Defender and its work. Afterwards, the Chair and Oversight Coordinator took questions and shared insights from touring the correctional facilities. The Commission thanks the First Deputy Public Defender, Hayley Y.C. Cheng, for the warm invitation and opportunity to present.

- **Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium: Expanding Education-to-Employment Opportunities for Justice-Impacted Individuals**
  On June 25, 2025, the Commission participated in the *Pathways to Meaningful Employment* event held at Chaminade University, which also offers college classes inside the Halawa Correctional Facility. Funded by a Mellon Grant, the event focused on expanding access to education and employment for justice-impacted individuals. The event emphasized the importance of breaking stigma, supporting second chances, and building inclusive systems—key goals aligned with HCSOC's ongoing reentry work across Hawai'i.

- **Basic Corrections Recruit Class Graduation Ceremony**
  On July 14, 2025, Commissioner Torney and the Oversight Coordinator attended the graduation ceremony for eight Adult Corrections Officers (ACO) graduating from Basic Corrections Recruit Class at the Island of Hawai'i YMCA in Hilo. The class completed eight weeks of rigorous training. The Commission shares a warm congratulations to all graduates!

  Since the department's redesignation from the Department of Public Safety (PSD) to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) on January 1, 2024, the Department increased its annual recruit classes to six from three, to address the staffing shortage of corrections officers at facilities in Hawai'i. By the end of this year, the Department aims to have eight classes.

- **Halawa Resource Fair**
  On July 17, 2025, Commission staff attended the Halawa Correctional Facility resource fair, which hosted about 70 vendors, including Waikiki Health, IHS, HPA, and housing providers, to share resources to help support the men before they transition out. The event was successful, fostering connections between service providers and participants, and strengthening community collaboration to support reentry and improve access to essential services.

- **Dismas Charities Community Board Meeting**
  Dismas Charities hosts regular Community Relations Board meetings at various locations to foster collaboration and communication between the organization and community partners. On July 30, 2025, Commission staff attended the Dismas Community Board meeting, which was filled with valuable resources and opportunities to network with other organizations. Dismas Charities play a critical role in supporting federal individuals transitioning back into the community, and this meeting focused on the importance of self-care for both providers and participants. The session fostered collaboration among agencies, shared practical strategies for wellness, and reinforced the vital link between self-care and effective reentry support.

- **Women's Community Correctional Center Hoʻike**
  On August 14, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the WCCC Hoʻike (exhibition, display, or performance) in the Maunawili courtyard. The women of WCCC showcased their talents through hula, faiva hiva (Tongan song and dance), and Samoan dance. The Total Life Recovery program also performed a powerful sign dance. The event, "E ola ka inoa: In the name of our ancestors, we rise", highlighted cultural pride, identity, and transformation, reflecting the hard work of the people in custody and staff who made this possible. The event was a showcase of programs, culture and achievements by the women of WCCC.

- **Sequential Intercept Model**
  On August 22, 2025, Commission staff attended the DCR's Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) meeting in Hilo, Hawaiʻi. The meeting was designed to build on a working model largely developed by Going Home Hawaiʻi, and focused on intercepts 2 – 4. Community partners and stakeholders including but not limited to United Healthcare, the Hawaiʻi County Prosecutor's Office, Hawaiʻi Paroling Authority, Ohana Health Plan, Hope Services Hawaiʻi, and Hawaiʻi Community Correctional Center (HCCC) Warden and staff formed working groups to identify services and resources that can be collaboratively leveraged to serve people with mental health and substance abuse issues on the Island of Hawaiʻi.

  The Commission is encouraged to learn that the DCR has drafted a timeline for synthesizing the input from the meeting's attendees with the intent of implementing a SIM that serves the unique needs of the Island of Hawaiʻi. DCR intends to hold additional events to gather more information from new and previous attendees to make the model as complete and ready for success as possible. DCR is hopeful that the model can be expanded and customized to meet the unique needs of neighboring islands.

  The public can learn more about the SIM by visiting Going Home Hawaiʻi's website at www.goinghomehawaii.org.

- **Waiawa Correctional Facility Resource Fair**
  On August 28, 2025, Commission staff attended the Waiawa Correctional Facility Resource Fair, which brought together more than 23 vendors providing services related to housing, employment, child support, and reentry. Organizations such as the Institute for Human Services (HIS), Behavioral Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD), Department of Health (DOH), and many others offered a wide range of support and information. Over 150 men in custody participated in the fair, many of whom shared that receiving these resources gave them a greater sense of ease and hope as they prepare for their transition out of Waiawa.

- **WCCC Ohana Family Day**
  On September 13, 2025, Commission staff attended the first-ever ‘Ohana Family Day at WCCC, held at Olomana Field. The event brought together 16 women in custody, and their loved ones who came to enjoy the moment, creating a rare and meaningful opportunity for families to reunite in a supportive environment. Families enjoyed booths, food, a bounce house, and a petting zoo, supported by 14 work line participants and community partners including Chaplain Tammy, Education, Chaminade University, and the Women’s Prison Project. Leadership support was visible with Warden Guillonta welcoming families and Director Tommy Johnson attending. The day created joy, belonging, and meaningful family connections while strengthening case manager relationships and underscoring the vital role of ‘ohana in reentry success. The Commission would like to thank the Women’s Prison Project for their generous donations to ensure the events success and thank Department leadership and Warden Guillonta for prioritizing family connections.

- **WCCC Mental Health Day**
  On November 10, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC) Mental Health Day at Olomana Cottage, an uplifting event dedicated to honoring the women participating in mental health programming. The mental health wāhine shared powerful expressions of healing through skits, songs, poetry, and artwork—each performance reflecting their resilience, growth, and courage. Department leadership, including Tommy Johnson, Sanna Muñoz, and facility staff, were present to support and celebrate the women. After a shared lunch, participants joined in exercise relays and races, reinforcing wellness of both mind and body. Overall, the event highlighted the remarkable talent and progress of the mental health women and underscored the importance of programs that foster confidence, connection, and community at WCCC.

- **H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Every day) Program**
  On Wednesday December 10, 2025, Commission staff visited the H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Everyday) program to observe operations and engage with staff and participants. The visit highlighted the program’s strong emphasis on family connection and peer support as key components in supporting accountability, healing, and successful reentry for justice-involved individuals, and contributing to HCSOC’s understanding of effective reentry support.

- **Misdemeanor Post-Booking Jail Diversion Program**

  On Wednesday, December 10, 2025, HCSOC staff attended a meeting focused on reviewing enhanced diversion efforts for misdemeanants diagnosed with a mental health disorder. The discussion centered on the Misdemeanor Post-Booking Jail Diversion Program, a pilot initiative jointly implemented in February 2023 by District Court Judge Hon. Melanie May, Prosecuting Attorney Steve Alm, Public Defender Jerry Villanueva, and Adult Mental Health Administrator Amy Curtis, Ph.D.

  The meeting brought together several interagency representatives who play a critical role in the diversion process, including staff from DCR's Intake Service Center and the Department of Health. A highlight of the session was the participation of Hon. Steve Leifman, who successfully implemented the diversion model that inspired the current pilot program. Judge Leifman (Ret.) provided valuable insights and posed challenging questions to help the group identify strategies for strengthening and sustaining the program for long-term success.

  This collaborative effort underscores the commitment of all stakeholders to improving outcomes for individuals with mental health needs and reducing unnecessary incarceration, paving the way for a more humane and effective justice system.

- **Jail Diversion Observation**

  On Thursday, December 11, 2025, HCSOC staff observed several hearings at District Court presided over by the Honorable Deputy Chief Judge Melanie May. During these proceedings, individuals facing misdemeanor charges were considered for diversion opportunities. The court's jail diversion staff provided Judge May with real-time updates on participants actively enrolled in the program, including one individual whose charges were dismissed following successful completion of diversion requirements.

  One of the most notable aspects of the process was the positive, respectful, and encouraging demeanor displayed by Judge May, court staff, and the public defender toward the accused. This approach reflects a core principle of rehabilitation – treating individuals with dignity and fostering an environment conducive to behavioral change. After the hearings concluded, invited attendees, including DCR staff, engaged in a meaningful discussion with Judge May and her diversion team on strategies to further improve and expand the program.

- **KCCC Keiki Day**

  On December 13, 2025, HCOSC staff joined a holiday-themed Family Day event at Kauaʻi Community Correctional Center (KCCC). The celebration featured festive music, lunch, games, and a gingerbread house crafting activity. In total, 33 family members came together to share meaningful moments with 13 individuals in custody. Additionally, age-appropriate gifts were provided for the keiki in attendance, which was clearly appreciated by the families. The Commission remains committed to supporting initiatives that nurture family relationships and encourage positive growth for individuals in custody, paving the way for brighter futures.

FACILITY-SPECIFIC ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the Commission's mandate to oversee the State's correctional system, the Commission collectively toured every Hawai'i prison and jail throughout 2025. Below are brief descriptions of the seven (7) facility-specific reports that encompass observations and recommendations made by Commissioners after touring the applicable facility. In addition, the full reports are in the appendix of this report.

In 2025, the Commission submitted over 45 recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for their consideration.

HCCC Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on May 8, 2025

On Thursday, April 10, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commissioners and Oversight Coordinator toured Hawai'i Community Correctional Center (HCCC). After the tour, the Commission compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered the recommendations below to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Expand Furlough Utilization at HCCC**
   Currently, 12 men are in the HCCC furlough program despite the capacity to accommodate up to 50 participants. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. While the Commission acknowledges that custody status is not the only factor in furlough determinations, it is a significant one. Notably, 15 individuals at Kulani Correctional Facility have community status, which is required for furlough. It is important to note that this has improved from last year's count (34), however the Commission recognizes that it is important to examine why more people in custody in community status are not in furlough at HCCC or other sites.

2. **Optimize New Housing Unit Utilization**
   The new housing unit, Kaumana, should be assessed and utilized to balance current housing priorities and serve the needs of different populations. This includes decreasing overcrowding, especially in Punahele, better serving vulnerable populations, including the mental health population, creating a proper space for women, and allowing for necessary facility maintenance. With the completion of the new housing unit, it's crucial to consider how it can support the largest issues within the facility.

   During the Commission's talk stories with HCCC staff, many recommended moving the mental health population to the new unit, transforming it into a dedicated mental health housing unit. The new unit includes suicide-resistant features, group space, and

recreational areas suitable for this population. This move would help decrease overcrowding in Punahele, create more space for women in the main facility, and relocate others from inadequate spaces, significantly improving living conditions.

It should be noted that even with the addition of these 24 new cells, accommodating up to 48 more people, the true jail population will still exceed capacity, necessitating continued population reduction efforts.

3. **Reduce Overcrowding through System-wide Population Reduction Efforts**
The most significant issue at HCCC remains overcrowding, particularly in Punahele, where vulnerable populations, such as those with acute mental illness and severe health issues, as well as new admissions, are housed. Even with the opening of the new unit, the facility will remain overcrowded. Addressing this requires a State and Third Circuit-wide priority on safely reducing the jail population. DCR alone cannot resolve this issue; instead, it must involve a coordinated system-wide effort.

   All justice partners, including the Judiciary, Office of the Public Defender, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, Probation, the Department of Health, and Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, must work both individually and collectively to safely reduce the jail population. On Hawai'i Island, a coordinated approach is essential.

   A. **Further Diversion Initiatives.** The Commission supports ongoing and new diversion initiatives on Hawai'i Island to address the needs of justice-involved individuals. The Commission is aware that this is in process and supports the furtherance of these and other diversion initiatives.

   B. **Work Together to Reduce Pretrial Time.** Consider a Third Circuit-wide goal – Judiciary, Prosecutor, Public Defender, and criminal defense attorney – to reduce timelines for all cases, aiming to expedite both felony and misdemeanor proceedings and reduce the time people spend in HCCC pretrial.

   C. **Population Analysis.** To safely divert people and support successful transitions post-incarceration, it is essential to understand individual needs. The Commission asks the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to consider a population analysis with the following information in a confidential, non-identifying manner: *demographic data, mental health and substance use data, key health indicators, housing data, employment, and income status*. This information will be used to determine what services and support are needed, what is currently provided and available within the community, and where the gaps are. There is a strong community network, including providers, throughout Hawai'i Island, but more data is needed to link people to services and support these efforts effectively.

4. **Enhance Programming Opportunities and Reduce Idle Time**
   In addition to facility overcrowding, people in custody have too much idle time and limited access to programming. The Commission witnessed this idle time and recommended the following:

   A. **Re-establish and Expand Programming Opportunities.** Re-establish programming opportunities at pre-COVID levels and then expand opportunities. Bring more programs back into the facility from community service providers. Community partnerships and programs are essential to enhance the facility's ability to manage operational issues.

   B. **Increase VolinCore Training Opportunities.** Offer regularly scheduled continuous VolinCore training opportunities for community service and program providers.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made during the 2025 visit:

5. **Ensure Access to Grievances**
   The Commission noted the significant lack of access to the grievance process for individuals housed at Hale Nani and for those housed in Wainuenue. Staff should be retrained on proper grievance procedures, along with the implementation of ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent and equitable access to the grievance system.

6. **Reevaluate and Monitor Staff Posts**
   People in Punahele reported being on 23-hour lockdown and are not given the opportunity to go outside for recreation. Additionally, staff reported that accommodating outdoor recreation in Komohana more than once a week is challenging with short staff. The Commission has observed on more than one visit what appears to be an excess number of staff posted at the temporary gate. At times, the Commission has observed four to five staff at the gate. The Commission strongly recommends that HCCC reevaluates how staff are posted and utilized throughout the facility to ensure that recreational time can be accommodated as frequently as possible.

KCCC Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on June 12, 2025

On Thursday, May 8, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commissioners and Oversight Coordinator toured the Kaua'i Community Correctional Center (KCCC). After the tour, the Commission compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered the following recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Immediately prioritize the construction and replacement of the KCCC kitchen as it poses a dangerous threat to individuals or staff being hurt due to its desperate condition. In the interim, must repair and maintain current flooring.**
   The floors in the kitchen and mess hall were worn through to bare wood in some areas and completely gone in other areas. Plywood had been temporarily laid down to cover missing floorboards, but they were flimsy and extremely dangerous to walk on. The dangerous condition of the floor in the kitchen and mess hall could easily result in serious injury to staff and people in custody. A new floor must be laid as soon as possible.

   Pending the installation of the modular kitchen, the Commission urges DCR to repair and maintain the floor. The Commission has received complaints from people in custody and staff, and the safety of staff and people in custody is one of the highest responsibilities of the department.

2. **Ensure individuals in the facility are receiving the most out-of-cell time possible in alignment with a rehabilitative and therapeutic environment.**
   In 2024, individuals in Module B claimed to be locked in their cells for 22 hours per day. On May 8, 2025, individuals in Module A and B made the same claim. This, by definition, is considered restrictive housing, also sometimes referred to as solitary confinement.

   The Commission understands there are staffing issues that contribute to this issue, and applauds the Department's efforts to fill vacancies. However, if the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is serious about the transition to a therapeutic and rehabilitative system, it is imperative to ensure individuals are not locked down within their cells for such extended periods of time.

   Therefore, daily schedules should be posted in all housing units for transparency and accountability regarding programming and out of cell time. This allows individuals in custody to anticipate what is to come, and to hold the staff accountable and ensure programming and out of cell time is completed in a consistent manner.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made during the 2025 visit:

3. **Implement 12-Hour Shifts**
   The Commission highly recommends implementing 12-hour shifts. This has been requested by the facility after surveying staff and measuring interest. This was also highlighted as an evident solution for KCCC in the Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report. In order to eliminate the need for exhausting 24-hour shifts that cause burnout and an increase in leave requests, the Department must try something different than what it is doing now. Having additional staff at the facility can ensure that posts are not understaffed and increase out-of-cell time and safety for people in custody.

4. **Enable all Facilities to Initiate and Process Emergency Hires On-Site**
   The Commission highly recommends that DCR allow correctional facilities to conduct on-site emergency hiring to expedite filling vacancies and increase staffing levels that are desperately needed to:
   - Monitor the mental health population and ensure the mental health population are housed in the best possible setting for their condition;
   - Ensure people in custody have access to out-of-cell time;
   - Provide much needed and urgent relief to burnt-out staff; and
   - Improve staff morale and retention.

MCCC Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on August 14, 2025

On Thursday, June 26, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commissioners and Oversight Coordinator toured the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC). After the tour, the Commission compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Grievance and medical forms and drop boxes should be inside all modules**.
   In Module D, grievance forms, grievance request boxes, medical request forms, and healthcare request boxes are located outside the modules. People in custody must ask staff for the forms and be escorted by staff to place the completed forms in their respective boxes, currently located in the sallyport. These should be placed inside the modules.

2. **Increase Programming Opportunities**
   People in custody have too much idle time and limited access to programming – including cultural programming – education, and reentry preparation. The Commission witnessed this idle time while onsite and heard many complaints regarding a lack of access to tablets due to there not being enough. Therefore, MCCC should expand access to tablets in addition to expanding programming, education, vocational training, reentry preparation, and cultural-based opportunities.

3. **Expand Furlough Utilization at MCCC**
   It was very disappointing that only five people in custody were participating in work furlough despite the capacity to accommodate at least 50 or more participants. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system.

   The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues, resulting in increased furlough participation at MCCC and the other furlough sites. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates close to 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

OCCC Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on October 9, 2025

On Wednesday, September 17, 2025, the Commissioners and Oversight Coordinator toured the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). After the tour, the Commission compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered the below recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Access to Confidential Policies**
   During the Commission's prior visit in August 2024, the Commission was surprised to learn that the Warden did not have access to DCR's "confidential" policies and procedures. Wardens are responsible for managing the facilities and upholding policies and procedures. Since August 2024, DCR has made confidential policies accessible to Wardens, as recommended by the Commission.

2. **Allow for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**
   Replace wood-covered windows in housing units to allow natural light, in line with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards. Although some wood coverings have been removed over the past year, wood coverings do remain on some cell windows. According to ACA Standard 4-ALDF-1A-16, *all inmate rooms/cells must provide occupants with access to natural light through at least three square feet of transparent glazing, plus two additional square feet per inmate in rooms/cells housing three or more individuals*. Therefore, the Commission recommends OCCC continue replacing wood coverings to ensure all cell windows in all modules allow natural light. Compliance with ACA standards is of particular importance with OCCC moving toward ACA accreditation.

3. **Restoration of Contact Visits**
   OCCC has not offered in-person contact visits for five years, initially due to COVID-19. Extensive research underscores the importance and rehabilitative benefits of contact visits for those in custody, as these visits allow individuals to maintain closer connections with their loved ones and communities. The Commission therefore continues to recommend OCCC reinstate contact visits.

4. **Expand Programming Opportunities**
   People in custody at OCCC have too much idle time and limited access to programming, including cultural, education, and reentry preparation. The Commission recommends expanding programming opportunities and community partnerships to reduce idle time and increase programming opportunities. While the facility has made some progress in this area, it is essential to continue and be innovative (even within limited space) to support people in custody and gain community support and trust.

5. **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**
   The kitchen at OCCC is in dire need of updates to ensure sanitary conditions for staff and the kitchen workline, and to provide safe food for the entire facility. Urgent repairs are needed for the dishwasher, along with replacement of ceiling and floor tiles, rusted appliances, and food service trays. Although there are plans for a new facility, these conditions cannot wait until then and must be addressed immediately.

6. **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**
   Although OCCC has the highest furlough participation and occupancy rate in comparison to the other three jails, there is still opportunity to increase furlough participation at OCCC. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues around furlough participation. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates near 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

7. **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**
   The recreation area outside the Holding Unit consists of individual cages, which currently lack shaded areas to protect people in custody from the sun. The Commission recommends installing shade structures, even tarps, to provide protection from sun exposure.

8. **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**
   The Commission has received multiple complaints regarding the following issues at OCCC:
   - **Roaches in Cells:** Roaches are present in the cells. This poses a health and sanitation concern. **The Commission recommends implementing a pest control plan that effectively and safely eliminates the roach population.**
   - **Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls:** The Commission learned that some individuals have experienced delays of several weeks in accessing bail calls, which has prevented those who could make bail from being released. This delay not only impacts individual rights but also contributes to overcrowding. The Commission urges the facility to establish and confirm a reliable system that allows timely access to bail calls for all eligible individuals and **ensures all people in custody have prompt access to bail calls.**

9. **Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Legal Calls, Mail, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation**
   People in custody in the holding unit at OCCC reported irregular access to legal calls, daily recreation, and inconsistent mail service, along with no books or reading material. ACA standards require the following access for people in disciplinary segregation:

   Mail: Inmates in Restrictive Housing can write and receive letters on the same basis as inmates in the general population.

Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-20, p. 128.

Access to Legal and Reading Materials: Inmates in Restrictive Housing have access to reading materials.
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-23, p. 129.

Exercise Out of Cell: Inmates in Restrictive Housing receive a minimum of one hour of exercise outside their cells, five days per week, unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise."
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-24, p. 129.

Telephone Privileges: Inmates in Restrictive Housing are allowed at minimum telephone privileges to access the judicial process and family emergencies as determined by the facility administrator or designee unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise.
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-25, p. 129.

Access to Programs: Inmates in Extended Restrictive Housing have access to programs and services that include but are not limited to the following: educational services, commissary services, library services, social services, behavioral health and treatment services, religious guidance, and recreational programs.
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-26, p. 130.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made during the 2025 visit:

10. **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**
    The Department needs to seriously consider how requiring post closures to limit overtime impacts daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, outdoor recreation, programming and general conditions of confinement. The Department should allow Wardens to make these decisions as they should know the needs of their facilities the best. Additionally, the Department should consider holding regular inter-divisional meetings between Division Administrators to evaluate the fiscal and humanitarian impacts of requiring post closures before authorizing overtime.

WCCC Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on October 9, 2025

On Thursday, September 11, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commission toured the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) collectively as a group. After the tour, the Commission compiled their notes encompassing their impressions but offered no additional recommendations.

HCF Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on November 13, 2025

On Thursday, October 9, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commission toured the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF). After the tour, the Commissioners compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered the below recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Permanently close the Special Needs Facility.**
   The Special Needs Facility has been permanently closed. This recommendation is resolved.

2. **Increasing non-security staffing must be a priority for transitioning to a rehabilitative and therapeutic system.**
   Two years ago, the two main staffing shortages that the Commission learned about were in the Learning Center and social work. At the time, education was down three full-time teachers, one secretary, and two workline positions leaving one full-time employee to run all educational programs. Additionally, the facility had eight (8) social work vacancies which resulted in high caseloads (80+ people per social worker) for the existing social workers.

   During the Commissions visit in 2024, it was confirmed that there are no social work vacancies, and that education vacancies had gone down from four vacancies to two (education supervisor and office assistant). The Commission congratulates the Department on its success with aggressive recruitment tactics for filling these imperative positions; however, the Commission hopes the Department will continue to place a strong focus on the need for mental health staff – particularly Psych Social Workers and Clinical Psychologists.

3. **Prioritize and expedite Capital Improvement Projects to repair electricity and the perimeter fence.**
   There has been significant progress on this as both projects have been funded and are currently in progress. The Commission emphasizes the need to complete these projects promptly to relocate people in custody currently at Saguaro Correctional Center back to Hawai'i, preventing these transfers from becoming long-term out-of-state placements.

4. **Incorporate Therapeutic and Rehabilitative Practices Throughout the Facility**
   Consider reopening and staffing the large yard so individuals can enjoy grass, fresh air, and sunlight and have an opportunity to look away from concrete. Additionally, consider incorporating murals throughout the housing units and on Main Street for a less restrictive feel. Lastly, consider planting native plants throughout Main Street for additional color and connection to ʻāina. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

5. **Include Medical and Mental Health Staff in Future Construction Plans**
   Include the medical and mental health team in any plans for construction to ensure a more therapeutic and rehabilitative space. If the mental or medical spaces are extended to the basement, ensure ample natural lighting by adding as many windows as possible and consider bright paint for a less restrictive space.

6. **Expand the Correctional Industries worklines to include specific training in skilled trades that would lead to gainful employment after incarceration.**
   At some point, there used to be an electrical and plumbing workline that helped keep the facility maintained. The electrician union previously came to the facility and trained people in custody, and then people leaving prison would have an income-generating trade and connections to the unions and jobs in high demand. However, that program has not existed for some time. It would benefit the Department to work with skilled trade unions to train individuals in plumbing, electrical, welding, HVAC, etc. This would not only create opportunities for individuals to earn gainful employment upon release, but also help the facility with desperately needed maintenance concerns. Correctional Industry worklines can assist in upkeeping the facilities while learning skills that are at the core of the Hawaiʻi Correctional Industry work. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

7. **Increase training and support for uniformed staff.**
   To expedite and stay current on uniformed staff training, consider placing or training certified instructors to be onsite full-time at Halawa. This would allow the facility to train staff more efficiently in a way that corresponds to the facility's schedule and specific needs. Also, consider updating the training academy curriculum to better prepare staff for their actual roles onsite at facilities. Although there has not been progress on focus on training HCF staff in house, the DCR is currently updating its training academy curriculum for new recruits.

8. **Increase training and support for case/unit managers to better meet the population's needs upon release.**
   The role of social workers and unit managers is vital to successful rehabilitation and reentry for people in custody. The Commission is aware that many people in custody are released directly to the community from Halawa. Here, it would be helpful to identify and offer additional training to support the critical role these staff members assume. Staff should stay current on local and national best practices in their field. The crucial role of these staff members and the importance of a mindset dedicated to supporting people in custody and their success should be included in the training.

Although it is unclear if national best practices are being implemented, the Commission is aware that the reentry office in DCR has been having consistent meetings with case managers to keep staff aligned with DCR's reentry efforts and initiatives. Additionally, the reentry office has been updating case managers on policy and procedure changes to ensure consistent implementation of reentry efforts statewide. Each of these meetings take several hours depending on the specific facilities needs and questions. The Commission does view this as important progress.

9. **The Department should support legislative efforts toward Compassionate Release or transfer to a more appropriate medical setting for the severely ill.**
   The Department, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Paroling Authority and the Commission, has drafted a compassionate release bill to be introduced during the 2026 legislative session. The Commission applauds the Department on their collaborative efforts towards this legislation.

KCF Facility Conditions & Recommendations

Report released on December 11, 2025

On Thursday, November 13, 2025, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commission toured the Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF). After the tour, the Commissioners compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered the below recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

Recommendations from prior annual tours to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1. **Begin Offering In-Person Visitation and Expand Access to Phone Calls**
   The Commission is pleased to report that KCF has begun offering in-person contact visitation and this recommendation is resolved.

2. **Increase the Population at Kulani as Kulani Has the Opportunity to be One of the Most Rehabilitative Facilities in Hawai'i**
   The DCR has not completed this recommendation, and in fact, the population numbers at KCF and WCF (both minimum custody) are worse in 2024 and 2025 than they were in 2023.

   Kulani is one of the most rehabilitative facilities in Hawai'i and sits around 50% capacity. As of November 2023, there were around 240 people in custody at Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) and Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona (AZSC) with a custody status of minimum or below. In October 2024, there were around 260. In 2025, there are around 244 with a custody status of minimum or below.

	2023 Hawai'i Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	53	455	369	--	--	877
HCF	4	183	435	187	2	11	822
WCF	27	154	--	--	--	--	181
KCF	24	61	--	--	--	--	85

Source: Hawai'i Department of Public Safety Roster, Dated Nov. 13, 2023

	2024 Hawai'i Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	77	506	411	--	--	994
HCF	6	179	306	204	6	5	706
WCF	23	113	--	--	--	--	136 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	13	65	--	--	--	--	78 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Oct. 14, 2024

	2025 Hawai'i Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	67	409	340	--	--	816
HCF	4	173	351	271	5	8	812
WCF	17	148	--	--	--	--	165 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	23	62	1	--	--	--	86 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Nov. 17, 2025

The Commission, again, recommends that the Department transfer eligible individuals at Halawa and Saguaro, with minimum custody or below, to Kulani and Waiawa Correctional Facilities. Due to the rehabilitative and therapeutic nature of the Kulani, this facility could be better utilized at a consistent capacity close to 100% and certainly over 90%.

3. **Remove the Monetary Eligibility Requirement for Furlough Participation at all Furlough Sites**
   The Commission is pleased to report that the Department has fulfilled this recommendation.

4. **Reinstate Transportation Shuttle for Staff**
   This recommendation has not been completed.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made during the 2025 visit:

5. **Prioritize Maintenance and Repair of Water System**
   The facility's water plant has been non-operational for over two years, requiring daily hauling of water. This issue has been repeatedly submitted for Capitol Improvement Funding (CIP) but remains unresolved. Non-portable water from the reservoir is repurposed for irrigation and fire control. The Department should prioritize securing CIP funding to repair the water system.

6. **Prioritize Maintenance and Repair of Dorm 7**
   The Department should address long-standing needed repairs to plumbing, tiles, and leaking ceilings in the Dorm 7 bathroom. Additionally, the Department should address the lack of heat within the dorm given the cold temperatures that impact the facility.

7. **Improve Digital Connectivity**
   The Department should secure funding to improve digital connectivity to support education and rehabilitation on tablets, computers, or other digital options. This is of particular importance given the distance of the facility from town and lack of in-person volunteers.

WCF Facility Conditions & Recommendations

The Commission planned to tour the Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF) on December 11, 2025, however, the tour was rescheduled for January 8, 2026.

CONFERENCES + TRAININGS

Local

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model of corrections, the Commission and staff attended various local conferences, trainings, and events to further connect with community and government stakeholders and learn more about the reentry system in the state. The Commission and staff attended the following 5 local conferences in 2025:

- **2025 Pu'uhonua Summit**
  On February 28, 2025, commission staff attended the Puʻuhonua Summit hosted by Hawaiʻi Community College Administration of Justice (AJ) Club and Program. The Lāmalama Ka Ulu Healing Center led discussions on truth, healing, and recovery. Attendees consisted of students from varying majors, cultural practitioners, community partners, and supporters coming together to learn about and immerse in experiencing the historical events of Hawai'i and reenact its impact on societal harmony with the land, with each other, and within families. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) shared a presentation on current initiatives and future plans for rehabilitation, reentry, and transparency.

  The summit highlighted the lived experiences of justice-involved individuals, shedding light on their reentry challenges and successes. It provided a collaborative space for talk story, resource sharing, and strengthening community support for reintegration.

- **Pou Hana O Na Wahine: Hoʻi I Ka Hale**
  On March 28, 2025, Commission staff attended Day 2 of the Pou Hana O Na Wahine: Hoʻi I Ka Hale Training and Resource Fair focused on preventing and addressing domestic violence. The day featured interactive workshops like ʻOhana Kuleana Mapping and Growing into Change, promoting mentorship, healing, and shared responsibility within families. The training also covered policy and procedure in how to navigate the Hawaiʻi State Legislature system, which many Native Hawaiians are unfamiliar with. The resource fair also connected attendees with local organizations providing support and advocacy services.

- **Reentry Simulation: Addressing Barriers to Life After Incarceration**
  On June 13, 2025, the Commission participated in the *Reimagined Reentry Simulation Project*, an experiential event designed to highlight the systemic barriers faced by individuals transitioning from incarceration to community life. Held in collaboration with the Penn State Restorative Justice Initiative and supported by the American Institute for Research Technical Assistance Grant, the simulation brought together policymakers, practitioners, educators, and community advocates. The event featured a panel moderated by the Oversight Coordinator, with various speakers including Kimmy Takata, the Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, who shared insights from her lived experience.

- **Nothing About Us Without Us**

  On June 20, 2025, the Commission attended the Peer Support Summit at Windward Community College—a powerful and collaborative event focused on improving reentry and mental health support systems across the state. The summit gathered peer support workers, mental health advocates, service providers, and justice-impacted individuals to engage in meaningful discussions, share resources, and build action plans. Kimmy Takata, the Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, opened the event with remarks on the importance of lived experience and the role of peer support in creating sustainable change. Highlights included a keynote by Justin Volpe from NASMHPD, presentations by the Office of Wellness and Resilience, and breakout sessions on housing, employment, mental health, and Sequential Intercept Mapping. The event provided valuable insights and resources that will support our ongoing work toward a more supportive and healing reentry system in Hawai'i.

- **Hawai'i Homeless & Housing Conference**

  On November 14, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the 2025 Hawai'i Homelessness & Housing Conference, a statewide gathering focused on housing solutions, policy updates, and culturally rooted approaches to homelessness. Governor Josh Green highlighted progress on kāhale villages, supportive housing, and mental health initiatives, while breakout sessions such as *He Alo, A e Alo* emphasized trauma-informed and culturally grounded care. Legislators shared statewide data, funding priorities, and ongoing barriers like permitting delays and housing shortages. A major highlight was the lived-experience panel, "From Surviving to Thriving," where five speakers – including the Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, Kimmy Takata – shared powerful stories of resilience and healing. The conference strengthened collaboration and reinforced the importance of lived-experience leadership in shaping Hawai'i's future housing and homelessness policies.

- **Women's Community Correctional Center: Ku'u Mana, Ku'u Ala: My Power, My Path Women's Empowerment**

  On December 5, 2025, Commission staff attended the Ku'u Mana, Ku'u Ala: My Power, My Path Women's Empowerment Conference, hosted by WCCC Education staff and held at the Maunawili Cottage. The event included opening cultural protocol, a keynote presentation by Honolulu City Council District 3 Councilmember Esther Kia'āina, panel discussions, interactive workshops, and facilitated opportunities for dialogue and community connection centered on women's empowerment. A total of 88 incarcerated Women participated in the conference. HCSOC staff served as speakers alongside other women with lived experience, sharing perspectives on resilience, healing, and justice-involved pathways. The conference provided meaningful opportunities for community engagement and alignment with trauma-informed and healing-centered approaches relevant to reentry and system oversight efforts.

National

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model of corrections and to continue its education and best practices throughout the country, the Commission and staff attended two national conferences and trainings. The Commission and staff attended the following national conferences/trainings in 2024:

- **Jail and Prison Oversight Forum**
  On February 18, 2025, Commission staff attended the Jail & Prison Oversight Forum hosted by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). The open forum covered the Office of the Washington State Corrections Ombuds (OCO) recent report on unexpected fatalities and allowed opportunity for questions and answers from other corrections oversight professionals across the nation. The report provided transparency and insight into the leading causes of unexpected fatalities within the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC), and how the DOC classifies unexpected fatalities. OCO's report on unexpected fatalities helps to set a precedent of transparency for reporting unexpected fatalities in correctional facilities.

- **NACOLE Webinar: Digital Video Evidence: Identifying Technical Challenges and Limitations**
  On February 21, 2025, Commission staff attended a webinar hosted by NACOLE covering Digital Video Evidence: Identifying Technical Challenges and Limitations. Casey Yunko, a Forensic Video Technician with Axon, discussed the importance of proper training for anyone tasked with reviewing and/or processing multimedia evidence for investigative purposes. He provided a thorough presentation on how to identify technical complications and limitations with video evidence and the misconceptions of digital video evidence. Casey also covered where to find more training for certification in authenticating video evidence. This training provided valuable insight into navigating correctional facility's CCTV systems.

- **Prison and Jail Innovation Lab Peer Learning Community Convening for Prison Oversight Directors**
  From March 27-28, 2025, the Oversight Coordinator attended the Peer Learning Community: Director's Convening hosted by the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab in Austin, Texas. This convening brought together thirteen different oversight directors from twelve different states and the District of Columbia. The convening covered navigating relationships with various stakeholders, measuring effectiveness and sustainability, managing politics and burnout, and navigating general challenges faced in the oversight community. The Coordinator found it extremely helpful to be surrounded by colleagues facing similar challenges and offering solutions, and appreciated the invitation from the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab.

- **NACOLE's Quarterly Forum for Jail and Prison Oversight**
  On May 20, 2025, Commission staff attended the NACOLE Quarterly Forum for Jail and Prison Oversight. This virtual event focused on the future of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in light of recent federal budget cuts. National Advocacy Director of Just Detention International, Julie Abate, was the primary speaker of the event. In addition to presenting on the uncertain future of federal funding for PREA, Julie provided PREA training resources and a blueprint for the vicarious trauma-informed organization.

- **National Reentry Workforce Collaborative 2025 Conference**
  From October 21 through October 24, Chair Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Johnson, and Commission staff attended the From Incarceration to Transformation: National Reentry Workforce Conference (NRWC) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference focused on hope, collaboration, lived experience, and innovation in reentry and workforce development. Commission staff co-presented Reentry Begins on the Inside: A Three-State Comparison of In-Prison Programming alongside John Howard Association and the Correctional Association of New York, highlighting Hawai'i's oversight and reentry initiatives. Connections were made with national partners such as KISRA, Resilience Education, CareerTeam, Homeboy Industries, and the Petey Greene Program, each offering valuable models and potential collaborations to support reentry in Hawai'i. The event reinforced that reentry is built on relationships, opportunity, compassion, and the power of lived experience – key principles guiding Hawai'i's ongoing reentry work.

- **National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Conference – Minneapolis, MN**
  From October 26 through October 29, Chair Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Johnson, and Commission staff attended the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The conference brought together national oversight leaders to discuss accountability, transparency, and community trust in the wake of incidents that deeply impacted the nation – including the deaths of George Floyd and Philando Castile, both of which occurred in Minnesota. Presenters reflected on how these tragedies reshaped public expectations and policies around oversight and reform, while acknowledging the ongoing challenges with achieving true accountability in civilian oversight of law enforcement.

  In addition to powerful keynote sessions, the conference offered specialized breakout forums specifically for executive leadership, investigators, and boards and commissions. The conference also offered breakout discussions on best practices in data use, community engagement, and civilian review processes. The Commission gained valuable insight into national strategies that align with Hawai'i's mission to ensure fairness, dignity, and trust within its correctional system, and had the opportunity to present in four separate panels including:

- Surviving the Storm: Building and Rebuilding Correctional Oversight in the Face of Political Pressure *presented by Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator and Chair Mark Patterson*
- Deescalation in a Custody Setting *presented by Chair Mark Patterson*
- Accountability in Crisis: How Oversight Can Drive Solutions to Corrections Staffing Shortages *presented by Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator*
- Doing Oversight After Doing Time: How Lived Experience is Reshaping Correctional Oversight Practices *presented by Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist*



Chair Mark Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Christin Johnson, Jail Oversight Specialist Alec Jamerson, and Reentry Oversight Specialist Kimmy Takata attending and speaking at the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) 2025 conference.

❖ **NACOLE 2025 Webinar Series: Correctional Medical Oversight in California: Critical Components and Key Takeaways**

In December 2025, HCSOC staff gained access to the 2025 Webinar Series – *Correctional Medical Oversight in California: Critical Components and Key Takeaways*, hosted by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). This session provided an in-depth look at how California's Office of Inspector General has structured its Medical Inspection Unit (MIU) and how the MIU has evolved its processes to ensure quality healthcare in correctional settings.

The MIU operates through a multidisciplinary structure that includes a Management Team, Analyst Team, Compliance Team, and Case Review Team. During the webinar, MIU representatives outlined their two-component process—case review and

compliance—supported by 15 key indicators used to evaluate healthcare quality. These indicators serve as benchmarks for assessing medical care delivery, compliance with standards, and overall system performance.

For HCSOC, this webinar was more than an informational session—it was a strategic opportunity to gain insight into the resources, staffing models, and analytical frameworks necessary to build effective oversight for Hawai'i's correctional healthcare system. Understanding the complexity of California's approach highlights the importance of specialized expertise, robust data analysis, and clear compliance metrics. These elements will guide HCSOC in identifying what tools, personnel, and processes are essential to ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in healthcare for individuals in custody.

Looking ahead, HCSOC plans to leverage these insights to develop a comprehensive roadmap for correctional healthcare oversight in Hawai'i. This includes assessing current gaps, engaging stakeholders, and advocating for the resources and expertise needed to implement a model that aligns with national best practices. By taking these steps, HCSOC aims to create a system that not only monitors compliance but actively promotes quality care, equity, and improved health outcomes for all individuals in custody.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – A CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO REENTRY OVERSIGHT

Updated Reentry Oversight Strategic Plan

In 2023, the Commission released its first strategic plan focused on diversion and reentry, with the commitment that it would serve as a living document – regularly reviewed and updated to remain responsive to changing needs and priorities in reentry oversight.

In 2025, the Commission hired its first Reentry Oversight Specialist whose work is informed by lived experience as a formerly incarcerated person and as a Native Hawaiian. Her perspective has added critical insight into the realities of reentry and the importance of culturally responsive, community-rooted approaches. These experiences have strengthened the Commission's oversight by centering the voices and needs of individuals and communities most directly impacted by reentry systems.

As a result, the 2023 strategic plan has been updated to more intentionally reflect cultural importance, lived experience, and equity in reentry oversight. The priorities outlined below represent the Commission's strategic focus for 2026-2030 in advancing effective and accountable reentry services.

Using the Plan

The Commission is mandated to *facilitate a corrections system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model*. For this core function of and priority area for the Commission, this strategic plan operates with the assumption that, in its most basic form, there are three components to actualize system-wide change:

1. Understanding the status of the system—where we are now.
2. Having a vision for the future of the system—where we want to go.
3. Implementing incremental steps that move toward the vision and away from the status—one step at a time.

These steps are built into this strategic plan and the corresponding work of the Commission.

Strategic Priorities

Taking into account the HCSOC agency-wide strategic plan, the Commission's mandate, and applicable standards and guideposts outlined in this document, the following objectives and priorities were developed to guide the Commission's reentry work. Additionally, this section provides a general framework and understanding of the Commission's approach to each of the priority areas as they relate to reentry.

Hawai'i is in a period of transition—from a system rooted in punishment to one grounded in healing, dignity, and purpose. To truly create a rehabilitated and therapeutic system, it is imperative to understand what people need to be healthy, safe, stable and successful—and then ensure the programs, services, and support inside our facilities meet those needs.

This means gathering both data and lived experiences, listening to people inside and making sure their voices are reflected in what the Commission reports and recommends. It means going into spaces, talking with people in custody, and working with staff to understand where things are breaking down and where things are working. It also means making sure our recommendations aren't just performative.

Please note that some of the objectives and strategies in this section will relate to more than one priority area. For brevity, each objective was included only once under the most relevant priority area.

- **Rehabilitation**
  Facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model.

  As Hawai'i transitions to a more rehabilitative and therapeutic corrections model, the public perception of incarceration, reentry, and individuals directly impacted by the justice system must also shift. This transition requires a new mindset, one that recognizes people in custody as human beings with potential, not just charges or classifications. The Commission's role in this shift is to support a rehabilitative model by identifying the gaps within the system.

  To be successful, the Commission must understand who is in custody, what their needs are, and where the system is falling short. This fundamental step will guide how the Commission can work with the Department to improve reentry, case management, and further support healing over punishment.

  Objective 1: Work with the Department to create a correctional environment where people in custody feel valued, supported, and encouraged in their ability to change, laying the groundwork for hope, healing, and successful reentry.

  Strategies:

  1. Support opportunities for people in custody to reconnect with their roots through Hawaiian cultural practices—such as mele (song), hula, oli (chant), mo'olelo (storytelling), and working with the 'āina (land). These activities support healing, restore a sense of identity, and strengthen the connection to values like aloha, pono, and kuleana, creating a foundation for personal growth and transformation.
  2. Facilitate connections between facilities and community members who can bring mentorship, cultural guidance, and positive role models, build trust and strengthen ties between people in custody and the broader community.
  3. Highlight and support programs, such as prison monologues, that give people in custody a voice and build encourage self-expression and build confidence as they prepare for reentry.
  4. Support opportunities for families to stay connected through visits, communication, classes, and activities that strengthen relationships, promote healing, and create a strong support system for reentry.

Objective 2: Uplift the role of human connection in reentry by fostering peer support, strengthening case manager capacity, and encouraging consistent volunteer engagement to inspire hope and positive change.

Strategies:

1. Support peer-led programming to provide mentorship, shared lived experience, and positive role modeling.
2. Support additional training in trauma-informed care, cultural competence, and motivational skills to strengthen connections with individuals in custody.
3. Encourage consistent and diverse volunteer presences inside facilities to build genuine connection between the community and individuals in custody. Having volunteers help reduce isolation and remind people that they are valued and not forgotten.

Objective 3: Work with the Department to increase out-of-cell time across all classifications, recognizing that meaningful activity, social interaction, and access to programming are essential for mental health, rehabilitation, and reducing tension in the facilities.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate with the Department to create a transparent, achievable step-down pathway so people understand exactly what is required to move to lower classification levels and gain increased freedom of movement.
2. Increase opportunities for work assignments, education, and skill-building programs, while adding unique, pro-social incentives such as volleyball tournaments, movie nights, and cultural activities to encourage participation and positive behavior.
3. Support and advocate for legislative efforts that increase out-of-cell time by providing legislators with data, research, and lived experience perspectives on how structured time outside cells improves safety, reduces recidivism, and fosters rehabilitation.

Objective 4: Identify, evaluate and support expansion of successful and promising practices that support rehabilitation, reduce population pressures, and improve reentry outcomes.

Strategies:

1. Collect and synthesize data from stakeholders and partners through data requests, talk stories, and meetings to report on how people are moving through the system including security levels and classifications.
2. Highlight current best and promising practices in Hawaii and other jurisdictions.
3. Offer recommendations and highlight opportunities for collaboration to improve correctional system movement and the classification system to procure better outcomes.

Objective 5: Work with DCR to ensure individuals in max-out population are not overlooked, but instead prioritized for reentry preparation, as they are among the most likely to recidivate.

Strategies:

1. Conduct surveys and interviews with incarcerated individuals approaching max out to understand their needs and reentry barriers, and available support.
2. Recommend implementation of preparation track at least one year prior to max-out, incorporating trauma-informed workshops, reentry planning, and peer support for individuals who will be released without parole supervision.
3. Promote the use of the peer support integration strategy across facilities to ensure those at highest risk of reentering society without supervision receive peer-based guidance and mentorship and connection to resources before and after release.

❖ **Population Limits**

Establish maximum inmate population limits for each correctional facility and formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each correctional facility.

As highlighted throughout this plan, the best way to ensure the population does not exceed capacity of each correctional facility is to ensure the programming efforts in place are impactful enough to prevent individuals from coming back into the system. Overreliance on a small number of clean and sober homes often places individuals at different stages of readiness in the same environment, which can hinder recovery and reintegration.

Objective 1: Identify and assess barriers to securing stable housing for individuals preparing for release and provide recommendations to DCR and other relevant stakeholders to ensure housing and essential community resources are in place prior to reentry.

Strategies:

1. Work with DCR to gather and review information from case managers on pre-release planning efforts at least 90 days prior to release, and report on progress related to securing stable housing.
2. Support the rollout of the 1115 waiver to help connect individuals with care and coverage prior to release, including behavioral health treatment, medications, and medical enrollment.
3. Engage with community housing and program providers across the state to understand available resources, identify potential barriers in working with DCR, and report findings to inform smoother transition process.

4. Advocate for legislation that increase affordable housing, such as 1% housing tax or low income housing credits, with particular attention to undeserved counties including Maui, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island.
5. Support efforts to expanding healing-centered housing, evidence – based residential programs, and community – based supports that offer a range of placement options to meet individuals where they are in their recovery journey.

Objective 2: Support efforts that prepare individuals for success upon release, including access to employment, education, life skills, and community-based resources.

Strategies

1. Pre-release employment planning – Work with DCR to report on efforts to connect individuals with employment opportunities prior to release.
2. Collaborate with legislators on initiatives such as "Unlock the box" to increase employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals.
3. Promote second chance hiring in state agencies by spearheading discussions with state departments on hiring qualified individuals returning from incarceration to help address vacancy rates in the government positions.
4. Work with DCR to track government position vacancies, identify in-demand skill sets, and encourage training program positions in prison that align with actual job openings.

Objective 3: Promote data transparency to track system movement and program effectiveness, identify what works and ensure access to the right programs. Address parole-related delays by exploring approved outside programs, reducing facility populations, and prevent unnecessary incarceration.

Strategies

1. Support the development of a real-time reentry dashboard to track facility population and overall program enrollment and update stats on quarterly basis to monitor trends and ensure timely responses to capacity or service gaps.
2. Promote joint planning and open communication between stakeholders including judiciary, probation, parole, law enforcement, and community organizations - to align efforts and prevent unnecessary incarceration.
3. Implement regular assessments of in-custody and community-based programs to determine which produce the highest rates of successful completion and timely release.

❖ **Reentry**

Work with the department of corrections and rehabilitation in monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees. The commission may make recommendations to the department of corrections and rehabilitation, the Hawaii paroling authority, and the legislature regarding reentry and parole services; and ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole when the maximum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services.

HRS §353L(3) outlines the Commission's responsibility to monitor and review the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program and system. The Commission will identify and report on current reentry programs and efforts, identify gaps in services and programs, uplift best and innovative practices that are being pursued, highlight staff and leadership taking on a pioneering role through this transitional period, recommend the expansion of successful efforts, and recommend the implementation of other programs and efforts that would serve the needs of people in custody.

Oversight efforts will emphasize healing-centered and culturally grounded approaches, including trauma-informed care, Native Hawaiian practices, mental health and substance use treatment, education, peer support, and creating a sense of purpose and belonging for those returning home.

Objective 1: Monitor, review, and report on the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees. HRS §353L (3).

Strategies:

1. Review the Department's Request for Proposals (RFPs) and partnerships with community service providers both inside of facilities and in the communities as they relate to the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program.
2. Conduct an ongoing study of national and local reentry policies, literature, and relevant federal regulations, including public sentiment toward existing practices.
3. Revisit previous Commission recommendations over time and publicly report on adoption, denial, or implementation outcomes.

Objective 2: Ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole when the maximum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services. HRS §353L(4).

Strategies:

1. Analyze system capacity by reviewing data and treatment plans to determine whether the number and type of available programs can serve the population before their minimum release date.
2. Recommend staffing increase and expand program offerings where gaps are identified to support productive time use and timely parole eligibility.
3. Support DCR, other state and local agencies, and other partners in actualizing program offerings.

Objective 3: Report on and support the status, success, and implementation of beneficial reentry-specific legislative efforts.

Strategies:

1. Identify and publicly report out on proposed bills and resolutions related to reentry.
2. Meet with applicable stakeholders to give feedback on reentry-focused bills.
3. Where applicable, make recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to support reentry-specific bills and ensure Commissioners are prepared to testify on reentry-specific bills.

❖ **Oversight**

Oversee the State's correctional system and have jurisdiction over investigating complaints at correctional facilities.

The Commission will connect with people in custody, staff, leadership, and the community through different avenues and learn more about what is most important to them. On a parallel track, the Commission's complaint intake system will be used to identify priorities of those in custody, and priority areas for the Commission to focus on.

Objective 1: Report facility-specific reentry efforts, including best practices and recommendations.

Strategies:

1. Conduct reentry- focused site visits at individual facilities and compile relevant findings into reports.
2. Use the Commissions stakeholder engagement strategy (e.g., talk stories, surveys, data requests, meetings) to gather input from system- impacted individuals and reentry professionals.
3. Highlight best practices already in place in the Department and make recommendations to further improve reentry efforts and outcomes.

Objective 2: Highlight what is most important to people impacted by the system and those with the greatest opportunity to influence change.

Strategies:

1. Connect with people in custody, correctional staff, leadership, and community members through different avenues to gauge their top priorities.
2. Receive and track allegations of violations and system-wide complaints pertaining to reentry to ensure accountability. With information gathered, identify priority areas for the Commission's focus.

Objective 3: Serve as a resource and work with DCR and HPA to review applicable policies and procedures, handbooks, and staff training related to reentry to better align with a therapeutic and rehabilitative model.

Strategies:

1. Review current policies, procedures, handbooks, and training modules to assess alignment with the rehabilitative and therapeutical model.
2. Provide recommendations to the DCR and HPA, and include examples of other jurisdiction's policies, procedures, and training content that is embedded in a rehabilitative and therapeutic corrections system.
3. Serve as a resource for agencies and stakeholders seeking to improve their reentry frameworks, with an emphasis on systems change and cultural responsiveness.

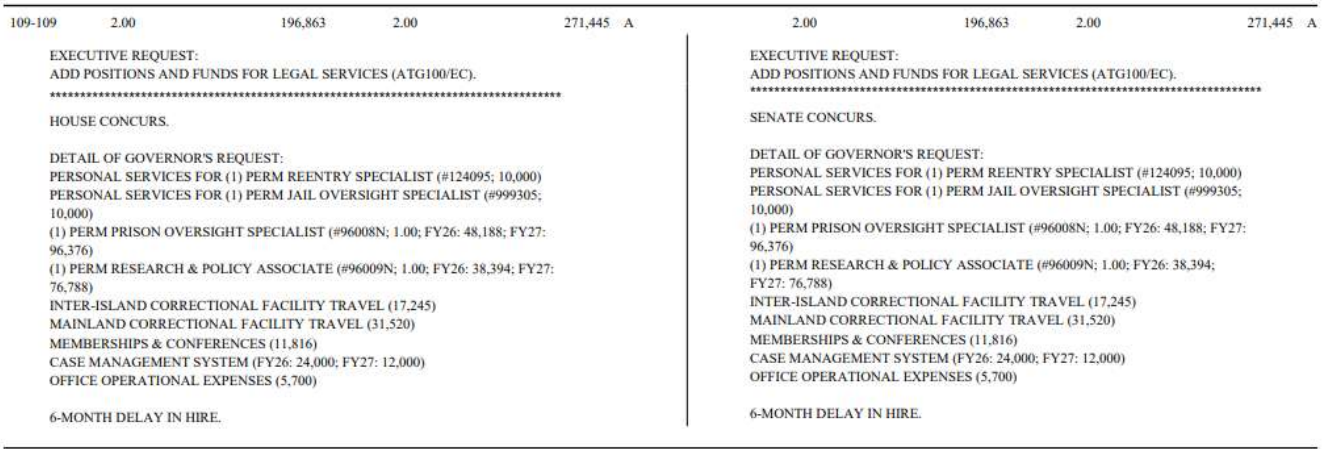
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Budget

During the FY2026 legislative session, the Commission requested $271,445 which included:

- Salary increase for Reentry Oversight Specialist
- Salary increase for Prison Oversight Specialist
- New Positions:
    - Prison Oversight Specialist
    - Research & Policy Associate
- Inter-island correctional facility travel
- Mainland correctional facility travel
- Memberships and conferences
- Case management system
- Office operational expenses

The House and Senate concurred with the request, meaning that the Oversight Commission was funded an additional $196,863 for fiscal year 2026 and $271,445 for fiscal year 2027. Further details of the request and concurrence are below:



109-109 2.00 196,863 2.00 271,445 A

EXECUTIVE REQUEST:
ADD POSITIONS AND FUNDS FOR LEGAL SERVICES (ATG100/EC).
****
HOUSE CONCURS.

DETAIL OF GOVERNOR'S REQUEST:
PERSONAL SERVICES FOR (1) PERM REENTRY SPECIALIST (#124095; 10,000)
PERSONAL SERVICES FOR (1) PERM JAIL OVERSIGHT SPECIALIST (#999305; 10,000)
(1) PERM PRISON OVERSIGHT SPECIALIST (#96008N; 1.00; FY26: 48,188; FY27: 96,376)
(1) PERM RESEARCH & POLICY ASSOCIATE (#96009N; 1.00; FY26: 38,394; FY27: 76,788)
INTER-ISLAND CORRECTIONAL FACILITY TRAVEL (17,245)
MAINLAND CORRECTIONAL FACILITY TRAVEL (31,520)
MEMBERSHIPS & CONFERENCES (11,816)
CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (FY26: 24,000; FY27: 12,000)
OFFICE OPERATIONAL EXPENSES (5,700)

6-MONTH DELAY IN HIRE.

2.00 196,863 2.00 271,445 A

EXECUTIVE REQUEST:
ADD POSITIONS AND FUNDS FOR LEGAL SERVICES (ATG100/EC).
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SENATE CONCURS.

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CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (FY26: 24,000; FY27: 12,000)
OFFICE OPERATIONAL EXPENSES (5,700)

6-MONTH DELAY IN HIRE.

House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force

House Concurrent Resolution No. 23 (HCR23 HD1 SD1) requests the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission to convene a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment. Mark Patterson, HCSOC Chair, is chairing this task force.

The Commission has dedicated a page on its website to the HCR23 Task Force: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/hcr23-task-force. This webpage has information on the expectations of the task force, members, expected outcomes, partnerships, and meeting information. Meetings will be live streamed and can be viewed on the Commission's Facebook page or YouTube channel.

The Council of State Governments (CSG) agreed to work in partnership with the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission on House Concurrent Resolution 23. The CSG's Justice Center is a national, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents state officials in all three branches of government. Their mission is to provide research driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

The HCR 23 task force is required to do the following:

- Study whether parole system models used by other states might be suited for Hawai'i.
- Examine and compare the minimum sentences issued by the HPA and, in certain instances by the courts, to determine whether there are significant differences.
- Recommend whether the administration of justice may be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the HPA.

How the CSG Justice Center Agreed to Assist:

1) Provide context about parole systems across the United States.
2) Conduct a comprehensive analysis of Hawai'i's criminal justice data.
3) Review existing corrections, court, and other criminal justice policies and procedures.
4) Engage and collect input from a broad range of state and local stakeholders in the criminal justice system.
5) Present findings from the analyses to the task force and begin developing policy options.
6) Produce a report summarizing the analyses and policy options and present the report as requested.

The first task force meeting took place on September 12, 2023, and the final task force meeting took place on September 12, 2024, after having research findings presented from the CSG and the Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI). Recordings from all task force meetings are available on the HCR23 website, and the Commission's YouTube Channel. Ultimately, the group did not collectively agree on legislation or recommendations for the legislature. The report was released on January 21, 2025, with all the information collected from the meetings.

The report can be found at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs Informational Briefing on Presentation of 2024 Annual Report and Correctional Staff Survey, Findings and Recommendations Report

On January 22, 2025, the Oversight Coordinator and Chair presented its 2024 Annual Report and 2025 *Correctional Staff Survey, Findings and Recommendations Report* during a Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs (PSM) informational briefing. The briefing was meant to bring awareness to the work of the Commission, and the important findings and recommendations outlined in the correctional staff report. The Commission thanks Chair Brandon Elefante and Vice Chair Glenn Wakai for the invitation to present to the committee.

House Committee on Public Safety Informational Briefing on Compassionate Release

On October 6, 2025, the House Committee on Public Safety hosted an informational briefing on compassionate release. The briefing included a presentation from Molly Crane, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Families for Justice Reform (FAMM), with brief comments and questions answered by Christin M. Johnson, Oversight Coordinator, Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission. The goal of the presentation was to help legislators and the general public understand the importance and significance of compassionate release, and to support upcoming legislation to embed compassionate release in statute. The presentation can be found here:
https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/HOUSE/PBS/PBSfiles/2025_FAMM_Presentation.pdf

Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group

On October 16, 2025, Chair Patterson participated in the Restrictive Housing Legislative Working group as a member of the working group. The Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group also completed an on-site inspection of Halawa Correctional Facility, with special interest given to the Restrictive Housing Unit on October 28, 2025, however Chair Patterson and Oversight Coordinator Johnson were unable to attend due to a travel conflict. The Act 292 Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group was established by the Legislature and enacted into law by Governor Joshua Green on July 3, 2025, to develop and recommend more comprehensive laws, policies, and procedures regarding restrictive housing for members of vulnerable populations.

The Act 292 Working Group is tasked with reviewing, considering, and identifying laws, policies, and procedures regarding restrictive housing for members of vulnerable populations including committed persons who: (a) are sixty years of age or elder; (b) have a physical or mental disability, a history of psychiatric hospitalization, or recently exhibited conduct, including serious self-mutilation, that indicates the need for further observation or evaluation to determine the presence of mental illness; (c) have a developmental disability, as defined in HRS Section 333F-1; (d) have a serious mental condition that cannot be effectively treated while the committed person is in restrictive housing; (e) have a significant auditory or visual impairment; or (f) is perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex. Act 292 (SLH2025) directs the Working Group to submit its recommendations to the Legislature by January 8, 2027. More information on the Working Group can be found here:
https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/legislature/specialcommittee.aspx?comm=rhg&year=2025

LEGISLATION

Amendments to Chapter 353L: Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission

Chapter 353L is the mandate that created and empowers the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission. The Commission requested two areas of the law be amended to further support the Commission's mission and duties. The Commission was successful in that Act 242 of 2025 was signed into law which included amendments to the Oversight Coordinator's term limit (changing from two years to three years), conditions of reappointment, and ensures the Oversight Coordinator can enter facilities unannounced. The detailed amendments can be found below.

The Commission found that the Oversight Coordinator should have a longer term as two years is an extremely limited timeframe to supervise and administer the operation of the commission in accordance with 353L.

[§353L-2] Oversight coordinator; appointment; term.

(a) The governor shall appoint an oversight coordinator from a list of three nominees submitted by the commission. The oversight coordinator shall be a person qualified by training and experience to administer the Hawaii correctional system oversight commission and shall be well-versed in criminal justice reform and maintain a firm commitment to the correctional system's transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model. The oversight coordinator shall serve a [~~two-year~~] three-year term [~~.~~] ; provided that at the end of the coordinator's term, the Hawaii correctional system oversight commission may review the coordinator's performance and make a recommendation to the governor whether the coordinator should be retained for an additional term."

The last amendment ensures that the Oversight Coordinator can enter facilities, unannounced, as the Coordinator sees fit. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has interpreted the current language to mean that the Coordinator can complete an unannounced tour only if it's during an investigation. However, nationally recognized best oversight practices must encompass unfettered access to facilities at all times.

[§353L-7] Studies and investigations; procedures.

"(c) [~~In an investigation, the~~] The oversight coordinator may make inquiries and obtain information as the oversight coordinator thinks fit, enter without notice to inspect the premises of an agency or correctional facility, and, in an investigation, hold private hearings in accordance with chapter 91."

LOOKING AT 2026 AND BEYOND

A New Focus on Investigative Processes

In 2025, the Commission reached a critical milestone in fulfilling its statutory mandate with the hiring of two full-time investigators. For the first time since its establishment, the Commission now has the dedicated capacity to meaningfully investigate individual complaints involving Hawai'i's correctional facilities. While investigation of complaints has always been central to the Commission's mission, limited staffing in prior years required the Commission to focus primarily on system-level monitoring, reporting, and policy analysis. The addition of investigative staff represents a fundamental strengthening of the Commission's oversight function.

The Commission's investigative structure is intentionally divided to reflect the distinct operational realities of Hawai'i's correctional system. One investigator is dedicated to prison facilities, while the second focuses exclusively on jails. This specialization allows for deeper subject-matter expertise, greater consistency in investigative practices, and more responsive engagement with complainants, facility staff, and impacted individuals. By aligning investigative resources with facility type, the Commission is better positioned to identify patterns, assess compliance with standards, and evaluate conditions at both the individual and systemic levels.

Most importantly, this expanded capacity enables the Commission to engage in individualized investigations in a way that was previously not possible. Investigating complaints at the individual level allows the Commission to better understand lived experiences within correctional facilities, identify potential rights violations, and inform broader recommendations for reform. These investigations also strengthen the Commission's ability to build public trust, provide accountability, and ensure that concerns raised by incarcerated individuals, staff, and the community receive meaningful review. The Commission views this development as a foundational step toward more effective, responsive, and comprehensive oversight of Hawai'i's correctional system.

A Continued Commitment to Reentry

In 2025, the Commission published its inaugural reentry report, Hoe Amau: The current state of reentry in Hawaii. This groundbreaking report addresses systemic issues such as inadequate reentry planning, limited program availability, and inconsistent implementation of statutory mandates which is critical in improving outcomes for individuals in custody and enhancing community safety. This report will be updated on an annual basis to reflect the Department's compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes Comprehensive Offender Reentry System, and the Department's progress of adopting the many recommendations which stemmed from that report.

Additionally, the Commission strategically hired a Reentry Oversight Specialist whose work is informed by lived experience as a formerly incarcerated person and as a Native Hawaiian. As a result, the Commission's 2023 Reentry Strategic Plan was updated to more intentionally reflect cultural importance, lived experience, and equity in reentry oversight.

SUMMARY

In 2025, the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission continued its independent oversight of the state’s jails and prisons with a focus on transparency, safety, rehabilitation, and accountability. Throughout the year, the Commission held monthly public meetings, toured every correctional facility statewide, and issued multiple public reports, including facility-specific assessments, a correctional staff survey report, and the Commission’s first comprehensive reentry report. These efforts were informed by conversations with people in custody, correctional staff, community service providers, advocates, and government stakeholders.

Key findings from 2025 include persistent challenges related to aging infrastructure, overcrowding, staffing shortages, limited access to programming, and gaps in medical, mental health, and reentry services. Sixteen individuals died in custody during the year, underscoring the urgency of transparency, prevention, and system-wide accountability. The Commission continues to publicly report deaths in custody to ensure that these incidents are documented, examined, and not overlooked.

In response to its observations, the Commission issued more than 45 recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. These recommendations emphasize improving safety and living conditions, expanding out-of-cell time and meaningful programming, strengthening grievance processes, increasing the use of diversion and furloughs, and supporting successful reentry. While some progress has been made, many issues remain unresolved and require sustained collaboration across the justice system.

Reentry was a central focus of the Commission’s work in 2025. Through the publication of *Hoe Amau: The Current State of Reentry in Hawai‘i* and site visits to community-based programs, the Commission identified both critical gaps and promising practices. The report highlights the importance of early reentry planning, continuity of care, culturally grounded programming, and strong partnerships between facilities and community providers to support successful reintegration and public safety.

As the Commission looks to the future, its work will continue to focus on strengthening oversight and advancing meaningful reform. Priorities moving forward include completing a comprehensive deaths in custody report, further elevating the voices of correctional staff and people in custody, and monitoring the implementation of recommendations issued in 2025. The Commission will also continue to assess facility conditions, population management strategies, and the impact of diversion and reentry initiatives across the state.

The Commission remains committed to fostering collaboration among the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Ultimately, the Commission’s forward-looking work is grounded in the belief that transparency, accountability, and partnership can lead to lasting improvement. While challenges remain, the path forward is clear: continued oversight, honest evaluation, and collective action are essential to building a more humane, effective, and rehabilitative correctional system for Hawai‘i.

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2025 Monthly Oversight Coordinator Reports



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – January 2025

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Introduction

In accordance with Chapter §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. In addition to the mandated parties this report must be shared with, the Oversight Coordinator publicly posts the monthly report to increase transparency and accountability. This report will also be shared with each individual who has the responsibility of appointing members of the Commission. This includes:

1) Governor of Hawaii
2) President of the Hawaii Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives
4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

The Oversight Coordinator monthly reports are released on the first Thursday of each month, covering the previous month, and will be discussed on the second Thursday of each month at the monthly Commission meetings.

Death in Custody

On February 5, 2025, around 1:00am at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), a corrections officer responded to commotion coming from a cell, immediately gave direct orders for two cellmates to get away from each other, and then immediately called for backup. Backup arrived, the cellmates were removed, and staff began administering CPR on a 33-year-old male. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived at the facility and assumed CPR and life-saving measures. Around 1:50am, the individual in custody was pronounced deceased. This death appears to be a homicide.

Published Reports

2024 Annual Report

In accordance with 353L-6, the Commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature no less than twenty days before the convening of each regular session. The Commission's 2024 Annual Report includes a full and complete statement of actions taken by the Commission for the preceding year and recommendations, including proposed legislation, that the Commission deems necessary or desirable.

In summary, the Commission undertook significant initiatives, holding 19 public meetings and issuing 20 detailed reports that addressed critical facility conditions, systemic challenges, and policy recommendations. The Commission's collaborative efforts with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation resulted in over 60 recommendations aimed at improving facility safety, enhancing rehabilitative opportunities, and promoting successful reentry into society. Additionally, the Commission conducted 33 general facility visits and six special tours, offering firsthand insights into the state of our correctional institutions. These visits underscored the urgent need for infrastructure upgrades, expanded rehabilitative programming, and compassionate care for individuals in custody.

House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force Report

During the 2023 Legislative Session, House Concurrent Resolution No. 23 was passed requesting the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission to convene a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment. The resolution aimed to explore parole models from other states and determine whether minimum sentencing responsibilities should be removed from the Paroling Authority. The task force included representatives from various sectors, including the judiciary, executive branch, legislature, and victims' advocates. Ultimately, the group did not collectively agree on legislation or recommendations for the legislature. The report was released on January 21, 2025, with all the information collected from the meetings.

The report can be found at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports/

Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report

On January 22, 2025, the Commission released its report on the correctional staff survey, findings, and recommendations. The Commission deliberately undertook this staffing survey and report as the Commission's first system-wide report due to the concerning conditions that staff are expected to work in. For years, the Commission has heard devastating stories from uniform and civilian correctional staff regarding their working conditions whether it be in person during facility tours, or through correctional staff contacting the Commission directly. Corrections staff are desperate to be heard and for meaningful change to occur. This report was intentionally prioritized by the Commission to address the critical issues outlined by staff.

The report can be found at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports/

Communications from Commissions

Letter to Governor: Urgent Call for a System Wide Plan Before Proceeding with New Jail Construction

On January 3, 2025, the Commission sent a letter to Governor Green and the Hawaii State Legislature, expressing conditional support for constructing a new jail to replace the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). The letter raises concerns that the DCR is focusing too narrowly on building the facility without addressing broader, systemic issues in Hawaii's correctional system, including inadequate rehabilitative programming, mental and physical healthcare, and reentry services. The letter highlights the need for evidence-based, culturally competent programs, trauma-informed design, and robust community-based alternatives to incarceration.

The letter can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/communications-news-releases/.

Letter to Governor: Director of DCR Engagement and Participation with the Commission

On January 14, 2025, the Commission sent a letter to Governor Green requesting assistance in ensuring that Director Tommy Johnson of the DCR attends future Commission meetings, as his presence is essential for fostering collaboration and progress on reforms to Hawaii's correctional system. The Commission highlights that past DCR administrations consistently attended meetings and stresses the importance of open communication, accurate information,

and mutual engagement. It also raises concerns over recent comments by Director Johnson that questioned the Commission's expertise, calling for an end to divisive rhetoric and a focus on building trust and collaboration. The Commission seeks the Governor's support in encouraging the Director to actively engage and work collectively toward meaningful corrections reform.

The letter can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/communications-news-releases/.

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs Informational Briefing

Presentation of 2024 Annual Report and Correctional Staff Survey, Findings and Recommendations Report

On January 22, 2025, the Oversight Coordinator and Chair presented its 2024 Annual Report and Correctional Staff Survey, Findings and Recommendations Report during a Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs (PSM) informational briefing. The briefing was meant to bring awareness to the work of the Commission, and the important findings and recommendations outlined in the correctional staff report. The Commission thanks Chair Brandon Elefante and Vice Chair Glenn Wakai for the invitation to present to the committee.

Commission Meeting on Legislative Priorities

The Commission had an additional meeting (outside of the regular monthly meetings) on January 30, 2025, to finalize a list of legislative measures that Commissioners will testify on. Below is the list of bills the Commission chose to support. The Commission did not choose any bills to actively not support.

A. Commission Related Bills

HB 1002 (SB 1321)
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission; Oversight Coordinator
RELATING TO THE HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION.
Beginning July 1, 2025, extends the term of the oversight coordinator for the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission. Clarifies that the oversight coordinator has the general authority to inspect agencies and correctional facilities without notice.
Introduced by: NAKAMURA (Introduced by request of another party)

B. Bail/Pre-Trial Detention

HB 127
Pretrial Release; Bail
RELATING TO PRETRIAL RELEASE.
Requires the court to enter on the record its written findings regarding the necessity of the conditions imposed on a defendant's release. Requires bail to be set in an amount that the defendant can afford based on certain factors.
Introduced by: TARNAS, BELATTI, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, MARTEN, PERRUSO, POEPOE, SOUZA, TAKAYAMA

SB 725 (HB 675)
Judges; Bail; Findings
RELATING TO BAIL.
Requires judges to make certain findings regarding a defendant's ability to afford bail.
Introduced by: RHOADS, CHANG, SAN BUENAVENTURA

C. New Jail/New Construction

HB 1263 – SUBMIT COMMENTS
Correctional Facilities; Moratorium; Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission; Criminal Justice Diversion Task Force; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO CORRECTIONS.
Establishes a moratorium on the issuance of a request for proposal and construction of any new or expanded correctional facility from 7/1/2025 to 6/30/2028, including the planned construction of a new facility to replace the existing Oahu community correctional center. Establishes a criminal justice diversion task force. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: HUSSEY, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, PERRUSO

D. Rehabilitative Practices

SB 782 (HB 676)
PUC; Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Communication Services; Correctional Facilities; Hawaii Youth Correctional Facilities; Report; Appropriations ($)
RELATING TO YOUTH AND ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.
Requires the State's youth and adult correctional facilities to provide free and accessible voice communication services for incarcerated persons in state correctional facilities. Prohibits any state agency from deriving revenue or financial benefit from the provision of communication services to persons confined in state correctional facilities. Requires the Public Utilities Commission to establish service quality standards and rules for the free voice communication services. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: Rhodes

E. Reentry

HB 1342
Recidivism; Offender Re-entry Programs; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS.
Expands programming and training for the comprehensive offender re-entry program under the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to reduce the rate of recidivism and increase inmate marketability and workforce readiness. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: SHIMIZU, AMATO, BELATTI, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KUSCH, LA CHICA, MATAYOSHI, MATSUMOTO, OLDS, PIERICK, TAKAYAMA, WARD

HB 911
Recidivism; Offender Re-entry Programs; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS.
Expands programming and training for the comprehensive offender reentry program under the department of corrections and rehabilitation to reduce the rate of recidivism and increase inmate marketability. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: MATSUMOTO, GARCIA, IWAMOTO, KILA, MATAYOSHI, MIYAKE, OLDS, WARD, Alcos

HB 433
Reentry Services; Community-based Services; Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY.
Appropriates funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for reentry services to connect offenders with community-based services.
Introduced by: NAKAMURA, AMATO, BELATTI, CHUN, COCHRAN, EVSLIN, GARRETT, GRANDINETTI, HASHEM, HOLT, HUSSEY, ICHIYAMA, ILAGAN, IWAMOTO, KAHALOA, KAPELA, KEOHOKAPU-LEE LOY, KILA, KITAGAWA, KONG, KUSCH, LA CHICA, LEE, M., LOWEN, MARTEN, MATAYOSHI, MIYAKE, MORIKAWA, OLDS, PERRUSO, POEPOE, QUINLAN, SAYAMA, TAKAYAMA, TAKENOUCHI, TAM, TARNAS, TEMPLO, TODD, WOODSON, YAMASHITA, Lamosao

HB 481
DCR; Offender Reentry; Certification; Suitability for Employment ($)
RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY.
Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to issue a certificate of suitability for employment. Requires the Department to collaborate with state and federal agencies and private employers to educate stakeholders on the certification. Appropriate funds.
Introduced by: MURAOKA

HB 251 (SB 734)

Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Department of Human Services; Social Work; Training Program; Nonviolent Incarcerated Individuals; Reports; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO SOCIAL WORK.
Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, to develop and establish a social work training program to assist nonviolent incarcerated individuals in the area of social work. Requires progress reports on the program to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: TAM, AMATO, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KILA, LA CHICA, LEE, M., MARTEN, MATAYOSHI, POEPOE, TAKAYAMA, TARNAS, TODD

SB 224 (HB 677)
DCR; Offender Reentry; Identification Documents; Departmental Assistance
RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION.
Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in collaboration with various agencies and upon request of the inmates, to assist inmates in obtaining the inmates' civil identification card, birth certificate, social security card, and other relevant identification necessary for successful reentry into society, as soon as practicable. Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to initiate the process of obtaining identifying documents for inmates released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards and other identifying documents to the inmate as soon as practicable.
Introduced by: ELEFANTE, AQUINO, CHANG, KANUHA, MCKELVEY, SAN BUENAVENTURA, WAKAI, Fukunaga, Hashimoto, Moriwaki

F. Medical

HB 854
Electronic Record Keeping; DC&R; Medical Records; Reporting; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OF COMMITTED PERSONS.
Appropriates $500,000, for each year of the fiscal biennium to the department of corrections and rehabilitation to procure a new software for electronic record keeping of medical records. Requires a report to the legislature.
Introduced by: SHIMIZU, IWAMOTO, LA CHICA, MATSUMOTO, MURAOKA, PIERICK, WARD

G. Mental Health

SB 955 – SUBMIT COMMENTS
DOH; Judiciary; Penal Code; Fitness to Proceed; Escape From Custody
RELATING TO FITNESS TO PROCEED.
Clarifies the term of commitment for a defendant being held at a hospital or mental health facility for a fitness-to-proceed examination. Clarifies who may serve as a qualified examiner. Reduces from 3 to 2 the number of qualified examiners required for a fitness-to-proceed examination in a felony case, unless the examiners disagree on the defendant's fitness. Establishes the rate of compensation for conducting the examinations. Establishes a reduced penalty, except in certain circumstances, for a person who commits the offense of escape in the second degree while in the custody of the Director of Health under section 704-421(1), Hawaii Revised Statutes.
Introduced by: SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHANG, MCKELVEY

SB 160 – SUBMIT COMMENTS
DOH; DCR; Inmates; Detainees; Mental Health Facility; Appropriation ($)
RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.
Requires the Department of Health to construct a mental health facility for inmates or detainees with mental health needs in the custody of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Appropriates moneys.
Introduced by: CHANG, FEVELLA, LEE, Gabbard

HB 1197
DC&R; Clinical Psychologists; Student Education Partnerships ($)
RELATING TO CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY.
Authorizes the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to utilize student education partnerships to increase the amount of mental health care providers in correctional facilities across the State. Appropriates funds.

H. Solitary Confinement

SB 104 (HB 1322)
DCR; Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission; Correctional Facilities; Committed Persons; Solitary Confinement; Restrictions; Report
RELATING TO CORRECTIONS.
Restricts the use of solitary confinement in state-operated and state-contracted correctional facilities, with certain specified exceptions. Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to develop written policies and procedures regarding solitary confinement by 7/1/2026. Requires the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission to review certain housing placements. Requires the Department to develop policies and procedures to review committed persons placed in solitary confinement and develop a plan for committed persons currently in solitary confinement by 4/1/2026. Requires a report to the Legislature and Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission. Effective 7/1/2026.
Introduced by: ELEFANTE, CHANG, FEVELLA, FUKUNAGA, LEE, SAN BUENAVENTURA, Wakai

I. Correctional Staff

SB 474 – SUBMIT COMMENTS
DCR; Psychologists; Licensing
RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGISTS.
Requires clinical psychologists employed by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to obtain licensure within 10 years from the date of employment. Sunsets on 7/1/2035.
Introduced by: ELEFANTE, CHANG, FEVELLA, INOUYE, KIDANI, Hashimoto, San Buenaventura

HB 69 (SB 90)
DCR; Compensatory Time Cash-Out Pilot Program; Appropriations ($)
RELATING TO A COMPENSATORY TIME CASH-OUT PILOT PROGRAM.
Establishes a Compensatory Time Cash-Out Pilot Program for eligible employees of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation who work in any state correctional facility. Appropriates funds.
Introduced by: MATAYOSHI, CHUN, GARRETT, HOLT, KITAGAWA, MARTEN, OLDS, SAYAMA, TAKAYAMA, TAM

J. Juvenile Justice

SB 694
Minors; Detention; Adult Correctional Facilities; Prohibition
RELATING TO THE DETENTION OF MINORS.
Prohibits minors from being held in jails, lockups, or prisons for adults.
Introduced by: GABBARD, CHANG

K. Expungement

HB 132
AG; Expungement; Pilot Project; Promotion of a Drug in the Third Degree; Schedule V Substances
RELATING TO EXPUNGEMENT.
Makes an amendment to the Department of the Attorney General pilot project for a state-initiated expungement process of arrest records concerning promoting a detrimental drug in the third degree to include the possession of any schedule V substance in any amount.
Introduced by: TARNAS, BELATTI, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KAPELA, KUSCH, LEE, MARTEN, PERRUSO, POEPOE, Matayoshi

Current Projects

Reentry Report

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to work with the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DCR) in monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program, HCSOC staff are currently working on a reentry report in accordance with the reentry portion of the Commission's mandate:

- Work with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in monitoring and reviewing the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii Paroling Authority's oversight of parolees. HRS §353L-3(b)(3)
- Ensure that the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System under Chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of people in custody on parole when the maximum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services. HRS §353L-3(b)(4)

The Commission will compile the HCSOC's first reentry report, outlining findings, highlighting best practices, and offering recommendations. The report is due to be published in late February, 2025.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – December

	Cost	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			**$845**	
Office Furniture			$0.00	
General Office Supplies	$588.63	1.00	$588.63	Computer Equipment
Staff and Commission Badges			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			$0.00	
Cell Phone			$0.00	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan	$172.99	1.00	$172.99	
Wifi Hotspot			$0.00	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$65.00	1.00	$65.00	
Eleastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$18.20	1.00	$18.20	
Other Current Expenditures			$0.00	
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			**$341.18**	
Airfare	$137.18	1.00	$137.18	
Car Rental	$115.00	1.00	$115.00	
Daily Per Diem	$20.00	2.00	$40.00	GC & RI
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking	$49.00	1.00	$49.00	GC & RI
Per Diem - Misc			$0.00	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			**$682.58**	
Airfare	$682.58	1.00	$682.58	Conference Travel
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Memberships + Conferences			**$600.00**	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)	$600.00	1.00	$600.00	
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			$0.00	
NACOLE Virtual Training			$0.00	
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit			$0.00	
Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice			$0.00	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Baggage Fee			$0.00	
TOTAL			**$2,468.58**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address: Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Website: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov

Submit Testimony: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony/

Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: YouTube
LinkedIn
Facebook
Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on February 13, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on March 13, 2025, at the Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S Beretania St., Room 203, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 and online via Zoom. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – February 2025

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Introduction

In accordance with Chapter §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. In addition to the mandated parties this report must be shared with, the Oversight Coordinator publicly posts the monthly report to increase transparency and accountability. This report will also be shared with each individual who has the responsibility of appointing members of the Commission. This includes:

1) Governor of Hawaii
2) President of the Hawaii Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives
4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

The Oversight Coordinator monthly reports are released on the first Thursday of each month, covering the previous month, and will be discussed on the second Thursday of each month at the monthly Commission meetings.

Death in Custody

Note: The following death was reported in the January 2025 Oversight Coordinator Report published on February 7, 2025: On February 5, 2025, around 1:00am at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), a corrections officer responded to commotion coming from a cell, immediately gave direct orders for two cellmates to get away from each other, and then immediately called for backup. Backup arrived, the cellmates were removed, and staff began administering CPR on a 33-year-old male. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived at the facility and assumed CPR and life-saving measures. Around 1:50am, the individual in custody was pronounced deceased. This death appears to be a homicide.

Welcoming New Staff

Alec Jamerson, Jail Oversight Specialist

Alec spent much of his childhood in Honolulu, HI and brings a decade of investigative experience to the HCSOC. Alec's experience investigating policy violations, Title IX and Title VII violations, criminal and civil misconduct, workplace misconduct, sexual misconduct, alcohol consumption, diversion, fraud, nursing violations, use of force, and misuse of information technology systems has provided insight into the need for policy reform. Alec first recognized the need for correctional reform in 2007, when he completed a field research project on the cause of homelessness in Long Beach, CA. After receiving his BA from the University of New Mexico, Alec began his service to the national community as an Investigation Analyst in 2014, conducting investigations that protect national security. Alec became a credentialed Investigator in 2017. His professional development journey has led Alec to ho'opili hou to Hawaii and directly serve the community that is an integral part of his ohana.

Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist

Kimmy Takata brings both professional expertise and lived experience to the Oversight Commission. Having navigated the criminal justice system firsthand, she has dedicated her career to supporting justice-involved individuals through advocacy, peer support, and systemic reform. Upon reentering society, Kimmy Takata pursued higher education, earning an

associate's degree in Hawaiian studies, a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science, and is soon to complete her Master's in Criminal Justice. For over a decade, she has worked with the Pu'a Foundation, providing direct support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women. She is a Certified Peer Support Specialist through the Department of Health and now serves as a trainer, equipping others with the tools to guide individuals through reentry. Her lived experience, combined with her professional background, gives her a unique perspective on the challenges within the system. With deep insight into where the system fails and where it can be improved, Kimmy Takata is committed to advocating for meaningful, trauma-informed reforms that promote successful reintegration and reduce recidivism in Hawai'i.

Published Reports

Hoe Amau – The current state of reentry in Hawaii

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to monitor and review the reentry system and comprehensive offender reentry program, the Commission has published its inaugural reentry report, Hoe Amau: The current state of reentry in Hawaii. Hoe amau (pull for the shore) represents the desperate effort to reach a safe and stable place, symbolizing the hope for salvation and opportunity for a new beginning.

Hawaii's correctional and reentry system stands at a pivotal moment, with a clear path forward toward a rehabilitative and therapeutic model. While significant challenges remain—including staffing shortages, gaps in reentry services, and delays in parole releases—this report highlights both the barriers and the opportunities for meaningful reform. Addressing systemic issues such as inadequate reentry planning, limited program availability, and inconsistent implementation of statutory mandates will be critical in improving outcomes for individuals in custody and enhancing community safety.

The report will be presented during the March 13 2025 Commission meeting and can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports/

Events Attended

Jail and Prison Oversight Forum

On February 18, 2025, Commission staff attended the *Jail & Prison Oversight Forum* hosted by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). The open forum covered the Office of the Washington State Corrections Ombuds (OCO) recent report on unexpected fatalities and allowed opportunity for questions and answers from other corrections oversight professionals across the nation. The report provided transparency and insight into the leading causes of unexpected fatalities within the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC), and how the DOC classifies unexpected fatalities. OCO's report on unexpected fatalities helps to set a precedent of transparency for reporting unexpected fatalities in correctional facilities.

NACOLE Webinar: Digital Video Evidence: Identifying Technical Challenges and Limitations

On February 21, 2025, Commission staff attended a webinar hosted by NACOLE covering Digital Video Evidence: Identifying Technical Challenges and Limitations. Casey Yunko, a Forensic Video Technician with Axon, discussed the importance of proper training for anyone tasked with reviewing and/or processing multimedia evidence for investigative purposes. He

provided a thorough presentation on how to identify technical complications and limitations with video evidence and the misconceptions of digital video evidence. Casey also covered where to find more training for certification in authenticating video evidence. This training provided valuable insight into navigating correctional facility's CCTV systems.

2025 Pu'uhonua Summit

On February 28, 2025, commission staff attended the Pu'uhonua Summit hosted by Hawaii Community College Administration of Justice (AJ) Club and Program. The Lāmalama Ka Ulu Healing Center led discussions on truth, healing, and recovery. Attendees consisted of students from varying majors, cultural practitioners, community partners, and supporters coming together to learn about and immerse in experiencing the historical events of Hawai'i and reenact its impact on societal harmony with the land, with each other, and within families. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) shared a presentation on current initiatives and future plans for rehabilitation, reentry, and transparency.

The summit highlighted the lived experiences of justice-involved individuals, shedding light on their reentry challenges and successes. It provided a collaborative space for talk story, resource sharing, and strengthening community support for reintegration.

Past Meetings

On February 13, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings/. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Months – January & February

Note: *Due to the schedule change for monthly meetings for 2025, there was not a monthly report posted in January 2025. Therefore, the first report of the year was the February 13, 2025, monthly report, which covered December 2024 expenses. January and February 2025 expenses are included in this report, and applicable monthly expenses will be reported in alignment with the monthly reports beginning next month.*

January

	Cost	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			**$659**	
Office Furniture			$0.00	
General Office Supplies	$200.00	1.00	$200.00	Parking Passes
Staff and Commission Badges			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			$0.00	
Cell Phone			$0.00	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan	$172.99	1.00	$172.99	
Wifi Hotspot			$0.00	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$130.00	1.00	$130.00	November/December
Eleastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$35.80	1.00	$35.80	November/December
Other Current Expenditures	$120.00	1.00	$120.00	Canva subscription
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			**$324.29**	
Airfare	$284.29	1.00	$284.29	RI-12/05 & 01/09
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem	$20.00	2.00	$40.00	CMC-08/23 & 10/17
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Per Diem - Misc			$0.00	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Memberships + Conferences			**$1,960.61**	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)			$0.00	
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			$0.00	
NACOLE Virtual Training			$0.00	
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit			$0.00	
Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice			$0.00	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem	$974.25	1.00	$974.25	MKP-10/06
Lodging+Tax	$986.36	1.00	$986.36	MKP-10/06
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Baggage Fee			$0.00	
TOTAL			**$2,943.69**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

February

	Cost	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			**$0**	
Office Furniture			$0.00	
General Office Supplies			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badges			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			$0.00	
Cell Phone			$0.00	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan			$0.00	
Wifi Hotspot			$0.00	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management			$0.00	
Eleastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management			$0.00	
Other Current Expenditures			$0.00	
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			**$20.00**	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem	$20.00	1.00	$20.00	CMJ-10/17
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Per Diem - Misc			$0.00	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Memberships + Conferences			**$0.00**	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)			$0.00	
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			$0.00	
NACOLE Virtual Training			$0.00	
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit			$0.00	
Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice			$0.00	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Baggage Fee			$0.00	
TOTAL			**$20.00**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address:	Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission 235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor Honolulu, HI 96813
Website:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov
Submit Testimony:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony/
Email:	hcsoc@hawaii.gov
Social Media:	YouTube LinkedIn Facebook Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on March 13, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on April 10, 2025, at the Kaua‘i Community College, 3-1901 Kaumuali‘i Hwy, Room OCET 106, Lihue, Hawai’i 96766 and online via Zoom. More information can be found on the Commission’s webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – March 2025

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Introduction

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5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

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Death in Custody

There have been no reported deaths in custody since February 5, 2025.

Correctional Facility Tours

Throughout the month of March, the new staff members have been meeting with all the Wardens, Chiefs of Security, and other applicable staff members to better familiarize themselves with the correctional system. The staff have completed initial tours of the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC), Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC), Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), and will be touring the Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF) and Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF) in April. In the future, a trip will be planned for staff to tour the Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona.

Additionally, staff have been meeting with various government stakeholders and community partners as part of their robust orientation to the Hawaii corrections system. Staff have met with more than 25 DCR staff members and stakeholders, including the Chief Prosecutor Steven Alm.

The Commission thanks all DCR staff, stakeholders, and community partners for their time, experience, and expertise they have shared with our team during the onboarding process.

Events Attended

He Ala Hou O Ke Ola Inc.

On March 27, 2025, Commission staff attended a site visit with David Makilan, founder of He Ala Hou O Ke Ola (HAHOKO). The program supports men transitioning from OCCC by providing stable housing, meals, and a path to recovery and personal development. HAHOKO currently operates five clean and sober homes and offers a structured program at the main facility, where participants can earn their clinical certification upon completion. One of the ongoing challenges HAHOKO faces is securing sustainable funding to continue and expand their efforts. The visit highlighted the importance of community-based reentry programs that provide both practical support and opportunities for personal growth. The Commission thanks David Makilan for his time in highlighting this important program.

16th Annual Parole Completion Celebration

On March 27, 2025, Commissioners and staff attended the 16th Annual Parole Completion Celebration. The Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, Kimmy Takata, was honored and recognized at this event for her achievements and the positive impact she has made throughout the State of Hawaii. It was a meaningful moment to celebrate her hard work, dedication, and personal growth. Commissioner Torney and Commissioner Town joined the event alongside friends and supporters from the Governor's Office, making the celebration even more special. Congratulations, Kimmy!



From left to right: Naomi Leipold, Project Manager, Office of Wellness and Resilience, Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist, HCSOC, and Martha Torney, Commissioner of HCSOC.

Prison and Jail Innovation Lab Peer Learning Community Convening for Prison Oversight Directors

From March 27-28, 2025, the Oversight Coordinator attended the Peer Learning Community: Director's Convening hosted by the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab in Austin, Texas. This convening brought together thirteen different oversight directors from twelve different states and the District of Columbia. The convening covered navigating relationships with various stakeholders, measuring effectiveness and sustainability, managing politics and burnout, and navigating general challenges faced in the oversight community. The Coordinator found it

extremely helpful to be surrounded by colleagues facing similar challenges and offering solutions, and appreciated the invitation from the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab.

Pou Hana O Na Wahine: Ho'i I Ka Hale

On March 28, 2025, Commission staff attended Day 2 of the Pou Hana O Na Wahine: Hoʻi I Ka Hale Training and Resource Fair focused on preventing and addressing domestic violence. The day featured interactive workshops like ʻOhana Kuleana Mapping and Growing into Change, promoting mentorship, healing, and shared responsibility within families. The training also covered policy and procedure in how to navigate the Hawaiʻi State Legislature system, which many Native Hawaiians are unfamiliar with. The resource fair also connected attendees with local organizations providing support and advocacy services.

Past Meetings

On March 13, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings/. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Months – March

	Cost	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			**$419**	
Office Furniture			$0.00	
General Office Supplies	$163.19	1.00	$163.19	Business cards
Staff and Commission Badges			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			$0.00	
Cell Phone			$0.00	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan	$172.99	1.00	$172.99	
Wifi Hotspot			$0.00	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$64.99	1.00	$64.99	
Eleastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	$18.20	1.00	$18.20	
Other Current Expenditures			$0.00	
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			**$137.58**	
Airfare	$137.58	1.00	$137.58	2/13-RI
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Per Diem - Misc			$0.00	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Memberships + Conferences			**$25.00**	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)			$0.00	
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			$0.00	
NACOLE Virtual Training	$25.00	1.00	$25.00	2/7-ANJ
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit			$0.00	
Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice			$0.00	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Baggage Fee			$0.00	
TOTAL			**$581.95**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address: Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Website: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov

Submit Testimony: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony/

Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: YouTube
LinkedIn
Facebook
Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on April 10, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on May 8, 2025, at the Kaua'i Community College, 3-1901 Kaumuali'i Hwy, Room OCET 106, Lihue, Hawai'i 96766 and online via Zoom. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – April 2025

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Introduction

In accordance with Chapter §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. In addition to the mandated parties this report must be shared with, the Oversight Coordinator publicly posts the monthly report to increase transparency and accountability. This report will also be shared with each individual who has the responsibility of appointing members of the Commission. This includes:

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4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

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Death in Custody

There have been no reported deaths in custody since February 5, 2025.

Tours

Hawaii State Hospital



On April 15, 2025, Chair Patterson and Commission staff toured the Hawaii State Hospital (HSH) to better understand the overlap between the population incarcerated in the jails and the population held at the hospital. It was an insightful visit which included a thorough presentation of the population and a tour of the newly constructed hospital. The Commission plans to tour

the Hawaii State Hospital collectively in August 2025 after the Commission meeting. The Commission thanks Mark Linscott, Administrator, Terrance Cheung, Chief Strategy Officer, and all HSH staff for their warm welcome and expertise.

HAHOKO Impact Center

On April 17, 2025, DCR joined Commission staff for a visit to the He Ala Hou O Ke Ola (HAHOKO) program, a nonprofit organization operating as a community reintegration program. HAHOKO provides Clean and Sober Housing, a Therapeutic Living Program, and supportive services for individuals who are justice-involved, homeless, or struggling with addiction and mental health challenges. This visit marked the beginning of a positive connection between DCR and HAHOKO, and the Commission appreciated DCR's collaboration in visiting the program together.

Events Attended

WCF Keiki Day

On April 6, 2025, Commission staff attended the Easter Keiki Day event hosted by the Waiawa Correctional Facility in collaboration with Keiki O Ka ʻĀina (KOKA) Family Learning Centers. Sixteen fathers, 23 children, six adult children, and 13 caregivers attended the event in addition to nearly a dozen volunteers. During the three-hour event, fathers and their children played activities and games that included soccer, volleyball and tossing a football to one another. Families also decorated egg-and-bunny-shaped sugar cookies, participated in an Easter egg hunt, and took photos with the Easter Bunny.



The Commission congratulates the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on its commitment to hosting 10 successful Keiki Days at the Waiawa Correctional Facility, the Women's Community Correctional Center, the Halawa Correctional Facility, and an upcoming event for the Kulani Correctional Facility.

Dismas Charities Honolulu Community Relations Board Meeting

On April 24, 2025, Commission staff attended the Quarterly Community Relations Board meeting hosted by Dismas Charities in Honolulu. The event brought together federal agencies,

community organizations, and reentry partners to share updates, resources, and collaboration opportunities. Key topics included federal reentry efforts, plans for a new reentry facility (on the federal side), and success stories from individuals on probation. The meeting provided valuable insight into the more structured federal reentry system and highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen community support for returning citizens.

Projects

Complaint Management

After completing a robust orientation to the Hawaii correctional system, Commission staff began the process of building a tracking system to track and monitor more than 200 backlogged letters received from people in custody, DCR staff, and various stakeholders. The tracking system has been optimized for resolving the backlog of letters and helping HCSOC reach operational capacity as quickly as possible. This will ensure people in custody, DCR staff, and stakeholders concerns are met with timely responses. The tracking system has also been designed to be easily integrated with a case management system, which the Commission received funding for fiscal year 2026. This will greatly improve HCSOC's ability to track, monitor, investigate, and respond to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

On April 10, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings/. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – April

	Cost	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			**$1,262**	
Office Furniture			$0.00	
General Office Supplies	$1,061.42	1.00	$1,061.42	Supplies + Parking Passes
Staff and Commission Badges			$0.00	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			$0.00	
Cell Phone			$0.00	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan	$200.74	1.00	$200.74	
Wifi Hotspot			$0.00	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management			$0.00	
Eleastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management			$0.00	
Other Current Expenditures			$0.00	
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			**$2,397.87**	
Airfare	$2,200.87	1.00	$2,200.87	Commission travel
Car Rental	$76.50	2.00	$153.00	
Daily Per Diem	$20.00	1.00	$20.00	01/09-RI
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking	$24.00	1.00	$24.00	01/09-RI
Per Diem - Misc			$0.00	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			**$2,665.69**	
Airfare	$915.65	1.00	$915.65	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem	$884.50	1.00	$884.50	AZ/TX-MKP
Lodging+Tax	$784.92	1.00	$784.92	AZ/TX-MKP
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Per Diem - Misc	$80.62	1.00	$80.62	Baggage Fee-MKP
Memberships + Conferences			**$0.00**	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)			$0.00	
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			$0.00	
NACOLE Virtual Training			$0.00	
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit			$0.00	
Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice			$0.00	
Airfare			$0.00	
Car Rental			$0.00	
Daily Per Diem			$0.00	
Lodging+Tax			$0.00	
Ground Transportation			$0.00	
Airport Parking			$0.00	
Baggage Fee			$0.00	
TOTAL			**$6,325.72**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address:	Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission 235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor Honolulu, HI 96813
Website:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov
Submit Testimony:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony/
Email:	hcsoc@hawaii.gov
Social Media:	YouTube LinkedIn Facebook Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on May 8, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on June 12, 2025, at the University of Hawai‘i Maui College, 310 W. Ka‘ahumanu Avenue, Room Noii 201, Kahului, Hawai’i 96732 and online via Microsoft Teams. More information can be found on the Commission’s webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – May 2025

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Introduction

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Deaths in Custody

1) Late Notice:[1] On April 12, 2025, at approximately 1:03am, a 24-year-old Hawaiian male in custody was found unresponsive at Halawa Correctional Facility. 911 Emergency Services was called and ACOs immediately administered CPR. At approximately 2:01am, EMS arrived and continued to administer CPR until approximately 2:28am when the individual was unfortunately pronounced deceased. The incident appears to be a suicide, which is the first apparent suicide this year. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

2) On May 17, 2025, at approximately 6:50am, a 29-year-old Micronesian male in custody was found unresponsive at the Halawa Correctional Facility. The responding ACO immediately administered CPR while 911 Emergency Services was called. At approximately 7:17am, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived at the facility. Unfortunately, at 7:54am, the individual was pronounced deceased. The incident appears to be a suicide, which is the second apparent suicide this year. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

3) On May 29, 2025, at approximately 10:12 am, DCR was notified that a 37-year-old Hawaiian male in custody was pronounced deceased while hospitalized at Pali Momi Hospital in the ICU. The deceased was in the custody of the Halawa Correctional Facility and was hospitalized after staff found him in his cell on May 27, 2025, under the influence of an unknown substance. CPR was conducted until EMS arrived and

[1] The Department notified the Commission in a timely manner, however, the Commission accidentally left the information out of last month's report.

transported the individual to the hospital. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which includes toxicology testing.

Tours

Hope Center Ministries Kailua

On May 20, 2025, Commission staff visited Hope Center Ministries in Kailua, a deeply spiritual and uplifting faith-based residential recovery program. The center offers a structured 12-month model that includes 24/7 peer-led support, vocational training, and court liaison services. It provides a supportive pathway for men transitioning from incarceration or homelessness and is soon expanding to welcome women. This visit highlighted the program's powerful role in helping individuals begin their healing journey and rebuild their lives with purpose and faith.

Hawaii State Hospital Resource Fair & Blessing of Kahua Ola

On May 30, 2025, Commission staff attended the Hawai‘i State Hospital Resource Fair, which began with a cultural blessing at Kahua Ola – a transitional housing space on campus where residents live independently as they prepare to return to the community. The blessing included traditional Hawaiian practices using pa‘akai and wai, setting the tone for the day. The fair featured community vendors like the Institute for Human Services (HIS) and Project Vision, music by patients, and activities such as sand art and plant medicine education. The event highlighted the healing environment at the Hawaii State Hospital and helped reduce stigma around mental health by showcasing patient talent, recovery, and community integration.



This is a photo of the sand art that everyone at the event participated in creating. It was a meaning opportunity for everyone – patients, volunteers, guests, and providers – to com together and work on a single project. The sand art was designed and run by the art teacher at the Hawaii State Hospital.

Events Attended

Halawa Correctional Facility Graduation Ceremony

On May 8, 2025, Commission staff attended a graduation ceremony at Halawa Correctional Facility, where nine incarcerated men received their Associate of Arts degrees in Business from Chaminade University. The event, filled with emotion and support from families, DCR, and Chaminade staff, highlighted the power of education. A special moment was held for a graduate in Protective Custody, who had to be separated from other graduates and people in custody, to ensure he was also celebrated. The day was a reminder that education can spark hope and transformation within a prison setting.

Hale Nani Resource Fair

On May 15, 2025, Commission staff attended a reintegration resource fair at Hale Nani Correctional Facility, where 26 justice-involved individuals prepared for reentry by connecting

with community organizations offering services such as job training, DMV support, and housing resources. This was the first event of its kind held at Hale Nani. The event was well received, with participants expressing appreciation for the opportunity to learn about vocational training, financial literacy, and dental support. The fair created a positive environment for collaboration and highlighted the importance of continued efforts to bring meaningful, participant-centered reentry support to Hale Nani. DCR is also planning a resource fair to be held at HCCC (main) soon.

NACOLE's Quarterly Forum for Jail and Prison Oversight

On May 20, 2025, Commission staff attended the National Association for Civilian Oversight Law Enforcement's (NACOLE) Quarterly Forum for Jail and Prison Oversight. This virtual event focused on the future of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in light of recent federal budget cuts. National Advocacy Director of Just Detention International, Julie Abate, was the primary speaker of the event. In addition to presenting on the uncertain future of federal funding for PREA, Julie provided PREA training resources and a blueprint for the vicarious trauma-informed organization.

Presentation to the Annual Office of the Public Defender Training Seminar

On May 23, 2025, the Commission's Chair and Oversight Coordinator presented to a large group of public defenders during the Annual Office of the Public Defender Training Seminar. The presentation covered an overview of oversight, a brief history of the Commission and the work the Commission prioritizes today, and the current state of the system to highlight the importance of the Office of the Public Defender and its work. Afterwards, the Chair and Oversight Coordinator took questions and shared insights from touring the correctional facilities. The Commission thanks the First Deputy Public Defender, Hayley Y.C. Cheng, for the warm invitation and opportunity to present.

Projects

Complaint Management

After completing a robust orientation to the Hawaii correctional system, Commission staff began the process of building a tracking system to track and monitor more than 200 backlogged letters received from people in custody, DCR staff, and various stakeholders. The tracking system has been optimized for resolving the backlog of letters and helping HCSOC reach operational capacity as quickly as possible. This will ensure people in custody, DCR staff, and stakeholders concerns are met with timely responses. The tracking system has also been designed to be easily integrated with a case management system, which the Commission received funding for fiscal year 2026. This will greatly improve HCSOC's ability to track, monitor, investigate, and respond to incoming complaints.

Published Reports

Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) Site Visit Observations

On May 8, 2025, the Commission released its Site Visit Observation Report on the April 10, 2025 tour of the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC). The tour included Chair Mark Patterson, Commissioner Martha Torney, Commissioner Ron Ibarra, Commissioner Mark Browning, and Commission staff.

Below are recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation which stemmed from the HCCC tour. The full report can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/

Recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

The Commission restates and urges DCR to adopt the following prior recommendations:

1) **Expand Furlough Utilization at HCCC**
   Currently, 12 men are in the HCCC furlough program despite the capacity to accommodate up to 50 participants. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. While the Commission acknowledges that custody status is not the only factor in furlough determinations, it is a significant one. Notably, 15 individuals at Kulani Correctional Facility have community status, which is required for furlough. It is important to note that this has improved from last year's count (34), however the Commission recognizes that it is important to examine why more people in custody in community status are not in furlough at HCCC or other sites.

2) **Optimize New Housing Unit Utilization**
   The new housing unit, Kaumana, should be assessed and utilized to balance current housing priorities and serve the needs of different populations. This includes decreasing overcrowding, especially in Punahele, better serving vulnerable populations, including the mental health population, creating a proper space for women, and allowing for necessary facility maintenance. With the completion of the new housing unit, it's crucial to consider how it can support the largest issues within the facility.

   During the Commission's talk stories with HCCC staff, many recommended moving the mental health population to the new unit, transforming it into a dedicated mental health housing unit. The new unit includes suicide-resistant features, group space, and recreational areas suitable for this population. This move would help decrease overcrowding in Punahele, create more space for women in the main facility, and relocate others from inadequate spaces, significantly improving living conditions.

   It should be noted that even with the addition of these 24 new cells, accommodating up to 48 more people, the true jail population will still exceed capacity, necessitating continued population reduction efforts.

3) **Reduce Overcrowding through System-wide Population Reduction Efforts**
   The most significant issue at HCCC remains overcrowding, particularly in Punahele, where vulnerable populations, such as those with acute mental illness and severe health issues, as well as new admissions, are housed. Even with the opening of the new unit, the facility will remain overcrowded. Addressing this requires a State and Third Circuit-wide priority on safely reducing the jail population. DCR alone cannot resolve this issue; instead, it must involve a coordinated system-wide effort.

All justice partners, including the Judiciary, Office of the Public Defender, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, Probation, the Department of Health, and Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, must work both individually and collectively to safely reduce the jail population. On Hawaii Island, a coordinated approach is essential.

A. Further Diversion Initiatives. The Commission supports ongoing and new diversion initiatives on Hawaii Island to address the needs of justice-involved individuals. The Commission is aware that this is in process and supports the furtherance of these and other diversion initiatives.

B. Work Together to Reduce Pretrial Time. Consider a Third Circuit-wide goal – Judiciary, Prosecutor, Public Defender, and criminal defense attorney – to reduce timelines for all cases, aiming to expedite both felony and misdemeanor proceedings and reduce the time people spend in HCCC pretrial.

C. Population Analysis. To safely divert people and support successful transitions post-incarceration, it is essential to understand individual needs. The Commission asks the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to consider a population analysis with the following information in a confidential, non-identifying manner: *demographic data, mental health and substance use data, key health indicators, housing data, employment, and income status*. This information will be used to determine what services and support are needed, what is currently provided and available within the community, and where the gaps are. There is a strong community network, including providers, throughout Hawaii Island, but more data is needed to link people to services and support these efforts effectively.

4) Enhance Programming Opportunities and Reduce Idle Time

In addition to facility overcrowding, people in custody have too much idle time and limited access to programming. The Commission witnessed this idle time and recommended the following:

A. Re-establish and Expand Programming Opportunities. Re-establish programming opportunities at pre-COVID levels and then expand opportunities. Bring more programs back into the facility from community service providers. Community partnerships and programs are essential to enhance the facility's ability to manage operational issues.

B. Increase VolinCore Training Opportunities. Offer regularly scheduled continuous VolinCore training opportunities for community service and program providers.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made on April 10, 2025.

1) Ensure Access to Grievances

The Commission noted the significant lack of access to the grievance process for individuals housed at Hale Nani and for those housed in Wainuenue. Staff should be retrained on proper grievance procedures, along with the implementation of ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent and equitable access to the grievance system.

2) **Reevaluate and Monitor Staff Posts**
People in Punahele reported being on 23-hour lockdown and are not given the opportunity to go outside for recreation. Additionally, staff reported that accommodating outdoor recreation in Komohana more than once a week is challenging with short staff. The Commission has observed on more than one visit what appears to be an excess number of staff posted at the temporary gate. At times, the Commission has observed four to five staff at the gate. The Commission strongly recommends that HCCC reevaluates how staff are posted and utilized throughout the facility to ensure that recreational time can be accommodated as frequently as possible.

Past Meetings

On May 8, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – May

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$761.74**	
General Office Supplies	$228.26	1	$228.26	
Telephone	$217.24	2	$434.48	April & May
Other Current Expenditures	$99.00	1	$99.00	ACA membership (3yrs)
Inter-Island Travel			**$1,352.78**	
Airfare	$1,352.78	1	$1,352.78	Commission travel (commissioners & staff)
Car Rental				
Per Diem				multiple travel dates
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber				5/8-GC
Airport Parking				multiple travel dates
Airport Parking				2/13, 3/13-RI
Airport Parking				5/8-GC
Baggage Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem				
Lodging				
Transportation				
Airport Parking				
Baggage Fee				
Toll Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Conferences			**$0.00**	
Airfare				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Car Rental				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Per Diem				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Airport Parking				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Baggage Fee				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Toll Fee				11/12-11/16/2024-CMJ
Miscellaneous				
		TOTAL	**$2,114.52**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

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Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: YouTube
LinkedIn
Facebook
Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on June 12, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on July 10, 2025, at the Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S Beretania St., Room 204, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 and online via Microsoft Teams. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – June 2025

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Introduction

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1) Governor of Hawaii
2) President of the Hawaii Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives
4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

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Deaths in Custody

No deaths occurring in June 2025 have been reported.

Tours

OCCC Tour with DC Information Council

On, June 10, 2025, HCSOC hosted District of Columbia Corrections Information Council's Senior Program Analyst, Patricia Marks. The DC Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent monitoring body mandated by the US Congress and the DC Council to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement at facilities where DC residents are incarcerated including facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP), the DC Department of Corrections (DOC), and private contractors.

Patricia Marks toured Oahu Community Correctional Center with HCSOC staff which allowed the Commission and DCR staff to hear her insights and experience. Warden John Schell and his staff were very accommodating. The visit was informative and supportive of better understanding the operation and the administration of correctional systems in other jurisdictions.

Events Attended

Reentry Simulation: Addressing Barriers to Life After Incarceration

On June 13, 2025, the Commission participated in the *Reimagined Reentry Simulation Project*, an experiential event designed to highlight the systemic barriers faced by individuals transitioning from incarceration to community life. Held in collaboration with the Penn State Restorative Justice Initiative and supported by the American Institute for Research Technical Assistance Grant, the simulation brought together policymakers, practitioners, educators, and community advocates. The event featured a panel moderated by the Oversight Coordinator, with various speakers including Kimmy Takata, the Commission's Reentry Oversight

Specialist, who shared insights from her lived experience. This hands-on learning opportunity offered powerful reflections on the gaps in reentry services and the need for collaborative, person-centered strategies across Hawai‘i.

Nothing About Us Without Us

On June 20, 2025, the Commission attended the Peer Support Summit at Windward Community College—a powerful and collaborative event focused on improving reentry and mental health support systems across the state. The summit gathered peer support workers, mental health advocates, service providers, and justice-impacted individuals to engage in meaningful discussions, share resources, and build action plans. Kimmy Takata, the Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, opened the event with remarks on the importance of lived experience and the role of peer support in creating sustainable change. Highlights included a keynote by Justin Volpe from NASMHPD, presentations by the Office of Wellness and Resilience, and breakout sessions on housing, employment, mental health, and Sequential Intercept Mapping. The event provided valuable insights and resources that will support our ongoing work toward a more supportive and healing reentry system in Hawai‘i.

Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium: Expanding Education-to-Employment Opportunities for Justice-Impacted Individuals

On June 25, 2025, the Commission participated in the *Pathways to Meaningful Employment* event held at Chaminade University, which also offers college classes inside the Halawa Correctional Facility. Funded by a Mellon Grant, the event focused on expanding access to education and employment for justice-impacted individuals. The event emphasized the importance of breaking stigma, supporting second chances, and building inclusive systems—key goals aligned with HCSOC's ongoing reentry work across Hawai‘i.

Projects

Complaint Management

Commission staff built a tracking system to track and monitor more than 200 backlogged letters received from people in custody, DCR staff, and various stakeholders. The tracking system has been optimized for resolving the backlog of letters and helping HCSOC reach operational capacity as quickly as possible. This will ensure people in custody, DCR staff, and stakeholders concerns are met with timely responses. The tracking system has also been designed to be easily integrated with a case management system, which the Commission received funding for fiscal year 2026. This will greatly improve HCSOC's ability to track, monitor, investigate, and respond to incoming complaints.

Published Reports

Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC) Site Visit Observations

On June 12, 2025, the Commission released its Site Visit Observation Report on the May 8, 2025 tour of the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC). The tour included Chair Mark Patterson, Commissioner Martha Torney, Commissioner Ron Ibarra, Commissioner Mark Browning, and Commission staff.

Below are recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation which stemmed from the KCCC tour. The full report can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/

Previous Recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Immediately prioritize the construction and replacement of the KCCC kitchen as it poses a dangerous threat to individuals or staff being hurt due to its desperate condition. In the interim, must repair and maintain current flooring.**
The floors in the kitchen and mess hall were worn through to bare wood in some areas and completely gone in other areas. Plywood had been temporarily laid down to cover missing floorboards, but they were flimsy and extremely dangerous to walk on. The dangerous condition of the floor in the kitchen and mess hall could easily result in serious injury to staff and people in custody. A new floor must be laid as soon as possible.

   Pending the installation of the modular kitchen, the Commission urges DCR to repair and maintain the floor. The Commission has received complaints from people in custody and staff, and the safety of staff and people in custody is one of the highest responsibilities of the department.

2) **Ensure individuals in the facility are receiving the most out-of-cell time possible in alignment with a rehabilitative and therapeutic environment.**
In 2024, individuals in Module B claimed to be locked in their cells for 22 hours per day. On May 8, 2025, individuals in Module A and B made the same claim. This, by definition, is considered restrictive housing, also sometimes referred to as solitary confinement.

   The Commission understands there are staffing issues that contribute to this issue, and applauds the Department's efforts to fill vacancies. However, if the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is serious about the transition to a therapeutic and rehabilitative system, it is imperative to ensure individuals are not locked down within their cells for such extended periods of time.

   Therefore, daily schedules should be posted in all housing units for transparency and accountability regarding programming and out of cell time. This allows individuals in custody to anticipate what is to come, and to hold the staff accountable and ensure programming and out of cell time is completed in a consistent manner.

Additional recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Implement 12-Hour Shifts**
The Commission highly recommends implementing 12-hour shifts. This has been requested by the facility after surveying staff and measuring interest. This was also highlighted as an evident solution for KCCC in the **Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report**. In order to eliminate the need for exhausting 24-hour shifts that cause burnout and an increase in leave requests, the Department must try something different than what it is doing now. Having additional staff at the facility can ensure that posts are not understaffed and increase out-of-cell time and safety for people in custody.

2) **Enable all Facilities to Initiate and Process Emergency Hires On-Site**
   The Commission highly recommends that DCR allow correctional facilities to conduct on-site emergency hiring to expedite filling vacancies and increase staffing levels that are desperately needed to:
   - Monitor the mental health population and ensure the mental health population are housed in the best possible setting for their condition;
   - Ensure people in custody have access to out-of-cell time;
   - Provide much needed and urgent relief to burnt-out staff; and
   - Improve staff morale and retention.

The Commission extends special thanks to the KCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

Past Meetings

On June 26, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – June

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$3,440.08**	
General Office Supplies	$228.26	1	$228.26	
Telephone	$217.24	2	$434.48	April & May
Other Current Expenditures	$2,707.86	1	$2,707.86	Logitech Rally UHD 4K
Other Current Expenditures	$5.12	4	$20.48	Autopsy reports
Other Current Expenditures	$99.00	1	$99.00	ACA membership (3yrs)
Other Current Expenditures	-$25.00	2	-$50.00	4/25-NACOLE webinar refund
Inter-Island Travel			**$1,748.28**	
Airfare	$1,352.78	1	$1,352.78	multiple travel dates
Car Rental	$115.50	1	$115.50	5/8
Per Diem	$20.00	9	$180.00	multiple travel dates
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber				
Airport Parking	$25.00	4	$100.00	multiple travel dates
Baggage Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem				
Lodging				
Transportation				
Airport Parking				
Baggage Fee				
Toll Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Conferences			**$206.78**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem	$58.00	1	$58.00	3/6-3/29/2024-CMJ
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber	$148.78	1	$148.78	3/6-3/29/2024-CMJ
Airport Parking				
Baggage Fee				
Toll Fee				
Miscellaneous				
		TOTAL	**$5,395.14**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

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Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: YouTube
LinkedIn
Facebook
Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on July 10, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on August 14, 2025, at the Windward Community College, 45-720 Keaahala Rd, Room: Hale A'o 102, Kaneohe, HI 96744 and online via Microsoft Teams. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

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Introduction

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Deaths in Custody

The last reported death in custody occurred on May 29, 2025.

Events Attended

Basic Corrections Recruit Class Graduation Ceremony

On July 14, 2025, Commissioner Torney and the Oversight Coordinator attended the graduation ceremony for eight Adult Corrections Officers (ACO) graduating from Basic Corrections Recruit Class at the Island of Hawai‘i YMCA in Hilo. The class completed eight weeks of rigorous training. The Commission shares a warm congratulations to all graduates!

Since the department’s redesignation from the Department of Public Safety (PSD) to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) on January 1, 2024, the Department increased its annual recruit classes to six from three, to address the staffing shortage of corrections officers at facilities in Hawai‘i. By the end of this year, the Department aims to have eight classes.

There are currently 1,140 filled ACO positions and approximately 380 vacant positions.

Dynamic Healing Center

On July 15, 2025, Commission staff visited the Dynamic Healing Center, met with the director Dr. Annie Anderson, and toured the facility. This program provides culturally grounded, trauma-informed care designed for both men and women in their journeys. In addition to its impactful programming, the center operates two well maintained clean and sober houses in Kalihi and Ewa Beach, offering safe, supportive housing that help bridge the gap between treatment and independent living. The visit allowed staff to observe effective reentry practices, strengthen community partnerships, and better understand how culturally rooted care supports successful reentry.

Halawa Resource fair

On July 17, 2025, Commission staff attended the Halawa Correctional Facility resource fair, which hosted about 70 vendors, including Waikiki Health, IHS, HPA, and housing providers, to share resources to help support the men before they transition out. The event was successful, fostering connections between service providers and participants, and strengthening community collaboration to support reentry and improve access to essential services.

Dismas Charities Community Board Meeting

Dismas Charities hosts regular Community Relations Board meetings at various locations to foster collaboration and communication between the organization and community partners. On July 30, 2025, Commission staff attended the Dismas Community Board meeting, which was filled with valuable resources and opportunities to network with other organizations. Dismas Charities play a critical role in supporting federal individuals transitioning back into the community, and this meeting focused on the importance of self-care for both providers and participants. The session fostered collaboration among agencies, shared practical strategies for wellness, and reinforced the vital link between self-care and effective reentry support.

Projects

Complaint Management

After recently receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission secured a vendor to ensure a smooth and efficient system for the office. Commission staff are preparing for a 15-week systems integration process, which will involve integrating the case tracking system developed by Commission staff with the newly developed case management system. Once this process is complete, the Commission will be better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On July 10, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Meeting to Vote for Necessity of Limited Meeting

On July 24, 2025, the Commission hosted a public meeting to discuss and vote on the necessity to have a limited meeting and waive the video recording requirements in order for the Commission to collectively tour the Hawaii State Hospital directly following the Commission's August monthly meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – July

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$0.00**	
General Office Supplies				
Telephone				
Other Current Expenditures				
Other Current Expenditures				
Other Current Expenditures				
Other Current Expenditures				
Inter-Island Travel			**$130.00**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem	$20.00	4	$80.00	CMJ, KRT, RI, GC
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber				
Airport Parking	$25.00	2	$50.00	CMJ, GC
Baggage Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem				
Lodging				
Transportation				
Airport Parking				
Baggage Fee				
Toll Fee				
Miscellaneous				
Conferences			**$0.00**	
Airfare				
Car Rental				
Per Diem				
Lodging				
Transportation - Uber				
Airport Parking				
Baggage Fee				
Toll Fee				
Miscellaneous				
		TOTAL	**$130.00**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

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Email:	hcsoc@hawaii.gov
Social Media:	YouTube LinkedIn Facebook Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting on August 14, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on September 11, 2025, at Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S. Beretania Street, Rom 204, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 or online via Microsoft Teams. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – August 2025

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Introduction

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Death in Custody

On August 9, 2025, at approximately 8:46 am, a 63-year-old Asian male in custody was found unresponsive at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). At approximately 8:55am, on-site medical staff responded and administered CPR. At approximately 9:11am, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel arrived and continued CPR. The patient appeared to regain a pulse and was transported to Queens medical hospital. On August 11, 2025, at approximately 4:20pm, medical staff at the hospital pronounced the patient deceased with the family present. The incident appears to be a suicide. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy, which can include toxicology testing.

Tours

Hawaii State Hospital

On August 14, 2025, directly following the monthly Commission meeting, Chair Patterson, Commissioner Browning, Commissioner Torney, the Oversight Coordinator and staff attended a tour of the Hawaii State Hospital (HSH) hosted by Hawaii State Hospital Administrator, Mark Linscott. Dr. Michael Champion, Senior Advisor for Mental Health and the Justice System, also accompanied the Commission on the tour. The tour was extremely helpful in understanding how mental health intersects with the justice system, and the care offered by the state hospital. The Commission would like to thank Mark Linscott, HSH Administrator for his invitation and hospitality, and Dr. Meghan Brearty for presenting during the August Commission meeting.

Events Attended

Women's Community Correctional Center Ho'ike

On August 14, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the WCCC Ho'ike (exhibition, display, or performance) in the Maunawili courtyard. The women of WCCC showcased their talents through hula, faiva hiva (Tongan song and dance), and Samoan dance. The Total Life Recovery

program also performed a powerful sign dance. The event, "E ola ka inoa: In the name of our ancestors, we rise", highlighted cultural pride, identity, and transformation, reflecting the hard work of the people in custody and staff who made this possible. The event was a showcase of programs, culture and achievements by the women of WCCC.

Waiawa Correctional Facility Resource Fair

On August 28, 2025, Commission staff attended the Waiawa Correctional Facility Resource Fair, which brought together more than 23 vendors providing services related to housing, employment, child support, and reentry. Organizations such as the Institute for Human Services (HIS), Behavioral Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD), Department of Health (DOH), and many others offered a wide range of support and information. Over 150 men in custody participated in the fair, many of whom shared that receiving these resources gave them a greater sense of ease and hope as they prepare for their transition out of Waiawa.

Sequential Intercept Model

On August 22, 2025, Commission staff attended the DCR's Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) meeting in Hilo, Hawai'i. The meeting was designed to build on a working model largely developed by Going Home Hawai'i, and focused on intercepts 2 – 4. Community partners and stakeholders including but not limited to United Healthcare, the Hawai'i County Prosecutor's Office, Hawai'i Paroling Authority, Ohana Health Plan, Hope Services Hawai'i, and Hawai'i Community Correctional Center (HCCC) Warden and staff formed working groups to identify services and resources that can be collaboratively leveraged to serve people with mental health and substance abuse issues on the Island of Hawai'i.

The Commission is encouraged to learn that the DCR has drafted a timeline for synthesizing the input from the meeting's attendees with the intent of implementing a SIM that serves the unique needs of the Island of Hawai'i. DCR intends to hold additional events to gather more information from new and previous attendees to make the model as complete and ready for success as possible. DCR is hopeful that the model can be expanded and customized to meet the unique needs of neighboring islands.

The public can learn more about the SIM by visiting Going Home Hawaii's website at www.goinghomehawaii.org.

Projects

Complaint Management

After recently receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission secured a vendor to ensure a smooth and efficient system for the office. Commission staff are preparing for a 15-week systems integration process, which will involve integrating the case tracking system developed by Commission staff with the newly developed case management system. Once this process is complete, the Commission will be better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On August 14, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – August

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$2,451.74**	
General Office Supplies	$91.08	1	$91.08	
Telephone	$217.24	1	$217.24	
Dues and Subscriptions	$500.00	1	$500.00	NACOLE Membership Renewal
Printing and Binding	$209.42	1	$209.42	Marketing Connections
Printing and Binding	$1,000.00	1	$1,000.00	Artsmart LLC
Other Current Expenditures	$434.00	1	$434.00	ACA Publications
Inter-Island Travel			**$1,538.95**	
Airfare - CMJ	$166.09	2	$332.18	6/26, 7/14
Airfare - MKP	$166.09	1	$166.09	6/26
Airfare - MTT	$166.09	1	$166.09	6/26
Airfare - KRT	$166.09	1	$166.09	6/26
Airfare - GC	$166.09	1	$166.09	6/26
Airfare - RI	$147.11	1	$147.11	6/26
Airfare - RI	$151.84	1	$151.84	7/10
Airfare - RI	-$151.54	1	-$151.54	7/10-Refund
Airfare - ANJ	$179.05	1	$179.05	6/26
Airfare - ANJ	-$179.05	1	-$179.05	6/26 Refund
Airfare - RMB	$179.05	1	$179.05	6/26
Airfare - RMB	-$179.05	1	-$179.05	6/26 Refund
Car Rental - GC	$76.50	1	$76.50	6/26
Car Rental - KRT	$115.50	1	$115.50	6/26
Per Diem - MTT	$20.00	2	$40.00	6/26, 7/14
Per Diem - MKP	$20.00	1	$20.00	6/26
Per Diem - CMJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	7/14
Per Diem - RI	$20.00	1	$20.00	6/30
Parking - MTT	$25.00	1	$25.00	6/26
Parking - MTT	$27.00	1	$27.00	7/14
Parking - RI	$24.00	1	$24.00	6/30
Parking - CMJ	$27.00	1	$27.00	7/14
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Conferences			**$0.00**	
		TOTAL	**$3,990.69**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address:	Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission 235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor Honolulu, HI 96813
Website:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov
Submit Testimony:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony
Email:	hcsoc@hawaii.gov
Social Media:	YouTube LinkedIn Facebook Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting on September 11, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on October 9, 2025, at Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S. Beretania Street, Rom 204, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 or online via Microsoft Teams. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – September 2025

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Introduction

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1) Governor of Hawaii
2) President of the Hawaii Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives
4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

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Deaths in Custody

1. On September 2, 2025, at approximately 8:24pm mountain standard time (MST), a 49-year-old male in custody was found injured on a cell floor at the Northeast New Mexico Correctional Facility in Clayton, NM (interstate compact facility). At approximately 8:29 pm MST, medical staff entered the pod with a gurney and removed the individual. Medical staff performed chest compressions until emergency medical services (EMS) arrived and assumed life saving measures. The male was transported by ambulance to Union County General Hospital where he was pronounced deceased at 9:13 pm MST. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy.

2. On September 25, 2025, at approximately 5:00pm, security staff were alerted that a 62-year-old male in custody needed assistance at Halawa Correctional Facility. Security staff called for medical backup, who arrived at approximately 5:10pm before EMS arrived and assumed life saving measures. The decedent was transported to Pali Momi Medical Center's emergency room where he was pronounced deceased at approximately 6:18pm. The medical examiner will determine the official cause of death following an autopsy.

Tours

Waikiki Health Center

On September 4, 2025, Commission staff visited the Waikiki Health Center where Director of Native Hawaiian Healing/Pu'uhonua Prison program, Francine Dudoit-Tagupa, shared the history and mission of the center. As the first health clinic in Waikiki and a federally Qualified Health Center, Waikiki Health provides medical, dental, behavioral health, and shelter services across eight sites on O'ahu. Unique among health centers, it is the only one focused on reentry, offering prison classes, pre-release support for SNAP and Med-Quest, and traditional Hawaiian healing practices like Ho'oponopono and Lomi to foster whole person and family care.

Waikiki Health plays a critical role in Hawai'i's reentry system, with its work aligning closely to the upcoming 1115 waiver set to begin in January 2026.

Hale Kipa

On September 30, 2025, Commission staff visited Hale Kipa in 'Ewa Beach and met with Executive Director Venus Rosete-Medeiros, who shared the facility's innovative and community-focused programs. Highlights included an aeroponics project where one container equals 3–5 acres of food production, with the first harvest donated to kūpuna, as well as shelters and services for youth up to age 25. Hale Kū Ola provides housing for mothers with children, and the Executive Director hopes to extend this resource to women leaving prison, especially those under 26 who may also access program funding and Housing First vouchers. Hale Kipa also offers the 10-week Kamalama parenting program, currently taught inside WCCC. Despite funding challenges and staff shortages, Hale Kipa remains a vital resource for transition-age youth and holds strong potential to support reentry for justice-involved women.

Events Attended

WCCC Ohana Family Day

On September 13, 2025, Commission staff attended the first-ever 'Ohana Family Day at WCCC, held at Olomana Field. The event brought together 16 women in custody, and their loved ones who came to enjoy the moment**,** creating a rare and meaningful opportunity for families to reunite in a supportive environment. Families enjoyed booths, food, a bounce house, and a petting zoo, supported by 14 work line participants and community partners including Chaplain Tammy, Education, Chaminade University, and the Women's Prison Project. Leadership support was visible with Warden Guillonta welcoming families and Director Tommy Johnson attending. The day created joy, belonging, and meaningful family connections while strengthening case manager relationships and underscoring the vital role of 'ohana in reentry success. The Commission would like to thank the Women's Prison Project for their generous donations to ensure the events success and thank Department leadership and Warden Guillonta for prioritizing family connections.

Reports

Women's Community Correctional Center Site Observations

On Thursday, September 11, 2025, the Commission toured the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included one of the five Commissioners – Commissioner Torney in addition to the Oversight Coordinator and staff. There were no additional recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation that stemmed from the WCCC tour. The full report can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/.

Oahu Community Correctional Center Site Observations

On Wednesday, September 17, 2025, the Commission toured the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included three of the five Commissioners – Chair Patterson, Commissioner Torney, and Commissioner Browning– in addition to the Oversight Coordinator, staff, and State House Representatives Della Au Belatti and Kim Coco Iwamoto. Commissioner Town was present for a meeting with Warden John Schell prior to the tour.

Below are recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation which stemmed from the OCCC tour. The full report can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/

Follow-up on Previous Commission Recommendations

The Commission made the following recommendations following the HCSOC February 2023 tour, which have not yet been implemented. The Commission continues to recommend the following:

1) **Allow for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**
   Replace wood-covered windows in housing units with to allow natural light, in line with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards. Although some wood coverings have been removed over the past year, wood coverings still remain on some cell windows. According to ACA Standard 4-ALDF-1A-16, all inmate rooms/cells must provide occupants with access to natural light through at least three square feet of transparent glazing, plus two additional square feet per inmate in rooms/cells housing three or more individuals. Therefore, the Commission recommends OCCC continue replacing wood coverings to ensure all cell windows in all modules allow natural light. Compliance with the ACA standards is of particular importance with OCCC moving toward ACA accreditation.

2) **Restoration of Contact Visits**
   OCCC has not offered in-person contact visits for five years, initially due to COVID-19. Extensive research underscores the importance and rehabilitative benefits of contact visits for those in custody, as these visits allow individuals to maintain closer connections with their loved ones and communities. The Commission therefore continues to recommend OCCC reinstate contact visits.

3) **Expand Programming Opportunities**
   People in custody at OCCC have too much idle time and limited access to programming, including cultural, education, and reentry preparation. The Commission recommends expanding programming opportunities and community partnerships to reduce idle time and increase programming opportunities. While the facility has made some progress in this area, it is essential to continue and be innovative (even within limited space) to support people in custody and gain community support and trust.

4) **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**
   The kitchen at OCCC is in dire need of updates to ensure sanitary conditions for staff and the kitchen workline, and to provide safe food for the entire facility. Urgent repairs are needed for the dishwasher, along with replacement of ceiling and floor tiles, rusted appliances, and food service trays. Although there are plans for a new facility, these conditions cannot wait until then and must be addressed immediately.

5) **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**
   Although OCCC has the highest furlough participation and occupancy rate in comparison to the other three jails, there is still opportunity to increase furlough

participation at OCCC. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues around furlough participation. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates near 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

6) **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**
The recreation area outside the Holding Unit consists of individual cages, which currently lack shaded areas to protect people in custody from the sun. The Commission recommends installing shade structures, even tarps, to provide protection from sun exposure.

7) **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**
The Commission has received multiple complaints regarding the following issues at OCCC:
   - Roaches in Cells: Roaches are present in the cells. This poses a health and sanitation concern. The Commission recommends implementing a pest control plan that effectively and safely eliminates the roach population.
   - Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls: The Commission learned that some individuals have experienced delays of several weeks in accessing bail calls, which has prevented those who could make bail from being released. This delay not only impacts individual rights but also contributes to overcrowding. The Commission urges the facility to establish and confirm a reliable system that allows timely access to bail calls for all eligible individuals and ensures all people in custody have prompt access to bail calls.

8) **Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Legal Calls, Mail, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation**
People in custody in the holding unit at OCCC reported irregular access to legal calls, daily recreation, and inconsistent mail service, along with no books or reading material. ACA standards require the following access for people in disciplinary segregation:

> **Mail**: Inmates in Restrictive Housing can write and receive letters on the same basis as inmates in the general population.
> *Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-20, p. 128.*
>
> **Access to Legal and Reading Materials**: Inmates in Restrictive Housing have access to reading materials.
> *Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-23, p. 129.*

Exercise Out of Cell: Inmates in Restrictive Housing receive a minimum of one hour of exercise outside their cells, five days per week, unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise."
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-24, p. 129.

Telephone Privileges: Inmates in Restrictive Housing are allowed at minimum telephone privileges to access the judicial process and family emergencies as determined by the facility administrator or designee unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise.
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-25, p. 129.

Access to Programs: Inmates in Extended Restrictive Housing have access to programs and services that include but are not limited to the following: educational services, commissary services, library services, social services, behavioral health and treatment services, religious guidance, and recreational programs.
Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-26, p. 130.

Additional Recommendations to be Considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**
   The Department needs to seriously consider how requiring post closures to limit overtime impacts daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, outdoor recreation, programming and general conditions of confinement. The Department should allow Wardens to make these decisions as they should know the needs of their facilities the best. Additionally, the Department should consider holding regular inter-divisional meetings between Division Administrators to evaluate the fiscal and humanitarian impacts of requiring post closures before authorizing overtime.

The Commission extends special thanks to the OCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

Projects

Complaint Management

After recently receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission secured a vendor to ensure a smooth and efficient system for the office. Commission staff are preparing for a 15-week systems integration process, which will involve integrating the case tracking system developed by Commission staff with the newly developed case management system. Once this process is complete, the Commission will be better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On September 11, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – September

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$23,202.54**	
Telephone	$217.24	1	$217.24	
Advertising	$350.00	1	$350.00	Job Posting-Prison Oversight Specialist
Other Current Expenditures	$1,094.24	1	$1,094.24	In ArtSmart LLC
Other Current Expenditures	$21,056.60	1	$21,056.60	Compaint Management System
Other Current Expenditures	$161.49	3	$484.46	2TB DUO LINK Gen 2 Flash Drive
Inter-Island Travel			**$429.84**	
AIRFARE-KRT	$174.29	1	$174.29	8/22
AIREFARE-ANJ	$179.05	1	$179.05	8/22
CAR RENTAL-CMJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	7/14
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Conferences			**$0.00**	
		TOTAL	**$23,632.38**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address: Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
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Submit Testimony: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony

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Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – October 2025

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Deaths in Custody

1. On Thursday November 6, 2025, at approximately 9:12am, a male in custody 62 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell. 911 was called, CPR was immediately conducted, and around 9:34am, Eloy EMS took over life saving measures. Unfortunately, at 9:50am, the individual was pronounced deceased. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

2. On Thursday, November 6, 2025, at approximately 2:33pm, a Hawaiian male, 38 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell. Staff immediately responded, conducted CPR, and alerted 911 emergency services. EMS arrived around 2:56pm and continued life saving measures. Unfortunately, 3:51pm, this individual was pronounced deceased. This death appears to be a suicide. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

Tours

WCCC Transforming Animal and Incarcerated Individuals' Lives (TAIL) Pilot program

On October 6, 2025, Commission staff visited the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) Ho'okipa Cottage to observe the Transforming Animal and Incarcerated Individuals' Lives (TAIL) pilot project. The visit highlighted how animal-assisted programs can promote healing, responsibility, and emotional well-being for incarcerated women. Two participants shared that caring for the kittens has helped them build new relationships and connect with people they had never spoken to before. Staff and residents expressed that the program has been heartwarming, bringing a sense of calm, unity, and purpose to the cottage. The Department received $50,000 in funding for WCCC to support cat care and food, helping sustain this positive initiative. The women appear to genuinely enjoy the program, which reflects how compassion-based approaches can strengthen rehabilitation and community within correctional settings.

Events Attended

House Committee on Public Safety Informational Briefing on Compassionate Release

On October 6, 2025, the House Committee on Public Safety hosted an informational briefing on compassionate release. The briefing included a presentation from Molly Crane, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Families for Justice Reform (FAMM), with brief comments and questions answered by Christin M. Johnson, Oversight Coordinator, Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission. The goal of the presentation was to help legislators and the general public understand the importance and significance of compassionate release, and to support upcoming legislation to embed compassionate release in statute. The presentation can be found here:
https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/CommitteeFiles/HOUSE/PBS/PBSfiles/2025_FAMM_Presentation.pdf

Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group

On October 16, 2025, Chair Patterson participated in the Restrictive Housing Legislative Working group as a member of the working group. The Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group also completed an on-site inspection of Halawa Correctional Facility, with special interest given to the Restrictive Housing Unit on October 28, 2025, however Chair Patterson and Oversight Coordinator Johnson were unable to attend due to a travel conflict. The Act 292 Restrictive Housing Legislative Working Group was established by the Legislature and enacted into law by Governor Joshua Green on July 3, 2025, to develop and recommend more comprehensive laws, policies, and procedures regarding restrictive housing for members of vulnerable populations.

The Act 292 Working Group is tasked with reviewing, considering, and identifying laws, policies, and procedures regarding restrictive housing for members of vulnerable populations including committed persons who: (a) are sixty years of age or elder; (b) have a physical or mental disability, a history of psychiatric hospitalization, or recently exhibited conduct, including serious self-mutilation, that indicates the need for further observation or evaluation to determine the presence of mental illness; (c) have a developmental disability, as defined in HRS Section 333F-1; (d) have a serious mental condition that cannot be effectively treated while the committed person is in restrictive housing; (e) have a significant auditory or visual impairment; or (f) is perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex. Act 292 (SLH2025) directs the Working Group to submit its recommendations to the Legislature by January 8, 2027. More information on the Working Group can be found here:
https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/legislature/specialcommittee.aspx?comm=rhg&year=2025

Conferences

National Reentry Workforce Collaborative 2025 Conference

From October 21 through October 24, Chair Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Johnson, and Commission staff attended the *From Incarceration to Transformation: National Reentry Workforce Conference (NRWC)* in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference focused on hope, collaboration, lived experience, and innovation in reentry and workforce development. Commission staff co-presented *Reentry Begins on the Inside: A Three-State Comparison of In-Prison Programming* alongside John Howard Association and the Correctional Association of New York, highlighting Hawai‘i’s oversight and reentry initiatives. Connections were made

with national partners such as KISRA, Resilience Education, CareerTeam, Homeboy Industries, and the Petey Greene Program, each offering valuable models and potential collaborations to support reentry in Hawai‘i. The event reinforced that reentry is built on relationships, opportunity, compassion, and the power of lived experience — key principles guiding Hawai‘i’s ongoing reentry work.

National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) 2025 Conference – Minneapolis, MN

From October 26 through October 29, Chair Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Johnson, and Commission staff attended the *National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Annual Conference* in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The conference brought together national oversight leaders to discuss accountability, transparency, and community trust in the wake of incidents that deeply impacted the nation — including the deaths of George Floyd and Philando Castile, both of which occurred in Minnesota. Presenters reflected on how these tragedies reshaped public expectations and policies around oversight and reform, while acknowledging the ongoing challenges with achieving true accountability in civilian oversight of law enforcement.

In addition to powerful keynote sessions, the conference offered specialized breakout forums specifically for executive leadership, investigators, and boards and commissions. The conference also offered breakout discussions on best practices in data use, community engagement, and civilian review processes. The Commission gained valuable insight into national strategies that align with Hawai‘i’s mission to ensure fairness, dignity, and trust within its correctional system, and had the opportunity to present in four separate panels including:

- Surviving the Storm: Building and Rebuilding Correctional Oversight in the Face of `Political Pressure *presented by Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator and Chair Mark Patterson*
- Deescalation in a Custody Setting *presented by Chair Mark Patterson*
- Accountability in Crisis: How Oversight Can Drive Solutions to Corrections Staffing Shortages *presented by Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator*
- Doing Oversight After Doing Time: How Lived Experience is Reshaping Correctional Oversight Practices *presented by Kimmy Takata, Reentry Oversight Specialist*



Chair Mark Patterson, Oversight Coordinator Christin Johnson, Jail Oversight Specialist Alec Jamerson, and Reentry Oversight Specialist Kimmy Takata attending and speaking at the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) 2025 conference.

Reports

Women's Community Correctional Center Site Observations

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Below are recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation which stemmed from the OCCC tour. The full report was published on October 9, 2025, and can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/.

Follow-up on Previous Commission Recommendations

The Commission made the following recommendations following the HCSOC February 2023 tour, which have not yet been implemented. The Commission continues to recommend the following:

1) **Allow for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**
   Replace wood-covered windows in housing units with to allow natural light, in line with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards. Although some wood coverings have been removed over the past year, wood coverings still remain on some cell windows. According to ACA Standard 4-ALDF-1A-16, all inmate rooms/cells must provide occupants with access to natural light through at least three square feet of transparent glazing, plus two additional square feet per inmate in rooms/cells housing three or more individuals. Therefore, the Commission recommends OCCC continue replacing wood coverings to ensure all cell windows in all modules allow natural light. Compliance with the ACA standards is of particular importance with OCCC moving toward ACA accreditation.

2) **Restoration of Contact Visits**
   OCCC has not offered in-person contact visits for five years, initially due to COVID-19. Extensive research underscores the importance and rehabilitative benefits of contact visits for those in custody, as these visits allow individuals to maintain closer connections with their loved ones and communities. The Commission therefore continues to recommend OCCC reinstate contact visits.

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People in custody at OCCC have too much idle time and limited access to programming, including cultural, education, and reentry preparation. The Commission recommends expanding programming opportunities and community partnerships to reduce idle time and increase programming opportunities. While the facility has made some progress in this area, it is essential to continue and be innovative (even within limited space) to support people in custody and gain community support and trust.

4) **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**
The kitchen at OCCC is in dire need of updates to ensure sanitary conditions for staff and the kitchen workline, and to provide safe food for the entire facility. Urgent repairs are needed for the dishwasher, along with replacement of ceiling and floor tiles, rusted appliances, and food service trays. Although there are plans for a new facility, these conditions cannot wait until then and must be addressed immediately.

5) **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**
Although OCCC has the highest furlough participation and occupancy rate in comparison to the other three jails, there is still opportunity to increase furlough participation at OCCC. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues around furlough participation. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates near 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

6) **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**
The recreation area outside the Holding Unit consists of individual cages, which currently lack shaded areas to protect people in custody from the sun. The Commission recommends installing shade structures, even tarps, to provide protection from sun exposure.

7) **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**
The Commission has received multiple complaints regarding the following issues at OCCC:
- Roaches in Cells: Roaches are present in the cells. This poses a health and sanitation concern. The Commission recommends implementing a pest control plan that effectively and safely eliminates the roach population.
- Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls: The Commission learned that some individuals have experienced delays of several weeks in accessing bail calls, which has prevented those who could make bail from being released. This delay not only impacts individual rights but also contributes to overcrowding. The Commission urges the facility to establish and confirm a reliable system that allows timely access to bail calls for all eligible individuals and ensures all people in custody have prompt access to bail calls.

8) Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Legal Calls, Mail, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation

People in custody in the holding unit at OCCC reported irregular access to legal calls, daily recreation, and inconsistent mail service, along with no books or reading material. ACA standards require the following access for people in disciplinary segregation:

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> *Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-20, p. 128.*
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> **Access to Legal and Reading Materials**: Inmates in Restrictive Housing have access to reading materials.
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Additional Recommendations to be Considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**
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The Commission extends special thanks to the OCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour. The Department responded to the OCCC on October 13, 2025 which is attached to this report.

Projects

Complaint Management

After receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission secured a vendor to ensure a smooth and efficient system for the office. Commission staff are working through a 15-week systems integration process, which involves integrating the case tracking system developed by Commission staff with the newly developed case management system. Once this process is complete, the Commission will be better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On October 9, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – October

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$4,459.62**	
TELEPHONE	$217.24	1	$217.24	
OFFICE SUPPLIES	$237.25	1	$237.25	STAMP CONNECTION
PRINTING & BINDING	$2,910.89	1	$2,910.89	PROFESSIONAL IMAGE
OTHER CURRENT EXPENDITURES	$1,094.24	1	$1,094.24	ARTSMART
Inter-Island Travel			**$2,532.04**	
AIRFARE-KRT	-$174.29	1	-$174.29	08/22 HAWAIIAN REFUND
AIREFARE-RI	$137.58	1	$137.58	09/04 HAWAIIAN
AIRFARE-ANJ	$156.60	1	$156.60	08/28 HAWAIIAN
AIRFARE-RI	-$137.58	1	-$137.58	09/04 HAWAIIAN REFUND
AIRFARE-ANJ	$137.58	1	$137.58	09/09 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-ANJ	$179.05	1	$179.05	09/18 HAWAIIAN
AIRFARE-KRT	$151.86	1	$151.86	10/07 ALASKA
AIRFARE-ANJ	$175.59	1	$175.59	10/10 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-KRT	$175.59	1	$175.59	10/10 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-ANJ	$151.86	1	$151.86	10/07 ALASKA
AIRFARE-KRT	$166.10	1	$166.10	10/08 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-ANJ	$161.35	1	$161.35	10/08 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-RI	$175.59	1	$175.59	10/09 ALASKA
AIRFARE-ANJ	$137.58	1	$137.58	10/21 SOUTHWEST
AIRFARE-MKP	$137.58	1	$137.58	11/13 ALASKA
AIRFARE-RMB	$142.34	1	$142.34	11/13 ALASKA
AIRFARE-CMJ	$137.58	1	$137.58	11/13 ALASKA
AIRFARE-MTT	$137.58	1	$137.58	11/13 ALASKA
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	08/22 ENTERPRISE
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	08/28 ENTERPRISE
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	09/18 ENTERPRISE
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	10/08 ENTERPRISE
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$76.50	1	$76.50	10/10 ENTERPRISE
PER DIEM-ANJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	09/09 PER DIEM
PER DIEM-ANJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	09/18 PER DIEM
PER DIEM-ANJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	10/07 PER DIEM
Mainland Travel			**$4,347.46**	
AIRFARE-MKP	-$228.70	1	-$228.70	11/05 HAWAIIAN REFUND
AIRFARE-CMJ	$1,060.89	1	$1,060.89	10/24 ALASKA
AIRFARE-CMJ	$1,060.89	1	$1,060.89	10/24 ALASKA
AIRFARE-CMJ	-$1,060.89	1	-$1,060.89	10/24 ALASKA REFUND
AIRFARE-ANJ	$975.80	1	$975.80	10/24 - ALASKA
AIRFARE-MKP	-$228.70	1	-$228.70	11/05 - HAWAIIAN
AIRFARE-MKP	$1,161.37	1	$1,161.37	10/20 - DELTA
AIRFARE-KRT	$1,353.99	1	$1,353.99	10/20 DELTA
AIRFARE-MKP	$252.81	1	$252.81	10/20 DELTA
Conferences			**$880.00**	
REGISTRATION-CMJ	$880.00	1	$880.00	NACOLE CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION-ANJ	$150.00	1	$150.00	NACOLE CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION-MKP	$855.00	1	$855.00	NACOLE CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION-KRT & MKP	$650.00	2	$1,300.00	NRWC CONFERENCE
		TOTAL	**$12,219.12**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address:	Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission 235 S Beretania Street, 16th floor Honolulu, HI 96813
Website:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov
Submit Testimony:	https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony
Email:	hcsoc@hawaii.gov
Social Media:	YouTube LinkedIn Facebook Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting on November 13, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on December 11, 2025, at Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S. Beretania Street, Rom 204, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 or online via teleconference. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION
Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima a Ho'oponopono Ola
1177 Alakea Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Vacant
Deputy Director
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz
Deputy Director
Rehabilitation Services
and
Programs

No. _____

October 13, 2025

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION:

Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th Floor
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) September 2025 Site Tour Observations

Dear Chair Patterson:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) received the attached Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission's (HCSOC) September 2025 Site Tour Observations report and recommendations. (Enclosed). The DCR thanks the HCSOC for their efforts and our continued cooperative and collaborative working relationship. The purpose of this correspondence is to respond to comments and the recommendations contained in the report.

Medical Unit/Infirmary:

***Response**: Module 3 has been identified as the new location of infirmary and is currently in the process of being cleaned and prepared to open.*

Holding Unit:

***Response**: Exposure to natural outdoor sunlight, sky, clouds, wind, etc., is the objective. DCR may consider partial shading via a shading screen.*

Module 17:

***Response**: Out-of-cell time has slightly increased, but due to lack of staff showing up for work consistently, DCR is unable to safely allow additional out of cell time. DCR is currently consulting with the Unit Public Workers (UPW) Union to implement a staff attendance program via Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).*

Visitation:

***Response**: In addition to non-contact in person visitation, OCCC also provides GTL tablets to those in custody to facilitate video visits and telephone calls with family and friends on approved visitation list.*

The following addresses previous commendations:

NOTE: Follow up on previous recommendations in HCSOC report skip No. 3 and goes from number 2 to number 4.

1. **Allow for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**:

   ***Response**: Facility is currently working to address this recommendation, including removing some of the wood covering to all for more natural light.*

2. **Restoration of Contact Visits**:

   ***Response**: Under consideration.*

4. **Expand Programming Opportunities**: (left as how it is in the report)

   ***Response**: Parts of OCCC are over 112 years old and are not designed for an abundance of rehabilitative, educational, treatment, or reentry programs. As a result, limited programs are provided, but due to staff calling out sick, programs are unfortunately often cancelled.*

5. **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**:

   ***Response**: A new dishwasher and a water softener machine have been purchased. The Food Service Manager is currently attempting to coordinate installation with a plumber and an electrician. In addition, the facility previously purchased approximately 800 new trays and has ordered an additional 1,100 trays. The old trays with mold are sitting on a pallet awaiting pick up for disposal and destruction.*

6. **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**:

   Response: *At present, major construction improvement projects are underway at the Laumaka Work Furlough site to address safety and sanitation concerns.*

7. **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**:

   Response: *Exposure to natural outdoor sunlight, sky, clouds, wind, etc., is the objective. DCR may consider partial shading via a shading screen.*

8. **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**:

   Response:

   - **Roaches in Cells**:

     Response: *Pest control contract in place and is being utilized.*

   - **Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls**:

     Response: *GTL tablets are readily available and allow free calls to bail bondsmen. Persons in custody and can use the tablets to request assistance of family members with contacting a bail bondsman. Persons in custody requesting to utilize land line telephones to contact bail bondsmen are not necessary as the GTL tablets are readily available*

9. **Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Level Calls, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation**:

   Response: *Reviewing current practices at OCCC to ensure compliance with departmental policies and procedures.*

Additional Recommendation to be Considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Finally, thank you again for working cooperatively and collaboratively with the department as we continue to shift from what some may have seen as a punitive corrections model to one that is holistic, evidence based, and focuses on successful reintegration.

Sincerely,

Tommy Johnson
Director

c: Dep-A Martin
Dep-R Muñoz
IDA Hoffman
Warden Schell

Enclosure

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

MARTHA TORNEY

HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MAʻEMAʻE NŌ
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Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)
September 2025 Site Tour Observations
Date of Report: September 17, 2025

On Wednesday, September 17, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included three of the five Commissioners – Chair Patterson, Commissioner Torney, and Commissioner Browning– in addition to the Oversight Coordinator, staff, and State House Representatives Della Au Belatti and Kim Coco Iwamoto. Commissioner Town was present for a meeting with Warden John Schell prior to the tour.

Meeting with Warden John Schell

The Commission and Representatives had the opportunity to meet with the OCCC Warden at the beginning of the tour which took the majority of the visit. One of the largest concerns noted by the Commission was consistent complaints received by people in custody at OCCC regarding lack of out-of-cell time. It is the Commission's understanding that this issue is specifically caused by restrictive overtime requirements that have been set at the Department level. The Warden explained that OCCC is required to close a minimum of 21 posts on any given watch before overtime can be authorized. The requirement to close 21 posts has resulted in consistent 23-hour lockdowns for general population custody levels. This prevents OCCC from providing regular access to out-of-cell time, including time out of cell for meals, showers, outdoor recreation, visits, phone or tablet time, and programming. The short and long-term impacts of trauma experienced by people in custody are also a concern given the conditions of confinement created by extended lockdowns.

The Warden and OCCC staff expressed serious concern regarding the potential liability generated from closing that many posts on a consistent basis as it creates terrible conditions of confinement. It is the Commission's opinion that **the cost of liability would likely outweigh any of the savings from reducing overtime costs.**

The Commission is deeply concerned regarding the lack of out-of-cell time for those in custody and views the relationship between restricting overtime and population management as a serious management failure on the Department level. Many of the solutions and recommendations that the Commission has put forward previously cannot be implemented at the facility level but must be implemented at the Department level.

Facility Highlights:
The Commission wishes to highlight several significant improvements OCCC has made, and key issues addressed over the past year:

1) Relocation of Women to the Women's Community Correctional Center
   Women in custody have been relocated to the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). This movement has significantly reduced overcrowding, reduced the opportunity for women in custody to be placed in compromising situations, and has provided the opportunity to expand medical and mental health programs for the male population at OCCC. Last year, OCCC had tentative plans to use Module 3 (30 cells) as the Health Care Infirmary and Module 2 (24 cells) as the step-down unit from Module 1 suicide watch and critical care for mentally ill people in custody. However, it does not appear that previous plans have been implemented.

2) Access to Confidential Policies
   During the Commission's prior visit in August 2024, the Commission was surprised to learn that the Warden did not have access to the DCR "confidential" policies and procedures. Wardens are responsible for managing the facilities and upholding policies and procedures. Since August 2024, the DCR has made confidential policies accessible to Wardens, as recommended by the Commission.

Medical Unit/Infirmary
The Medical Unit was orderly and well-staffed. The physical space lacks privacy for medical practitioners who interview and examine people in custody, preventing what should be confidential medical communications. The infirmary is inadequate for a facility the size of OCCC, and the area completely lacks privacy.

Holding Unit
The Holding Unit was built in 1936 and, while functional, was clearly archaic. It is three stories with 12 cells on each floor. The front of the cells is made up of metal bars, not walls. Given the openness, there was no excessive noise detected. Thirty-nine (39) people in custody were housed in the Holding Unit—which has a maximum rated capacity of 60—with some double bunked. The unit was cold with some people in custody wrapped in their blankets to keep warm.

The outside recreation yard is made up of "cages" for a single individual. These cages, about double the size of a cell, do not have shaded areas to block the sun. It was reported by staff that about half the population in the holding unit take advantage of outdoor recreation time.







Module 17

During the Commission's visit, Module 17 housed approximately 49 people which was designed with a capacity of 48 The unit was under extremely high tension where nearly all people in custody, from behind their locked cells, were yelling complaints regarding not having daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, phone calls, programs, and outdoor recreation. This further highlights the importance of ensuring the population is managed to ensure appropriate conditions of confinement. High tensions such as these further the risk of inmate assaults, fights, suicides, staff assaults, use of force and other dangerous potentially avoidable situations for staff and people in custody.

Annex II

Annex II is a three-story concrete building divided into open bays on each floor, with dormitory-style housing that utilizes bunk beds. On the day of the Commission's visit, 134 men, were housed in this area, which was designed with a capacity of 114. People in custody progress through the unit, moving from the first to the second, and then to the third floor. No complaints were expressed from staff or people in custody in this unit.

Visitation:
The visiting area allows for only non-contact visits, preventing any physical contact between people in custody and their loved ones.

Follow-up on Previous Commission Recommendations
The Commission made the following recommendations following the HCSOC February 2023 tour, which have not yet been implemented. The Commission continues to recommend the following:

1) **Allows for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**
Replace wood-covered windows in housing units with to allow natural light, in line with ACA standards. Although some wood coverings have been removed over the past year, wood coverings do still remain on some cell windows. According to ACA Standard 4-ALDF-1A-16, *all inmate rooms/cells must provide occupants with access to natural light through at least three square feet of transparent glazing, plus two additional square feet per inmate in rooms/cells housing three or more individuals*. Therefore, the Commission recommends OCCC continue replacing wood coverings to ensure all cell windows in all modules allow natural light. Compliance with the ACA standards is of particular importance with OCCC moving toward ACA accreditation.

2) **Restoration of Contact Visits**
OCCC has not offered in-person contact visits for five years, initially due to COVID-19. Extensive research underscores the importance and rehabilitative benefits of contact visits for those in custody, as these visits allow individuals to maintain closer connections with their loved ones and communities. The Commission therefore continues to recommend OCCC reinstate contact visits.

4) **Expand Programming Opportunities**
People in custody at OCCC have too much idle time and limited access to programming, including cultural, education, and reentry preparation. The Commission recommends expanding programming opportunities and community partnerships to reduce idle time and increase programming opportunities. While the facility has made some progress in this area, it is essential to continue and be innovative (even within limited space) to support people in custody and also gain community support and trust.

5) **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**
The kitchen at OCCC is in dire need of updates to ensure sanitary conditions for staff and the kitchen workline, and to provide safe food for the entire facility. Urgent repairs are needed for the dishwasher, along with replacement of ceiling and floor tiles, rusted appliances, and food service trays. Although there are plans for a new facility, these conditions cannot wait until then and must be addressed immediately.

6) **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**
Although OCCC has the highest furlough participation and occupancy rate in comparison to the other three jails, there is still the opportunity to increase furlough participation at OCCC. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more

individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues around furlough participation. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates near 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

7) **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**
The recreation area outside the Holding Unit consists of individual cages, which currently lack shaded areas to protect people in custody from the sun. The Commission recommends installing shade structures, even tarps, to provide protection from sun exposure.

8) **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**
The Commission has received multiple complaints regarding the following issues at OCCC:
   - **Roaches in Cells:** Roaches are present in the cells. This poses a health and sanitation concern. **The Commission recommends implementing a pest control plan that effectively and safely eliminates the roach population.**
   - **Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls:** The Commission learned that some individuals have experienced delays of several weeks in accessing bail calls, which has prevented those who could make bail from being released. This delay not only impacts individual rights but also contributes to overcrowding. The Commission urges the facility to establish and confirm a reliable system that allows timely access to bail calls for all eligible individuals and **ensure all people in custody have prompt access to bail calls.**

9) **Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Legal Calls, Mail, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation**
People in custody in the holding unit at OCCC reported irregular access to legal calls and daily recreation, and inconsistent mail service, along with no books or reading material. ACA standards require the following access for people in disciplinary segregation:

   Mail: Inmates in Restrictive Housing can write and receive letters on the same basis as inmates in the general population.
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-20, p. 128.

   Access to Legal and Reading Materials: Inmates in Restrictive Housing have access to reading materials.
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-23, p. 129.

   Exercise Out of Cell: Inmates in Restrictive Housing receive a minimum of one hour of exercise outside their cells, five days per week, unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise."

Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-24, p. 129.

Telephone Privileges: Inmates in Restrictive Housing are allowed at minimum telephone privileges to access the judicial process and family emergencies as determined by the facility administrator or designee unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise.

Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-25, p. 129.

Access to Programs: Inmates in Extended Restrictive Housing have access to programs and services that include but are not limited to the following: educational services, commissary services, library services, social services, behavioral health and treatment services, religious guidance, and recreational programs.

Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-26, p. 130.

Additional Recommendations to be Considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**
The Department needs to seriously consider how requiring post closures to limit overtime impacts daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, outdoor recreation, programming and general conditions of confinement. The Department should allow Wardens to make these decisions as they should know the needs of their facilities the best. Additionally, the Department should consider holding regular inter-divisional meetings between Division Administrators to evaluate the fiscal and humanitarian impacts of requiring post closures before authorizing overtime.

The Commission extends special thanks to the OCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – November 2025

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Introduction

In accordance with Chapter §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. In addition to the mandated parties this report must be shared with, the Oversight Coordinator posts the monthly report publicly to increase transparency and accountability. This report will also be shared with each individual who is responsible for appointing members of the Commission. This includes:

1) Governor of Hawai‘i
2) President of the Hawai‘i Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawai‘i House of Representatives
4) Hawai‘i Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

The Oversight Coordinator monthly reports are released on the first Thursday of each month, covering the previous month, and will be discussed on the second Thursday of each month at the monthly Commission meetings.

Deaths in Custody

1. On Sunday, November 16, 2025, at approximately 2:20pm, a male in custody, 56 years old, at Halawa Correctional Facility was found by medical staff in the infirmary unresponsive and not breathing when conducting a routine check for vital signs. Medical staff immediately checked for a pulse, but no pulse was detected. The decedent was pronounced deceased by medical staff at 3:30pm. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

2. On Wednesday November 19, 2025, at approximately 3:53pm, a male in custody, 66 years old, at Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona was pronounced deceased at a hospital in Tucson, AZ. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations (DCR) records indicate that the decedent was hospitalized on October 11, 2025, for abdominal pain. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

3. On Saturday, November 29, 2025, at approximately 4:50am, a male in custody, 56 years old, at Halawa Correctional Facility was found by medical staff in the infirmary with no pulse. Medical staff immediately attached an AED, started CPR, and alerted 911 emergency services. EMS arrived around 4:59am and continued life saving measures. At approximately 5:35am, EMS transported the patient to the hospital. At approximately 5:48am, DCR security were informed that the patient was pronounced deceased by medical staff. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

Tours

Tour of OCCC with the ACLU Hawai‘i

On November 18, 2025, the ACLU of Hawai‘i joined the Commission’s Oversight Coordinator to tour the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC). The ACLU was able to see the deteriorating conditions of OCCC firsthand and speak to people in custody and staff about their experiences within the facility. The Oversight Coordinator would like to thank OCCC’s

Warden and the ACLU for touring OCCC and continuing to foster a collaborative relationship with the Commission in finding better solutions for staff and those in custody.



Photo from the ACLU Hawai'i standing in front of OCCC

Events Attended

Civil Beat Editorial Interview

On November 4, 2025, Chair Patterson and Oversight Coordinator Johnson participated in the "Sunshine Interview" series hosted by Honolulu Civil Beat. The two discussed funding challenges, staffing shortages, safety issues, investigations and rehabilitation at the state's prisons and jails. The article was posted on November 9, 2025 and can be read here or at civilbeat.org.



WCCC Mental Health Day

On November 10, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) Mental Health Day at Olomana Cottage, an uplifting event dedicated to honoring the women participating in mental health programming. The mental health wāhine shared powerful expressions of healing through skits, songs, poetry, and artwork—each performance reflecting their resilience, growth, and courage. Department leadership, including Tommy Johnson, Sanna Muñoz, and facility staff, were present to support and celebrate the women.

After a shared lunch, participants joined in exercise relays and races, reinforcing wellness of both mind and body. Overall, the event highlighted the remarkable talent and progress of the mental health women and underscored the importance of programs that foster confidence, connection, and community at WCCC.

Hawai'i Homeless & Housing Conference 2025

On November 14, 2025, HCSOC staff attended the 2025 Hawai'i Homelessness & Housing Conference**,** a statewide gathering focused on housing solutions, policy updates, and culturally rooted approaches to homelessness. Governor Josh Green highlighted progress on kāhale villages, supportive housing, and mental health initiatives, while breakout sessions such as *He Alo, A e Alo* emphasized trauma-informed and culturally grounded care. Legislators shared statewide data, funding priorities, and ongoing barriers like permitting delays and housing shortages. A major highlight was the lived-experience panel, "From Surviving to Thriving," where five speakers – including the Commission's Reentry Oversight Specialist, Kimmy Takata – shared powerful stories of resilience and healing. The conference strengthened collaboration and reinforced the importance of lived-experience leadership in shaping Hawai'i's future housing and homelessness policies.

Reports

Halawa Correctional Facility Site Observations

On Thursday, October 9, 2025, the Commission toured the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) collectively as a group. The tour included two of the five Commissioners – Mark Patterson (Chair) and Martha Torney, in addition to Commission staff. The full report was published on November 13, 2025, and can be read at: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/. Below are recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation which stemmed from the HCF tour.

Prior recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Permanently close the Special Needs Facility.**
   The Special Needs Facility has been permanently closed. This recommendation is resolved.

2) **Increasing non-security staffing must be a priority for transitioning to a rehabilitative and therapeutic system. *Unclear**
   Two years ago, the two main staffing shortages that the Commission learned about were in the Learning Center and social work. At the time, education was down three full-time teachers, one secretary, and two workline positions leaving one full-time employee to run all educational programs. Additionally, the facility had eight (8) social work vacancies which resulted in high caseloads (80+ people per social worker) for the existing social workers.

   During the Commissions visit in 2024, it was confirmed that there are no social work vacancies, and that education vacancies had gone down from four vacancies to two (education supervisor and office assistant). The Commission congratulates the Department on its success with aggressive recruitment tactics for filling these

imperative positions; however, the Commission hopes the Department will continue to place a strong focus on the need for mental health staff – particularly Psych Social Workers and Clinical Psychologists.

3) **Prioritize and expedite Capital Improvement Projects to repair electricity and the perimeter fence.**
There has been significant progress on this as both projects have been funded and are currently in progress. The Commission emphasizes the need to complete these projects promptly to relocate people in custody currently at Saguaro Correctional Center back to Hawaii, preventing these transfers from becoming long-term out-of-state placements.

4) **Incorporate Therapeutic and Rehabilitative Practices Throughout the Facility**
Consider reopening and staffing the large yard so individuals can enjoy grass, fresh air, and sunlight and have an opportunity to look away from concrete. Additionally, consider incorporating murals throughout the housing units and on Main Street for a less restrictive feel. Lastly, consider planting native plants throughout Main Street for additional color and connection to ʻāina. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

5) **Include Medical and Mental Health Staff in Future Construction Plans *Unclear**
Include the medical and mental health team in any plans for construction to ensure a more therapeutic and rehabilitative space. If the mental or medical spaces are extended to the basement, ensure ample natural lighting by adding as many windows as possible and consider bright paint for a less restrictive space.

6) **Expand the Correctional Industries worklines to include specific training in skilled trades that would lead to gainful employment after incarceration.**
At some point, there used to be an electrical and plumbing workline that helped keep the facility maintained. The electrician union previously came to the facility and trained people in custody, and then people leaving prison would have an income-generating trade and connections to the unions and jobs in high demand. However, that program has not existed for some time. It would benefit the Department to work with skilled trade unions to train individuals in plumbing, electrical, welding, HVAC, etc. This would not only create opportunities for individuals to earn gainful employment upon release, but also help the facility with desperately needed maintenance concerns. Correctional Industry worklines can assist in upkeeping the facilities while learning skills that are at the core of the Hawaii Correctional Industry work. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

7) **Increase training and support for uniformed staff.**
To expedite and stay current on uniformed staff training, consider placing or training certified instructors to be onsite full-time at Halawa. This would allow the facility to train staff more efficiently in a way that corresponds to the facility's schedule and specific needs. Also, consider updating the training academy curriculum to better prepare staff for their actual roles onsite at facilities. Although there has not been progress on focus on training HCF staff in house, the DCR is currently updating its training academy curriculum for new recruits.

8) **Increase training and support for case/unit managers to better meet the population's needs upon release. *Unclear**
The role of social workers and unit managers is vital to successful rehabilitation and reentry for people in custody. The Commission is aware that many people in custody are released directly to the community from Halawa. Here, it would be helpful to identify and offer additional training to support the critical role these staff members assume. Staff should stay current on local and national best practices in their field. The crucial role of these staff members and the importance of a mindset dedicated to supporting people in custody and their success should be included in the training.

   Although it is unclear if national best practices are being implemented, the Commission is aware that the reentry office in DCR has been having consistent meetings with case managers to keep staff aligned with DCR's reentry efforts and initiatives. Additionally, the reentry office has been updating case managers on policy and procedure changes to ensure consistent implementation of reentry efforts statewide. Each of these meetings take several hours depending on the specific facilities needs and questions. The Commission does view this as important progress.

9) **The Department should support legislative efforts toward Compassionate Release or transfer to a more appropriate medical setting for the severely ill.**
The Department, in collaboration with the Hawaii Paroling Authority and the Commission, has drafted a compassionate release bill to be introduced during the 2026 legislative session. The Commission applauds the Department on their collaborative efforts towards this legislation.

The Commission extends special thanks to the HCF staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour. The Department responded to the HCF report on November 12, 2025, which is attached to this report.

Projects

Complaint Management

After receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission secured a vendor to ensure a smooth and efficient system for the office. Commission staff are working through a 15-week systems integration process, which involves integrating the case tracking system developed by Commission staff with the newly developed case management system. Once this process is complete, the Commission will be better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On November 13, 2025, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2025-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – November

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$0.00**	
Inter-Island Travel			**$80.00**	
PER DIEM-ANJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	10/07 PER DIEM
PER DIEM-ANJ	$20.00	1	$20.00	10/10 PER DIEM
PER DIEM-KRT	$20.00	1	$20.00	10/07 PER DIEM
PER DIEM-KRT	$20.00	1	$20.00	10/07 PER DIEM
Mainland Travel			**$2,946.73**	
PER DIEM-KRT	$1,254.25	1	$1,254.25	10/20-10/29 (PA & MN)
EXCESS LODGING-KRT	$1,376.96	1	$1,376.96	10/20-10/29 (PA & MN)
BAGGAGE FEE-KRT	$205.00	1	$205.00	10/20-10/29 (PA & MN)
GROUND TRANSPORTTATION-KRT	$110.52	1	$110.52	10/20-10/29 (PA & MN)
		TOTAL	**$3,026.73**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

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Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting on December 11, 2025. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on January 8, 2026, at Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S. Beretania Street, Rom 204, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 or online via teleconference. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.

Facility-Specific Reports

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Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC)
April 2025 Site Visit Observations Report
Date of Report: May 8, 2025

On Thursday, April 10, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) including Hale Nani. The tour included Chair Mark Patterson, Commissioner Martha Torney, Commissioner Ron Ibarra, Commissioner Mark Browning, and Commission staff. During the tour, the Commission was granted access to all areas of the facility and was able to communicate with people in custody.

General Observations

HCCC has a capacity of 226 and is organized into five housing units, with a sixth unit, Kaumana, recently constructed. HCCC expects to move a portion of its population to Kaumana by Sunday, April 13, 2025. HCCC staff were recently trained to prepare for assuming new posts at Kaumana.

Four of the six housing units are located at HCCC's primary jail location (commonly referred to as "the Main," and referred to as the Main hereafter), located at 60 Punahele St., Hilo, HI 96720. These include Punahele, Komohana, and Waianuenue, and the new unit, Kaumana.

The Hale Nani Annex site, located at 3196 Kai Ki St, Hilo, HI 96720, contains two housing units: Hale Nani Mauka, holding sentenced men on furlough preparing to reenter the community, and Hale Nani Makai, designated for the female general population.

The total headcount on the day of the tour in the Main was 248 with a capacity of 126 (197% occupancy rate). The total headcount on the day of the tour in Hale Nani was 49 with a capacity of 100 (49% occupancy rate).

Hale Nani

The Commission first toured Hale Nani which is comprised of two housing units: Mauka, which houses males, and Makai, which houses females.

Mauka has two large dorms (A and B) with an open dayroom in between them. The dorm has a total capacity of 50, with a capacity of 25 on side A and 25 on side B. Men in custody could move freely between the dorms and the dayroom. Dorm A housed five sentenced misdemeanants who work in the kitchen and Dorm B houses 12 men on furlough. Six of the 12 people on furlough were reportedly providing community service for Merrie Monarch and were concerned about their ability to find a permanent job. Mauka had two operational portable fans and no working ceiling fans.

The kitchen is located in Mauka and services both Hale Nani and the Main. After inspecting the freezer, the Commission is concerned that the freezer may be over capacity which can prevent food from being kept frozen and preserved. It is unclear why HCCC is not utilizing the kitchen at the Main, especially since the Hale Nani kitchen servicing the Main requires additional staff, time, and vehicles to transport food six miles from Hale Nani to the Main.

Makai includes two dorms, dorm A and dorm B, with a total capacity of 50, 25 on side A and 25 on side B. Each dorm is secured by a locked chain-linked gate. The two dorms are separated by a day room which provides access to the phone, an ACO post, and a shared restroom.

Women housed in Makai reported not having confidential access to grievances. Instead, they have reportedly been told by staff to submit concerns via inter-unit requests in lieu of grievances. This was verified by staff which was corrected during the tour.

The Commission is also concerned that there is no access to a law library at Hale Nani.

Punahele

The Commission then toured the Main which started with Punahele. The Punahele unit covers multiple areas of the facility including the medical corridor where there are two wet cells (cell with sink and toilet), storage spaces, medical offices, and one dry cell (cell with no sink or toilet). The dry cell has cameras installed and is next to the control station and is meant for temporary (hours) housing as needed. However, the Commission found three women housed in the dry cell for a week due to fighting. Housing women in dry cells does not meet federal guidelines *(Federal Performance Based Detention Standards Rev. 11, May 2022, F.4 Prison Hygiene, F.4.1, pg. 48)*.

After the medical corridor, there is a housing unit with multiple sets of cells on each side, a large glass dayroom commonly referred to as, "the fishbowl," a general dayroom space where the ACO post is, and a back hallway encompassing additional cells. At the time of the tour, there were 25 people housed in "the fishbowl." The fishbowl has no beds, sinks, or toilets – only thin mattresses on the floor.

The cells in Punahele that are meant to hold two people were overcrowded, housing 3-4 people in each cell. People housed in the Punahele cells reported that they are shackled by their hands and feet while they are in the dayroom. They reported that the shackles irritate their skin, which was confirmed by HCCC staff. The Commission sees no reason for this level of restraint.

In addition to potentially unnecessary shackling, people housed in Punahele are on 23-hour lockdown and are not given the opportunity to go outside for recreation. The only "recreational time" they experience is in the day room where the television station is reportedly changed every 20 minutes. This is against federal standards requiring fresh air and sunlight *(55-ACI-2E-01, Performance-Based Standards and Expected Practices for Adult Correctional Institutions, March 2021, Fifth Edition)* for at least one hour per day, every day. Some people in custody reported living under these conditions for 8-10 months.

Komohana

Komohana is a two-story housing unit, designed to house 64 individuals. At the time of the tour, Komohana housed 89 people who share 8 showers – 4 showers on the lower level and 4 showers on the upper level. Two of the 4 showers on the upper level were in disrepair and not operational, leaving only 6 showers to be shared by 89 people.

People in custody reported outdoor recreation is occurring more frequently than it used to but is still not occurring daily. Staff reported that recreation is being offered on a limited basis – once per week – because of staffing limitations. The same staff member also reported that people turn down outside recreation in favor of using the phones located in the housing unit.

Waianuenue

Waianuenue is comprised of two separate dorms with a large control station in the center. One dorm housed sentenced felons, the other dorm housed pretrial detainees. The Commission observed that the bathroom in general required significant maintenance and sinks were missing handles.

Staff reported that the only grievance box in Waianuenue is in the pretrial dorm. There is reportedly not a grievance box in the dorm where the sentenced population is housed. Staff reported that the sentenced population must hand their completed grievance form to an Adult Corrections Officer (ACO) in the control station so the ACO can then place the grievance form in the grievance box that is located in the pretrial dorm. This practice compromises the right to confidentiality when filing grievances. Staff also reported that the grievance box is not checked regularly by a dedicated grievance officer. Staff could not confidently name or identify a dedicated grievance officer. However, the Warden reassured the Commission that a dedicated grievance officer was recently hired to manage grievances at HCCC and KCF.

Kaumana

Construction on the new housing unit, Kaumana, is complete. Starting Sunday April 13, Kaumana will reportedly house the pretrial population. None of the cells have windows for sunlight, however, the cell doors have 2 large windows that face the dayroom and outside area, providing the occupants with a view of the outdoor atrium. The dayroom includes a large, 3-piece panoramic landscape portrait of Mauna Loa with the ocean in the foreground that can be seen from the inside of all cells. This portrait helps to create a rehabilitative environment that starkly contrasts with the environments of the other housing units.

Lack of Basic Necessities for Jail Operations

Although the Commission has reported on this before, it is important to highlight again here, HCCC lacks many necessities to make it a fully functional jail. The facility lacks a proper segregation unit, a proper protective custody unit, a proper mental health unit, an appropriate space for those on safety and suicide watch, a proper infirmary, a perimeter fence, and a proper female housing unit. This makes managing the population an *extremely* difficult task for all staff who work at HCCC, especially given the overcrowding.

The facility was originally built over 60 years ago. It is old, antiquated, and outdated, and these infrastructure deficiencies and the needs of the populations cannot be adequately addressed in this current facility.

Visitation

Currently, there is no in-person visitation, and this has been the case for over five years (initially due to COVID-19, then due to construction). In-person contact visits are imperative for maintaining relationships with family, friends, and communities. It is unacceptable that HCCC has not come up with any resolution to the lack of visits during this timeframe.

Additionally, people in custody explained that adding people to their phone or visitation list can only be done once every 6 months, which seems unnecessarily restrictive. Additionally, video visits cost $8 for 14 minutes, which the vast majority of people in custody cannot afford and should not be considered a potential alternative to in-person contact visitation.

Follow-up on Previous Commission Recommendations

Unresolved concerns that require attention include facility overcrowding, which remains a significant issue, including the use of overcrowded modular unit cells and dry cells for long-term housing. The Commission recognizes that HCCC is opening a new housing unit, Kaumana, which, if used properly, will help address overcrowding in cells and house people in custody in a more rehabilitative environment. The Commission has previously recommended optimizing Kaumana by using it to house the mental health population. The Commission will continue to monitor how Kaumana is being used.

The Commission recognizes that its prior recommendation to complete the renovations to the front lobby and office area has been addressed. Completed renovations mean that staff now have access to restrooms and do not have to use portable toilets.

Recommendations to be considered by the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation:

The Commission restates and urges DCR to adopt the following prior recommendations:

1) **Expand Furlough Utilization at HCCC**
   Currently, 12 men are in the HCCC furlough program despite the capacity to accommodate up to 50 participants. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. While the Commission acknowledges that custody status is not the only factor in furlough determinations, it is a significant one. Notably, 15 individuals at Kulani Correctional Facility have community status, which is required for furlough. It is important to note that this has improved from last year's count (34), however the Commission recognizes that it is important to examine why more people in custody in community status are not in furlough at HCCC or other sites.

2) **Optimize New Housing Unit Utilization**
   The new housing unit, Kaumana, should be assessed and utilized to balance current housing priorities and serve the needs of different populations. This includes decreasing overcrowding, especially in Punahele, better serving vulnerable populations, including the mental health population, creating a proper space for women, and allowing for necessary facility maintenance. With the completion of the new housing unit, it's crucial to consider how it can support the largest issues within the facility.

   During the Commission's talk stories with HCCC staff, many recommended moving the mental health population to the new unit, transforming it into a dedicated mental health housing unit. The new unit includes suicide-resistant features, group space, and recreational areas suitable for this population. This move would help decrease overcrowding in Punahele, create more

space for women in the main facility, and relocate others from inadequate spaces, significantly improving living conditions.

It should be noted that even with the addition of these 24 new cells, accommodating up to 48 more people, the true jail population will still exceed capacity, necessitating continued population reduction efforts.

3) **Reduce Overcrowding through System-wide Population Reduction Efforts**
The most significant issue at HCCC remains overcrowding, particularly in Punahele, where vulnerable populations, such as those with acute mental illness and severe health issues, as well as new admissions, are housed. Even with the opening of the new unit, the facility will remain overcrowded. Addressing this requires a State and Third Circuit-wide priority on safely reducing the jail population. DCR alone cannot resolve this issue; instead, it must involve a coordinated system-wide effort.

All justice partners, including the Judiciary, Office of the Public Defender, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, Probation, the Department of Health, and Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, must work both individually and collectively to safely reduce the jail population. On Hawaii Island, a coordinated approach is essential.

A. **Further Diversion Initiatives.** The Commission supports ongoing and new diversion initiatives on Hawaii Island to address the needs of justice-involved individuals. The Commission is aware that this is in process and supports the furtherance of these and other diversion initiatives.

B. **Work Together to Reduce Pretrial Time.** Consider a Third Circuit-wide goal – Judiciary, Prosecutor, Public Defender, and criminal defense attorney – to reduce timelines for all cases, aiming to expedite both felony and misdemeanor proceedings and reduce the time people spend in HCCC pretrial.

C. **Population Analysis.** To safely divert people and support successful transitions post-incarceration, it is essential to understand individual needs. The Commission asks the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to consider a population analysis with the following information in a confidential, non-identifying manner: *demographic data, mental health and substance use data, key health indicators, housing data, employment, and income status*. This information will be used to determine what services and support are needed, what is currently provided and available within the community, and where the gaps are. There is a strong community network, including providers, throughout Hawaii Island, but more data is needed to link people to services and support these efforts effectively.

4) **Enhance Programming Opportunities and Reduce Idle Time**
In addition to facility overcrowding, people in custody have too much idle time and limited access to programming. The Commission witnessed this idle time and recommended the following:

A. **Re-establish and Expand Programming Opportunities.** Re-establish programming opportunities at pre-COVID levels and then expand opportunities. Bring more programs back into the facility from community service providers. Community partnerships and programs are essential to enhance the facility's ability to manage operational issues.

B. **Increase VolinCore Training Opportunities.** Offer regularly scheduled continuous VolinCore training opportunities for community service and program providers.

The Commission urges DCR to consider and adopt the following new recommendations based on observations that were made on April 10, 2025.

1) **Ensure Access to Grievances**
   The Commission noted the significant lack of access to the grievance process for individuals housed at Hale Nani and for those housed in Wainuenue. Staff should be retrained on proper grievance procedures, along with the implementation of ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent and equitable access to the grievance system.

2) **Reevaluate and Monitor Staff Posts**
   People in Punahele reported being on 23-hour lockdown and are not given the opportunity to go outside for recreation. Additionally, staff reported that accommodating outdoor recreation in Komohana more than once a week is challenging with short staff. The Commission has observed on more than one visit what appears to be an excess number of staff posted at the temporary gate. At times, the Commission has observed four to five staff at the gate. The Commission strongly recommends that HCCC reevaluates how staff are posted and utilized throughout the facility to ensure that recreational time can be accommodated as frequently as possible.

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GOVERNOR

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

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OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

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Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)
May 2025 Site Tour Observations
Date of Report: June 12, 2025

On Thursday, May 8, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included four of the five Commissioners – Mark Patterson (Chair), Martha Torney, Mark Browning, Ron Ibarra in addition to the Oversight Coordinator and staff. This report encompasses notes from the Commissioners and will be discussed at the monthly public meeting held on June 12, 2025.

General Observations

The rated capacity of KCCC is 128, and during the tour, the headcount of the facility was 84 individuals (67 males, and 17 females) with a 65% occupancy. The Commission is happy to report that the population has lowered by approximately 26% since the Commission last visited in 2024, when the headcount was 117 individuals (96 males, and 21 females) with a 91% occupancy. The pretrial population makes up 52.3% of the KCCC jail population.

KCCC staff provided access to the Commission without any hesitation or issues. Commissioners were able to speak to individuals in custody throughout the facility. The Commission is pleased to report that people in custody are no longer being housed in shipping containers or dayroom spaces at KCCC. This is much needed change and the Commission appreciated the KCCC team and all of their efforts to ensure people are housed appropriately.

Ongoing Construction Projects

There were two critical construction projects underway during the Commission's previous visit in 2024. The first being the sewer main in front of the facility had burst, preventing the utilization of three holding cells adjacent to the administration area, and the second being the water main by the highway being serviced. The Commission was informed that the water main construction has resulted in the delay of much needed remodel of the kitchen.

The construction on the sewer main and water main is complete, no longer preventing the kitchen from being repaired or replaced, or the use of the holding units.

Shipping Container Housing

The shipping containers in front of the administration area were originally used for new intakes and active COVID-19 cases. When the Commission visited in 2024, they were being used as a secure housing unit for women. The Commission is pleased to report that the shipping containers are no longer being used for housing. This is an important development as staff have reported when utilizing the shipping containers, there were not enough staff to post at the unit, leaving people in custody with no supervision.

Module A

Module A is the oldest part of the facility, opened in 1977, and is made up of four, three-cell units. Each three-cell unit has a very small dayroom that opens into a larger central dayroom. During the Commission's last visit, the new shower area in Module A had water pooling in the center of the room. The Commission did not observe any water pooling during this visit.

Despite some overcrowding in single-cells, Module A's population has generally improved since the Commission's prior visit. Another notable improvement in Module A is that the dayrooms are no longer being used for sleeping quarters but are serving their intended purpose.

Some people in Module A reported spending 22 hours per day in their cell due to short staffing. The Commission finds this unacceptable as research clearly indicates that more time locked in cells creates more mental health issues and suicide risks, greater tension between people in custody, less safe conditions for staff, and less rehabilitative programming for those in custody.

The law library is located in Module A, a male-only unit, potentially causing access restrictions for females. The Commission observed what appeared to be sign-up sheets for people in custody to make appointments to use the library. The Commission observed that the sign-up sheet had no entries. However, access to the law library is not a complaint the Commission has received from people in custody at KCCC.

Holding Cells

Three holding cells are located within the Administration area of Module A, with observation windows along the hallway. These are multipurpose cells for administrative segregation and suicide watch. During the Commission's visit in 2024, the holding cells were not in use due to sewage repairs that were being made.

The Commission observed a woman in a holding cell whom staff reported had serious mental health needs. The Commission is concerned that if the woman in custody is exhibiting mental health conditions, the conditions of the holding unit could potentially deteriorate her mental health condition further. Housing women in a men's facility severely limits the facility's ability to ensure women are in an environment that is more conducive to their rehabilitation. The Commission is also concerned that this particular woman is not getting the out of cell time she needs, as people with mental health conditions often require more supervision than those who do not have mental health conditions. The Commission is concerned that extended periods of confinement in holding cells could be detrimental to anyone's reported mental health condition.

Module B

Module B was added in 1986 and is a unique space with six large cells, allowing a rated capacity of four people in custody assigned to each cell. During the Commission's previous visit in 2024, three double bunks (beds for six individuals) were found in the cell that the Commissioners had visited. The individuals assigned to that cell were deeply concerned with the time spent in their cells. They claimed they were confined to the cell for 22 hours per day. The population in that cell has improved since the prior visit, now housing 2 individuals, however, it is clear that the amount of time they get out of cell has not changed.

The dayroom is quite large, but all individuals were locked in their cells during the Commission's visit. Staff reported they receive two hours per day of out-of-cell time (22 hours locked down), but

sometimes they may receive an additional hour out (21 hours locked down). Additionally, the facility placed steel shutters over the cell door windows, limiting any sight outside of the cell. During the Commission's prior visit in 2024, staff claimed this was for security reasons. Again, the Commission finds this level of in-cell time and isolation unacceptable.

Module C

Module C, opened in 1997, is an L-shaped building with two large dormitories joined by a multipurpose room in the center and a bathroom for each wing. Each dorm is divided into cubicles with half-walls. The building was under renovation during the Commission's March 2023 visit, and renovations were completed when the Commission visited again in 2024. During the 2024 visit, it was evident that all windows were replaced, and the bathrooms were renovated. The unit was clean, and individuals had considerable freedom of movement within the unit.

On May 8, 2025, Module C was closed due to staffing shortages and a low count of individuals who can be housed in a dorm setting. Exposure to natural light in Module C is significantly less limited than the exposure to natural light in Module A and B cells. With more staffing, Module C could be opened, potentially addressing some of the overcrowding in Module A, and providing a more rehabilitative environment for a larger number of the facility's population.

Cabins A-C

Cabins A, B and C were originally built as temporary housing for Kauai residents after Hurricane Iniki. The cabins were moved to the facility between 1993 and 1995 as temporary housing but continue to be used today. These units were not included in the 2001 capacity report as they do not meet fire code—no fire suppression system and no second exit. Although the cabins feel tight and overcrowded, there were no complaints from the male or female occupants.

Kitchen

The facility-wide kitchen and mess hall for Module C and the cabins are in a separate building that is in dire need of replacement. The floors in the kitchen and mess hall were worn through to bare wood in some areas and completely gone in other areas. Plywood had been temporarily laid down to cover missing floorboards, but they were flimsy and extremely dangerous to walk on. The dangerous condition of the floor in the kitchen and mess hall could easily result in serious injury to staff and people in custody. A new floor must be laid as soon as possible.

It is important to note that during the March 2023 tour, the Commissioners noted the same issues and concerns but were told that the kitchen was soon scheduled to be replaced. During the 2024 visit, Commissioners were told work cannot start until the water main was repaired, a project that is now complete. In 2024, Commissioners were also informed that a module system is to be installed behind the existing kitchen which will then be removed, and a kitchen and chow hall will be built. The conditions have only worsened since the Commission's 2023 and 2024 tours, and it is obvious that nothing has been done to remedy the situation.

The condition of the structure has degraded so significantly that the ability of staff to manage and provide quality meals is in question. One Commissioner noted that the kitchen is in such despair that it should be closed entirely and alternative means of providing meals be considered.

As of May 8, 2025, Commissioners are still being informed that a module system has been ordered but has missed its shipping date several times at a port in California. Once the module is shipped, there

are concerns that shipping logistics could cause further delivery delays. Once shipped to Honolulu, the module will most likely have to change barges at Sand Island before being shipped to Nawiliwili Harbor on Kauai. The most direct route from Nawiliwili Harbor to KCCC is approximately 6 miles (13 minutes). Commissioners are concerned that the module could be too heavy for any cargo trucks on the island, and the width of the module may be greater than the width of the road, which would require closing the road when transporting the unit.

As various factors make the exact installation date of the modular kitchen unknown, the Commission does not view the promise of the modular kitchen as a solution to the immediate dangers of the current kitchen. Staff reported that they have estimated the cost of ordering meals from outside sources pending the arrival of the modular kitchen. This may be a solution that is less costly to the State than the lawsuits that could arise from keeping the current kitchen open. Pending the installation of the modular kitchen, the Commission urges DCR to close the current kitchen and immediately implement a temporary food service solution. The Commission has been reporting on this issue since 2023 with no changes made or action taken by administration.

Staffing Shortages

Staff burnout was extremely evident during the tour in 2024 and continues to concern the Commission. This appears to be due to severe staffing shortages, consistently long work hours (consistent 16- and 24-hour shifts), and being tasked with multiple posts and multiple roles. For example, the gate post is expected to manage the shipping containers and the furlough population. In reality, those should be three separate posts for three separate officers, however, one officer is expected to run all posts without mistakes. Pure exhaustion has been more evident in KCCC than in any other facility. The Commission believes that KCCC staff are doing the best they can, but they have been forced to work in these same conditions for far too long, and relief is needed as soon as possible.

Staff reported that they may need to return to 24-hour shifts due to staffing shortages being compounded by staff taking leave.

Restraint Chair and WRAP Chair

In 2024, the Commission was quite taken aback to discover both a Restraint Chair and a WRAP chair (which uses straps to fully immobilize the body) in the security office of the facility. These restrictive restraints are at the highest level on the use of force continuum. Restraint and WRAP Chairs have caused serious harm to people in custody, resulted in death, and have been subjected to lawsuits in many states. It is an area ripe for misuse and litigation.

The Commission is happy to report that there is no longer a Restraint Chair at KCCC. However, a WRAP chair is still being stored in the security office. Staff in the facility were not aware of any policy governing the use of the chairs but claimed that staff were trained in how to use the WRAP chair. The Commission ensured the Warden has access to confidential policies in his office, and that staff can reference them as needed.

The Commission did not see a log that is maintained while an individual is restrained in the WRAP chair. The Commission was informed that the chair is mostly utilized when an individual is kicking or banging the cell door to protect the individual from injury and the cell from destruction.

Previous Recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Immediately prioritize the construction and replacement of the KCCC kitchen as it poses a dangerous threat to individuals or staff being hurt due to its desperate condition. In the interim, must repair and maintain current flooring.**
   The floors in the kitchen and mess hall were worn through to bare wood in some areas and completely gone in other areas. Plywood had been temporarily laid down to cover missing floorboards, but they were flimsy and extremely dangerous to walk on. The dangerous condition of the floor in the kitchen and mess hall could easily result in serious injury to staff and people in custody. A new floor must be laid as soon as possible.

   Pending the installation of the modular kitchen, the Commission urges DCR to repair and maintain the floor. The Commission has received complaints from people in custody and staff, and the safety of staff and people in custody is one of the highest responsibilities of the department.

2) **Ensure individuals in the facility are receiving the most out-of-cell time possible in alignment with a rehabilitative and therapeutic environment.**
   In 2024, individuals in Module B claimed to be locked in their cells for 22 hours per day. On May 8, 2025, individuals in Module A and B made the same claim. This, by definition, is considered restrictive housing, also sometimes referred to as solitary confinement.

   The Commission understands there are staffing issues that contribute to this issue, and applauds the Department's efforts to fill vacancies. However, if the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is serious about the transition to a therapeutic and rehabilitative system, it is imperative to ensure individuals are not locked down within their cells for such extended periods of time.

   Therefore, daily schedules should be posted in all housing units for transparency and accountability regarding programming and out of cell time. This allows individuals in custody to anticipate what is to come, and to hold the staff accountable and ensure programming and out of cell time is completed in a consistent manner.

Additional recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Implement 12-Hour Shifts**
   The Commission highly recommends implementing 12-hour shifts. This has been requested by the facility after surveying staff and measuring interest. This was also highlighted as an evident solution for KCCC in the **Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report**. In order to eliminate the need for exhausting 24-hour shifts that cause burnout and an increase in leave requests, the Department must try something different than what it is doing now. Having additional staff at the facility can ensure that posts are not understaffed and increase out-of-cell time and safety for people in custody.

2) **Enable all Facilities to Initiate and Process Emergency Hires On-Site**
   The Commission highly recommends that DCR allow correctional facilities to conduct on-site emergency hiring to expedite filling vacancies and increase staffing levels that are desperately needed to:
   - Monitor the mental health population and ensure the mental health population are housed in the best possible setting for their condition;
   - Ensure people in custody have access to out-of-cell time;
   - Provide much needed and urgent relief to burnt-out staff; and
   - Improve staff morale and retention.

The Commission extends special thanks to the KCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

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Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC)
June 2024 Site Visit Observations Report
Date of Report: August 14, 2025

On Thursday, June 26, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included three of the five Commissioners—Mark Patterson (Chair), Martha Torney, and Ronald Ibarra—in addition to the Oversight Coordinator and staff. The Commission was granted access to all areas of the facility and was able to communicate with all people in custody who wanted to speak with the Commission.

The Commission is very pleased to report that MCCC has maintained a low population over the past year. With a rated capacity of 301, in 2023, there were 299 people in custody housed at MCCC versus 215 people in custody in 2024. As of June 26, 2025, with a population of 221, MCCC continues to stay undercrowded.

General Observations
Warden Liane Endo and staff conducted the tour. The Commission was once again impressed with the cordial relationship that exists between staff (both uniform and civilian) and those who are incarcerated. The Commission was provided with unfettered access to people in custody both in the housing units and at their work assignments.

Overall, the facility continues to be very clean and well-maintained, especially considering its age and, in comparison to other jails in Hawaii. However, the facility is still in need of updates and proper funding for those updates. There are several critical maintenance updates underway, such as patching cemented hallways and ceilings.

Physical Plant
The physical plant of the MCCC includes housing units and necessary operational areas. The utilized housing units consist of five dormitories—Dorm 1, Dorm 2, Dorm 3 (housing women), Dorm 6, and Dorm 7—and six modules—Module A, Module B, Module C, Module D, Module 3, and Dayrooms (Module 3 and Dayrooms house women). The facility also includes key areas such as the kitchen, medical unit, education, library, and holding area.

Dorms 1 and 2
Dorm 1 housed eleven (11) pretrial men and Dorm 2 housed seven (7) pretrial men, and all 18 work different shifts in the kitchen. The dorms and bathroom areas were clean and functional. Large fans were provided to keep the area as cool as possible (there is no air conditioning in these dorms).

Dorm 3
The Commission did not have time to tour Dorm 3 during this visit.

Dorms 6 and 7
As of June 26, 2025, only Dorm 6 was being utilized due to a low population. There were three (3) individuals on work furlough with jobs in the community who returned to the facility upon the end of the workday. The mixing of furloughed and sentenced individuals is of concern. In the past, the Department avoided mixing those on work furlough with others, as participants may succumb to pressure to bring unauthorized articles or contraband back for those not released for work. This concern was shared with the Warden. Additionally, the Commissioners continue to be concerned with the low number of people participating in work furlough, an important step in the reintegration process.

The people in custody expressed concern that programs and classes were too limited to prepare them for life in the community. People in custody indicated that there were not enough programs ("we sit here and do nothing"), very little release preparation, and no connections to necessary services and programs for successful reintegration, leading to a lack of hope. They emphasized the need for more programs and were especially interested in reentry preparation and learning trades, such as plumbing and carpentry.

Module A and B
Module A is a two-story medium security unit with 24 cells, 12 on each floor, with a large common dayroom and small outdoor recreation yard. The rated capacity is 48 which equates to two people per cell. Of the 58 individuals assigned to Module A, 32 were pretrial and 24 sentenced. This resulted in not less than three people per cell for the pretrial population, with two cells assigned to four people (one cell was not in use). Some of the sentenced population were housed three to a cell as two cells were not in use. Pretrial individuals were assigned to the bottom floor, sentenced to the top. So as not to mix the two statuses, the floors did not occupy the dayroom at the same time.

People in custody reported that they are getting a total of six hours and 25 minutes of out of cell time per day (two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon of general out of cell time including the option of outdoor recreation, and three 45-minute meals out of cell). The Commission hopes to see a continued notable increase in out-of-cell time, and an expansion of increased out of cell time offered to other housing units.

Those we spoke to expressed that there was a lack of activities available to keep them occupied, especially the lack of tablets. The tablets include a wide range of programs, ranging from Alcoholics Anonymous to GED to computer programming. One individual mentioned that fights sometimes result due to the limited number. There were also complaints about the high cost of store orders.

Module C and D
Module D houses people in disciplinary segregation. In Module D, people in custody are provided one hour of out-of-cell time per day, and meals are served in the cells. The Commission did not receive any complaints from those in custody. The Commission did not have time to tour Module C during this visit.

However, people in custody who are placed in these units do not have direct access to the grievance or medical request system. In these modules, people in custody must ask for a grievance or medical form and then be escorted by staff to drop the completed forms in their respective boxes, currently located in the sallyport. People in custody should be able to freely make such requests rather than ask a staff member for a form and then wait to be escorted to drop the request.

Module 2 and 3

Women are housed in these two medium security living units which were built as part of the original facility in the 1970s. Due to the size of the cells and limited unencumbered space, the cells are rated for one person per cell. However, out of necessity, the cells house not less than two women per cell (one had three women).

One of the original quads was converted to the medical unit decades ago, resulting in people from other housing units needing to enter the dayroom to access medical/dental care. One woman was very concerned about men coming into their living unit to either visit the medical unit or crossing through to get to facility worklines.

Commissioners and staff were shocked to see the clear amount of severely mentally ill women incarcerated in this space. Women were mumbling to themselves, pacing in circles, unable to share clear thoughts, and looking up to the sky with blank stares. Staff shared that it has been a difficult population for them to manage and expressed that they experience high stress levels working with this level of mental health issues. Staff explained that it appears that less people are coming in overall, but of those who do come in, many have severe mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Lastly, the women shared that there are not enough tablets for everyone to utilize, leaving them with not much to do. This could potentially exuberate their mental health condition.

Holding/Intake

The holding cells in the intake area have small windows, lack visibility, are dark, devoid of natural light or outside views, and lack any visual or tactile features that could provide mental stimulation. Additionally, there are minimal opportunities for physical activity in this area. Therefore, the Commission found it very concerning to find three women assigned to the dry cells located near intake and the administrative offices. These cells are not designed for overnight use and should not be used to house people in custody. When necessary, these cells are designated for suicide-watch.

Kitchen, Education, and Library

The Commission did not have time to tour the education area, kitchen, or library during this visit.

Visitation

After five years of not having in person contact visits, MCCC reinstated contact visits during April 2025. The Commission is very pleased to see this and applauds MCCC for their efforts.

Previous recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Grievance and medical forms and drop boxes should be inside all modules**.
   In Module D, grievance forms, grievance request boxes, medical request forms, and healthcare request boxes are located outside the modules. People in custody must ask staff for the forms and be escorted by staff to place the completed forms in their respective boxes, currently located in the sallyport. These should be placed inside the modules.

2) **Increase Programming Opportunities**
   People in custody have too much idle time and limited access to programming – including cultural programming – education, and reentry preparation. The Commission witnessed this idle time while onsite and heard many complaints regarding a lack of access to tablets due to there not being enough. Therefore, MCCC should expand access to tablets in addition to expanding programming, education, vocational training, reentry preparation, and cultural-based opportunities.

3) **Expand Furlough Utilization at MCCC**
   It was very disappointing that only five people in custody were participating in work furlough despite the capacity to accommodate at least 50 or more participants. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system.

   The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues, resulting in increased furlough participation at MCCC and the other furlough sites. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates close to 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

The Commission extends special thanks to the MCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

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Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)
September 2025 Site Tour Observations
Date of Report: October 9, 2025

In accordance with the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission's (the Commission, HCSOC) mandate to oversee the State's correctional system, on Thursday, September 11, 2025, the Commission toured the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included one of the five Commissioners –Martha Torney in addition to the Oversight Coordinator and staff. The Commission had unfettered access to staff and the facility.

General Observations

During the Commission's prior visit in August 2024, there were three new buildings under construction: Building A (a secure housing unit now called "Pakui"), Building B (intake), and Building C (administration). All three structures are now complete. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) is working with the Commission to rate the housing capacity for Pakui, the new secure housing unit.

Olomana Cottage

Olomana Cottage has a total capacity for 72 people between four dorms (Dorms A, B, C, and D) and primarily house people with a range of mental health issues. At the Commission's request, the mental health staff accompanied the Commission while touring the unit. Olomana Cottage reportedly does not have an assigned Case Manager and shares the Kaala Cottage Case Manager. People in custody report that the Case Manager does not spend adequate time in Olomana Cottage so when she comes to the unit, she is immediately overwhelmed with questions and requests. People in custody are aware of staffing shortages and do not fault the Case Manager.

Dorm A

On the day of the visit, the census for Dorm A was 38, with a 172% occupancy. Dorm A is a dormitory setting divided into cubicles separated by half walls with three to five individuals assigned to each cubicle. The jail population who are designated as medium to high acuity (primarily Level 3, some Level 2) occupy Dorm A.

Reading material is available, but a common complaint received from people in custody is that books are not rotated often enough. Another common complaint from people in custody pertains to how the Store Order is only every two weeks and expensive compared to costs in the community, which often leads to people in custody asking the facility to provide snacks, especially in the evening. The time between dinner and breakfast is at least 12 hours, which is a common complaint at other facilities.

In the bathroom area, there were a number of problems indicative of the aging facility (opened in about 1952). Two of the sinks had poor water pressure. Of the four showers, hot water was not always available. People in custody discovered that if they kept one shower on all the time, there was more reliable hot water in the others. The first toilet was malfunctioning as the flush push button did not always work.

Dorm B

On the day of the visit, the census for Dorm B was 13, with a 108% occupancy. Dorm B is made up of cells, all but two single celled. People in custody designated as medium to high mental health acuity occupy Dorm B.

Dorm C

On the day of the visit, the census for Dorm C was 21, with a 131% occupancy. Dorm C houses people with high mental health acuity in single cells and is the disciplinary unit for the Cottage. The Commission spoke with one person in custody who was reading a book prior to our discussion. Books are available but not tablets, which the person in custody would like to have access to. She also noted that those in Dorm C do not have much out-of-cell time, averaging one hour per day. This is concerning to the Commission given that individuals with mental health issues need more access to out of cell time.

Pakui Cottage

Pakui was recently built and occupied for less than one year. Pakui Cottage has three dorms (Dorm A, B , and C) and houses the prison population. The Commission is currently in the process of determining its operating capacity. Offender Services provides classes on a variety of subjects on Monday and Wednesday, Tuesday and Thursday are ukulele classes.

Dorm A

Dorm A is two stories and divided into cubicles with floor-to-ceiling side walls separating each cubicle and an open front. There are four cubicles on each floor, with four double-bunks in each cubicle for a total of eight beds. The bottom floor opens into the dayroom, the upper floor is an open hallway overlooking the dayroom.

The most common complaint was lack of airflow in the cubicle, resulting in hot conditions that were obvious during our tour. The windows, while providing adequate daylight, have small louvers on the top that open. Two plug-in fans were assigned to each cubicle but did not provide enough air flow to reduce the heat.

People in custody reported that many programs needed for parole eligibility were restricted from medium and close custody inmates. An example used was the Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) only accepting minimum custody individuals. Other programs were available to all, as stated above.

Some complained that the mattresses become flattened over time, resulting in less cushion between the person and the hard bunk.

Dorm B

Dorm B, the same layout as Dorm A, is designated the Honor Dorm with individuals having more freedom of movement and access to classes outside the living unit. Some were interested in going to the new gym in Kaala Cottage that was literally donated to the prison population by the Women's Prison Project. However, it is challenging to manage security of escorting individuals when the pretrial and sentenced population must remain separate (the gym is located where pretrial individuals are housed).

One person in custody complained about the lack of a notary at the facility. In the past, facility secretaries and other clerical workers were trained as state notaries and provided notary services to people in custody and, when needed, for official business carried out by State employees. It appears that the Department no longer allows this.

Dorm C

Dorm C is two stories with 12 cells on each floor. People in custody assigned to Dorm C include those classified as Maximum custody, Protective Custody or housed in disciplinary segregation as a result of a misconduct. The space is used judiciously, with only 14 people in custody occupying the 24 cells available. People in custody are given one hour per day out of cell, during which time they have access to phones or tablets for contacting their families or participating in programming available on the tablet.

Maunawili Cottage

Maunawili Cottage is where the library, education services, medical and infirmary, and the kitchen are located. No people in custody are housed in Maunawili Cottage.

Education

The Education Supervisor shared some of the programs offered including obtaining a GED, Dental Assistance Training, Career Building, Mindfulness, etc. Windward Community College provides college courses, such as Psychology 100, Religion 150, English 100, and the very popular Culinary Arts. The educational staff are doing a great job in offering a variety of courses.

Library

The library has a very large selection of books available. At the time of the visit, there were no staff available to explain how people in custody access the law library.

Medical

Medical staff noted the medical records system is running very slow which can impede their work. There are also a number of vacancies that include one RN IV, three RN III, two LPN II, and two Human Service Professionals. Medical staff were informed that agency nurses will not be assigned after September 30th due to "lack of funds." Medical staff at MCCC reported the same staffing issue and removal of agency nurses. Given that the Fiscal Year began on July

1, 2025, it is very concerning to the Commission that no funds may be available after the first quarter of the fiscal year.

Infirmary

The infirmary had one woman in the general room and three women in cells. Two of the women in cells were on suicide watch, the third on safety watch. When passing through the area where the cells are, the Adult Corrections Office (ACO) assigned was not at the desk, but in a room across from the cells talking with what appeared to be a person in custody on the work line. The Commission does not know how long the ACO was away from the desk, however, suicide watch requires constant surveillance.

Kitchen

The kitchen was busy preparing for dinner, but it was clean and in good order, especially for being 60 years old. There was only one piece of equipment (the steam cooker) in need of repair. The cooker produces heat but no steam, however, maintenance is being scheduled. The refrigerator and freezer temperatures were appropriate. The pantry was full, well organized and allowed air to flow adequately.

Follow Up on Previous Recommendations

While touring WCCC in 2024, the Commission noted a large number of women housed in the infirmary on suicide watch. After inquiring, the Commission learned that since February 2024, WCCC did not have a psychologist on staff. This caused a very serious backlog of individuals on suicide watch who otherwise would have been removed. However, the Commission has learned that DCR hired Dr. Erin Wilkinson in July 2025, who is an experienced Psychologist and has already started evaluating DCR's mental health needs. The amount of individuals on suicide watch was significantly less concerning and the Commission applauds DCR's recruitment efforts.

The Commission has no additional recommendations currently and extends special thanks to the WCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

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Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)
September 2025 Site Tour Observations
Date of Report: October 9, 2025

On Wednesday, September 17, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included three of the five Commissioners – Chair Patterson, Commissioner Torney, and Commissioner Browning– in addition to the Oversight Coordinator, staff, and State House Representatives Della Au Belatti and Kim Coco Iwamoto. Commissioner Town was present for a meeting with Warden John Schell prior to the tour.

Meeting with Warden John Schell

The Commission and Representatives had the opportunity to meet with the OCCC Warden at the beginning of the tour which took the majority of the visit. One of the largest concerns noted by the Commission was consistent complaints received by people in custody at OCCC regarding lack of out-of-cell time. It is the Commission's understanding that this issue is specifically caused by restrictive overtime requirements that have been set at the Department level. The Warden explained that OCCC is required to close a minimum of 21 posts on any given watch before overtime can be authorized. The requirement to close 21 posts has resulted in consistent 23-hour lockdowns for general population custody levels. This prevents OCCC from providing regular access to out-of-cell time, including time out of cell for meals, showers, outdoor recreation, visits, phone or tablet time, and programming. The short and long-term impacts of trauma experienced by people in custody are also a concern given the conditions of confinement created by extended lockdowns.

The Warden and OCCC staff expressed serious concern regarding the potential liability generated from closing that many posts on a consistent basis as it creates terrible conditions of confinement. It is the Commission's opinion that **the cost of liability would likely outweigh any of the savings from reducing overtime costs.**

The Commission is deeply concerned regarding the lack of out-of-cell time for those in custody and views the relationship between restricting overtime and population management as a serious management failure on the Department level. Many of the solutions and recommendations that the Commission has put forward previously cannot be implemented at the facility level but must be implemented at the Department level.

Facility Highlights:

The Commission wishes to highlight several significant improvements OCCC has made, and key issues addressed over the past year:

1) Relocation of Women to the Women's Community Correctional Center

Women in custody have been relocated to the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). This movement has significantly reduced overcrowding, reduced the opportunity for women in custody to be placed in compromising situations, and has provided the opportunity to expand medical and mental health programs for the male population at OCCC. Last year, OCCC had tentative plans to use Module 3 (30 cells) as the Health Care Infirmary and Module 2 (24 cells) as the step-down unit from Module 1 suicide watch and critical care for mentally ill people in custody. However, it does not appear that previous plans have been implemented.

Medical Unit/Infirmary

The Medical Unit was orderly and well-staffed, however, many staff vacancies exist and services are augmented by contract nurses. The physical space lacks privacy for medical practitioners who interview and examine people in custody, preventing what should be confidential medical communications. The infirmary is inadequate for a facility the size of OCCC, and the area completely lacks privacy.

Holding Unit

The Holding Unit was built in 1936 and, while functional, was clearly archaic. It is three stories with 12 cells on each floor. The front of the cells is made up of metal bars, not walls. Given the openness, there was no excessive noise detected. Thirty-nine (39) people in custody were housed in the Holding Unit with some double bunked whereas there are 36 cells. The unit was cold with some people in custody wrapped in their blankets to keep warm.

The outside recreation yard is made up of "cages" for a single individual. These cages, about double the size of a cell, do not have shaded areas to block the sun. It was reported by staff that about half the population in the holding unit take advantage of outdoor recreation time.







Module 17
During the Commission's visit, Module 17 housed approximately 49 people which was designed with a capacity of 48. The unit was under extremely high tension where nearly all people in custody, from behind their locked cells, were yelling complaints regarding not having daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, phone calls, programs, and outdoor recreation. This further highlights the importance of ensuring the population is managed to ensure appropriate conditions of confinement. High tensions such as these further the risk of inmate assaults, fights, suicides, staff assaults, use of force and other dangerous potentially avoidable situations for staff and people in custody.

Annex II
Annex II is a three-story concrete building divided into open bays on each floor, with dormitory-style housing that utilizes bunk beds. On the day of the Commission's visit, 134 men were housed in this area, which was designed with a capacity of 114. People in custody progress through the unit, moving from the first to the second, and then to the third floor. No complaints were expressed from staff or people in custody in this unit.

Visitation:
The visiting area allows for only non-contact visits, preventing any physical contact between people in custody and their loved ones.

Follow-up on Previous Commission Recommendations
The Commission made the following recommendations following the HCSOC February 2023 tour, which have not yet been implemented. The Commission continues to recommend the following:

1) **Access to Confidential Policies**
   During the Commission's prior visit in August 2024, the Commission was surprised to learn that the Warden did not have access to DCR's "confidential" policies and procedures. Wardens are responsible for managing the facilities and upholding policies and procedures. Since August 2024, DCR has made confidential policies accessible to Wardens, as recommended by the Commission.

2) **Allow for Natural Light by Removing Wood Covering from all Cell Windows**

Replace wood-covered windows in housing units to allow natural light, in line with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards. Although some wood coverings have been removed over the past year, wood coverings do remain on some cell windows. According to ACA Standard 4-ALDF-1A-16, *all inmate rooms/cells must provide occupants with access to natural light through at least three square feet of transparent glazing, plus two additional square feet per inmate in rooms/cells housing three or more individuals*. Therefore, the Commission recommends OCCC continue replacing wood coverings to ensure all cell windows in all modules allow natural light. Compliance with ACA standards is of particular importance with OCCC moving toward ACA accreditation.

3) **Restoration of Contact Visits**
OCCC has not offered in-person contact visits for five years, initially due to COVID-19. Extensive research underscores the importance and rehabilitative benefits of contact visits for those in custody, as these visits allow individuals to maintain closer connections with their loved ones and communities. The Commission therefore continues to recommend OCCC reinstate contact visits.

4) **Expand Programming Opportunities**
People in custody at OCCC have too much idle time and limited access to programming, including cultural, education, and reentry preparation. The Commission recommends expanding programming opportunities and community partnerships to reduce idle time and increase programming opportunities. While the facility has made some progress in this area, it is essential to continue and be innovative (even within limited space) to support people in custody and gain community support and trust.

5) **Prioritize Kitchen Upgrades, Including Dishwasher Repair and Mold-Free Trays**
The kitchen at OCCC is in dire need of updates to ensure sanitary conditions for staff and the kitchen workline, and to provide safe food for the entire facility. Urgent repairs are needed for the dishwasher, along with replacement of ceiling and floor tiles, rusted appliances, and food service trays. Although there are plans for a new facility, these conditions cannot wait until then and must be addressed immediately.

6) **Expand Furlough Utilization at OCCC**
Although OCCC has the highest furlough participation and occupancy rate in comparison to the other three jails, there is still opportunity to increase furlough participation at OCCC. Identifying and addressing the roadblocks to furlough is crucial to allow more individuals to benefit from these programs and move through the correctional system. The Commission recommends that DCR assess, identify, and resolve systemic issues around furlough participation. The Commission would like to see furlough occupancy rates near 100% as it significantly increases the chances of success post-release.

7) **Install Shade for Recreation Cages in the Holding Unit**
The recreation area outside the Holding Unit consists of individual cages, which currently lack shaded areas to protect people in custody from the sun. The Commission recommends installing shade structures, even tarps, to provide protection from sun exposure.

8) **Investigate and Address Concerns from People in Custody at OCCC**
The Commission has received multiple complaints regarding the following issues at OCCC:
   - **Roaches in Cells:** Roaches are present in the cells. This poses a health and sanitation concern. **The Commission recommends implementing a pest control plan that effectively and safely eliminates the roach population.**
   - **Difficulties in Accessing Bail Calls:** The Commission learned that some individuals have experienced delays of several weeks in accessing bail calls, which has prevented those who could make bail from being released. This delay not only impacts individual rights but also contributes to overcrowding. The Commission urges the facility to establish and confirm a reliable system that allows timely access to bail calls for all eligible individuals and **ensures all people in custody have prompt access to bail calls.**

9) **Ensure Regular Access to Books and Reading Material, Legal Calls, Mail, and Recreation for Those in Holding Unit, including those in Disciplinary Segregation**
People in custody in the holding unit at OCCC reported irregular access to legal calls, daily recreation, and inconsistent mail service, along with no books or reading material. ACA standards require the following access for people in disciplinary segregation:

   Mail: Inmates in Restrictive Housing can write and receive letters on the same basis as inmates in the general population.
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-20, p. 128.

   Access to Legal and Reading Materials: Inmates in Restrictive Housing have access to reading materials.
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-23, p. 129.

   Exercise Out of Cell: Inmates in Restrictive Housing receive a minimum of one hour of exercise outside their cells, five days per week, unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise."
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-24, p. 129.

   Telephone Privileges: Inmates in Restrictive Housing are allowed at minimum telephone privileges to access the judicial process and family emergencies as determined by the facility administrator or designee unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise.
   Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-25, p. 129.

Access to Programs: Inmates in Extended Restrictive Housing have access to programs and services that include but are not limited to the following: educational services, commissary services, library services, social services, behavioral health and treatment services, religious guidance, and recreational programs.

Source: American Correctional Association (ACA) Performance-Based Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 5th ed., March 2021, 4B Restrictive Housing, 5-ACI-4B-26, p. 130.

Additional Recommendations to be Considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Evaluate the Impacts of Requiring Post Closures to Limit Overtime Costs**
   The Department needs to seriously consider how requiring post closures to limit overtime impacts daily access to showers, out-of-cell time, outdoor recreation, programming and general conditions of confinement. The Department should allow Wardens to make these decisions as they should know the needs of their facilities the best. Additionally, the Department should consider holding regular inter-divisional meetings between Division Administrators to evaluate the fiscal and humanitarian impacts of requiring post closures before authorizing overtime.

The Commission extends special thanks to the OCCC staff for their time, professionalism, and expertise during the tour.

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GOVERNOR

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

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Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF)
October 2025 Site Tour Observations
Date of Report: November 13, 2025

On Thursday, October 9, 2025, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) collectively as a group. The tour included two of the five Commissioners – Mark Patterson (Chair) and Martha Torney, in addition to Commission staff.

This report encompasses notes from the Commissioners and will be discussed at the Commission's monthly public meeting held on November 13, 2025.

General Findings

The Commission found that the facility is demonstrating best efforts to maintain programming despite staffing shortages and ongoing renovations. Additionally, the Commission found that the facility has several Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) underway intended to improve the safety and wellbeing of both staff and people in custody including:

- *Upgraded Perimeter Fence*: A portion of the perimeter fence has been replaced with a double-fence design to improve security. The facility is awaiting approval for additional funding to replace the remainder of the perimeter fence.
- *Updated Plumbing in all Housing Units*: Light fixtures and plumbing are being systematically replaced for all 496 cells. The Warden explained that when old plastic pipes running from the main water line failed, water seeped into the light fixtures causing extensive damage to infrastructure and safety hazards. The Commission applauds the Warden's efforts to prioritize updating the plumbing to prevent further deterioration of infrastructure, and replacing old, inoperable light fixtures with new LED lights. Additionally, rusted and deteriorating cell window screens, some of which have developed large holes that created security vulnerabilities, are being replaced by more durable punch plates.
- *Air Conditioning in Education Center*: The education center is currently closed because the air conditioner system is being upgraded. During this time, the Warden and his staff have resourcefully utilized other areas of the facility to continue education and programming as follows:
    - Correctional Industries: An air-conditioned space in the Correctional Industries building is being utilized for Substance Abuse (or 2.5) programming. Commissioners were able to witness a class in session and observed that the participants were engaged and happy to have the opportunity to continue programming in an air-conditioned space.
    - Indoor Basketball Gym: The gym's large, indoor floor space was furnished with tables and chairs to accommodate Cognitive Skills, Geography 101, Counseling, and court-

mandated classes. People in custody who the Commission spoke with expressed enthusiastic gratitude and appreciation for how alternative spaces are being utilized to continue programming while the education building is under construction.
    - Visitation Area: People in custody reported that the visitation area is also being used to accommodate court-mandated classes.
- *Incorporated New Staff Gym*: A space located near intake is being renovated as a new staff gym. The gym, approximately 800sf, will include a variety of exercise equipment to cater to a variety of workout styles and preferences. This is a much-needed improvement for staff health and wellness.

Housing Units

HCF has four main housing modules, each with 124 cells. Each of the four modules are divided into two blocks, Block A and Block B. The Commission toured Module 4B which was undergoing renovations. For security purposes, each module block is completely emptied while renovations are underway.

Medical Unit

The Commission toured the medical unit which included the mental health unit and infirmary. The Commission found that it was overcrowded with patients who do not receive regular access to programming. The Commission also found that Halawa's ability to serve the needs of its mental health population are limited, however they are better equipped than other facilities. The Department is currently reviewing a recent assessment led by experts to identify recommendations that can be implemented to better serve the mental health population. The assessment resulted from a lawsuit (*Opulento, et al. v. State of Hawaii, et. al.*) and can be found in a report drafted by Jeffrey L. Metzner, M.D., University of Colorado School of Medicine and Bhushan S. Ahgarkar, M.D., D.F.A.P.A., Distinguished Fellow, American Psychiatric Association. The report is dated June 23, 2025 and can found publicly at:
https://psychrights.org/States/Hawaii/250623OpulentoExpertsReport.pdf.

The facility faces other challenges such as finding a way to accommodate 19 people in custody who require CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machines without safe and secure access to an adequate number of electrical outlets.

Programming and Correctional Industries

Although the facility's industrial area is currently being utilized to hold various classes while the air conditioning is fixed in the education building, the Commission has found that overall, the industrial area for vocational training is underutilized. The Commission was informed that the facility will be receiving stadium seats, donated by Aloha Stadium, which may be repurposed for programming and recreational spaces.

Prior recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

1) **Permanently close the Special Needs Facility.**
   The Special Needs Facility has been permanently closed. This recommendation is resolved.

2) **Increasing non-security staffing must be a priority for transitioning to a rehabilitative and therapeutic system. *Unclear**

Two years ago, the two main staffing shortages that the Commission learned about were in the Learning Center and social work. At the time, education was down three full-time teachers, one secretary, and two workline positions leaving one full-time employee to run all educational programs. Additionally, the facility had eight (8) social work vacancies which resulted in high caseloads (80+ people per social worker) for the existing social workers.

During the Commissions visit in 2024, it was confirmed that there are no social work vacancies, and that education vacancies had gone down from four vacancies to two (education supervisor and office assistant). The Commission congratulates the Department on its success with aggressive recruitment tactics for filling these imperative positions; however, the Commission hopes the Department will continue to place a strong focus on the need for mental health staff – particularly Psych Social Workers and Clinical Psychologists.

3) **Prioritize and expedite Capital Improvement Projects to repair electricity and the perimeter fence.**
There has been significant progress on this as both projects have been funded and are currently in progress. The Commission emphasizes the need to complete these projects promptly to relocate people in custody currently at Saguaro Correctional Center back to Hawaii, preventing these transfers from becoming long-term out-of-state placements.

4) **Incorporate Therapeutic and Rehabilitative Practices Throughout the Facility**
Consider reopening and staffing the large yard so individuals can enjoy grass, fresh air, and sunlight and have an opportunity to look away from concrete. Additionally, consider incorporating murals throughout the housing units and on Main Street for a less restrictive feel. Lastly, consider planting native plants throughout Main Street for additional color and connection to ʻāina. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

5) **Include Medical and Mental Health Staff in Future Construction Plans *Unclear**
Include the medical and mental health team in any plans for construction to ensure a more therapeutic and rehabilitative space. If the mental or medical spaces are extended to the basement, ensure ample natural lighting by adding as many windows as possible and consider bright paint for a less restrictive space.

6) **Expand the Correctional Industries worklines to include specific training in skilled trades that would lead to gainful employment after incarceration.**
At some point, there used to be an electrical and plumbing workline that helped keep the facility maintained. The electrician union previously came to the facility and trained people in custody, and then people leaving prison would have an income-generating trade and connections to the unions and jobs in high demand. However, that program has not existed for some time. It would benefit the Department to work with skilled trade unions to train individuals in plumbing, electrical, welding, HVAC, etc. This would not only create opportunities for individuals to earn gainful employment upon release, but also help the facility with desperately needed maintenance concerns. Correctional Industry worklines can assist in upkeeping the facilities while learning skills that are at the core of the Hawaii Correctional Industry work. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

7) **Increase training and support for uniformed staff.**
To expedite and stay current on uniformed staff training, consider placing or training certified instructors to be onsite full-time at Halawa. This would allow the facility to train staff more efficiently in a way that corresponds to the facility's schedule and specific needs. Also, consider updating the training academy curriculum to better prepare staff for their actual roles onsite at facilities. Although there has not been progress on focus on training HCF staff in house, the DCR is currently updating its training academy curriculum for new recruits.

8) **Increase training and support for case/unit managers to better meet the population's needs upon release. *Unclear**
The role of social workers and unit managers is vital to successful rehabilitation and reentry for people in custody. The Commission is aware that many people in custody are released directly to the community from Halawa. Here, it would be helpful to identify and offer additional training to support the critical role these staff members assume. Staff should stay current on local and national best practices in their field. The crucial role of these staff members and the importance of a mindset dedicated to supporting people in custody and their success should be included in the training.

Although it is unclear if national best practices are being implemented, the Commission is aware that the reentry office in DCR has been having consistent meetings with case managers to keep staff aligned with DCR's reentry efforts and initiatives. Additionally, the reentry office has been updating case managers on policy and procedure changes to ensure consistent implementation of reentry efforts statewide. Each of these meetings take several hours depending on the specific facilities needs and questions. The Commission does view this as important progress.

9) **The Department should support legislative efforts toward Compassionate Release or transfer to a more appropriate medical setting for the severely ill.**
The Department, in collaboration with the Hawaii Paroling Authority and the Commission, has drafted a compassionate release bill to be introduced during the 2026 legislative session. The Commission applauds the Department on their collaborative efforts towards this legislation.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR
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Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF)
November 2025 site Tour Observations
Date of Report: December 11, 2025

On Thursday, November 13, 2025, the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF) collectively as a group. The tour included two of the five Commissioners – Martha Torney, and Ronald Ibara in addition to Commission staff. This report encompasses notes from the Commissioners and will be discussed at the Commission's monthly public meeting held on December 11, 2025**.**

Facility Overview

On the day of the visit, KCF housed 86 incarcerated men, with capacity to hold 160. This means the facility was at 54% capacity. Since this facility plays a key role in providing minimum security programming and reentry preparation for individuals nearing release, the Commission has continuously pushed the Department to use the facility to its full capacity. The Commission has been and continues to be disappointed by the lack of bed space at KCF utilized by the Department.

During the visit, Warden Rowe shared updates on facility improvements, including the completion of the staff offices, training center, and vehicle storage area. The grounds have been cleared of old vehicles and debris, significantly improving the campus' appearance and safety. However, infrastructure challenges persist. The facility's water plant has been non-operational for over two years, requiring daily hauling of water. This issue has been repeatedly submitted for Capitol Improvement Funding (CIP) but remains unresolved. Non-portable water from the reservoir is repurposed for irrigation and fire control. Additionally, power outages and connectivity issues affect communication and limit opportunities for technology-based programming.

Programs and Services

Kulani currently offers several rehabilitation and education programs, including:

- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Levels 2.0 and 2.5
- GED and vocational education in partnership with the community college
- Sex Offender Treatment Programs
- Safety and vocational certification courses

Since the last visit, the facility has added two case managers and one Substance Use Disorder Counselor. However, there is no Level 3.0 program Substance Abuse Disorder class, potentially impacting people's opportunities to meaningfully parole. The Commission is also concerned that a single instructor continues to manage both 2.0 and 2.5 groups.

There remains a significant gap in cognitive-behavioral and trauma-informed classes, such as *Thinking for a Change* or anger management programming. Staff expressed interest in expanding partnerships with community and cultural-based organizations to fill these service gaps, provided they meet security clearance requirements, but there is no indication of a concerted effort to make that happen.

Library and Education
The Commission toured the library and education. The men expressed appreciation that it has reopened and received new books, many of which were based on popular movies. The librarian had organized the space to allow wheelchair accessibility and added additional shelving. The law library remained well-equipped with Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS), LexisNexis, and other required legal references, allowing men to conduct legal research and prepare for hearings.

Kitchen and Food Service
The Commission toured the kitchen and spoke with both staff and incarcerated workers. Overall, the kitchen appeared organized and operational. Staff reported that one of the refrigerators was reading **57°F**, but they were actively adjusting the thermostat to bring the temperature down. The Commission noted that this should be monitored to ensure compliance with food safety standards.

Men working in the kitchen shared positive feedback about the quality of food at Kulani, describing it as “restaurant-style” and noting it was better than food served at other facilities. The kitchen staff were engaged and appeared to have a good rapport with the workers. However, the Commission encourages ongoing oversight of food storage temperatures and maintenance to prevent equipment failures or spoilage.

Dorm 6 & 7 Observations
The Commission visited Dorms 6 and 7, where several men openly discussed their concerns. A recurring issue was fear of submitting written requests or grievances. Multiple individuals stated that filing requests could lead to transfer delays, transfers back to Halawa, or other forms of retaliation. This fear discouraged men from reporting problems and undermines trust in the grievance process. Frustration was also expressed regarding delays in case management communication and a lack of clarity on program status or release timelines. Some individuals expressed that they have waited extended periods to enter SUD 2.5 classes due to limited staff and turnover. These concerns align with feedback received from previous visits and family calls to HCSOC, indicating ongoing issues with case management engagement and accountability.

Dorm 7 specifically required maintenance attention**.** One urinal had been non-functional for several months**,** tiles in the showers and walls were falling off**,** and the ceiling had active leaks. Maintenance staff reported that repairs are underway but have been delayed due to persistent rain.

Commissioner Recommendations
Kulani Correctional Facility continues to demonstrate commitment to maintaining safety and order with limited resources. The facility has made visible progress in cleanup and infrastructure organization. However, the rehabilitative mission remains hindered by systemic issues that directly affect program access and reentry preparation.

Follow Up on Previous Recommendations

Below are four recommendations that stemmed from the December 2023 KCF Site Observations report in addition to updated findings based on the October 2024 site observations.

1) **Begin Offering In-Person Visitation and Expand Access to Phone Calls**
   The Commission is pleased to report that KCF has begun offering in-person contact visitation and this recommendation is resolved.

2) **Increase the Population at Kulani as Kulani is One of the Most Rehabilitative Facilities in Hawaii**
   The DCR has not completed this recommendation, and in fact, the population numbers at KCF and WCF (both minimum custody) are worse in 2024 and 2025 than they were in 2023.

   Kulani is one of the most rehabilitative facilities in Hawaii and sits around 50% capacity. As of November 2023, there were around 240 people in custody at Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) and Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona (AZSC) with a custody status of minimum or below. In October 2024, there were around 260. In 2025, there are around 244 with a custody status of minimum or below.

	2023 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	53	455	369	--	--	877
HCF	4	183	435	187	2	11	822
WCF	27	154	--	--	--	--	181
KCF	24	61	--	--	--	--	85

Source: Hawaii Department of Public Safety Roster, Dated Nov. 13, 2023

	2024 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	77	506	411	--	--	994
HCF	6	179	306	204	6	5	706
WCF	23	113	--	--	--	--	136 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	13	65	--	--	--	--	78 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Oct. 14, 2024

	2025 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	67	409	340	--	--	816
HCF	4	173	351	271	5	8	812
WCF	17	148	--	--	--	--	165 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	23	62	1	--	--	--	86 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Nov. 17, 2025

The Commission, again, recommends that the Department transfer eligible individuals at Halawa and Saguaro, with minimum custody or below, to Kulani and Waiawa Correctional Facilities. Due to the rehabilitative and therapeutic nature of the Kulani, this facility could be better utilized at a consistent capacity close to 100% and certainly over 90%.

3) **Remove the Monetary Eligibility Requirement for Furlough Participation at all Furlough Sites**
The Commission is pleased to report that the Department has fulfilled this recommendation.

4) **Reinstate Transportation Shuttle for Staff**
This recommendation has not been completed.

Additional recommendations to be considered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

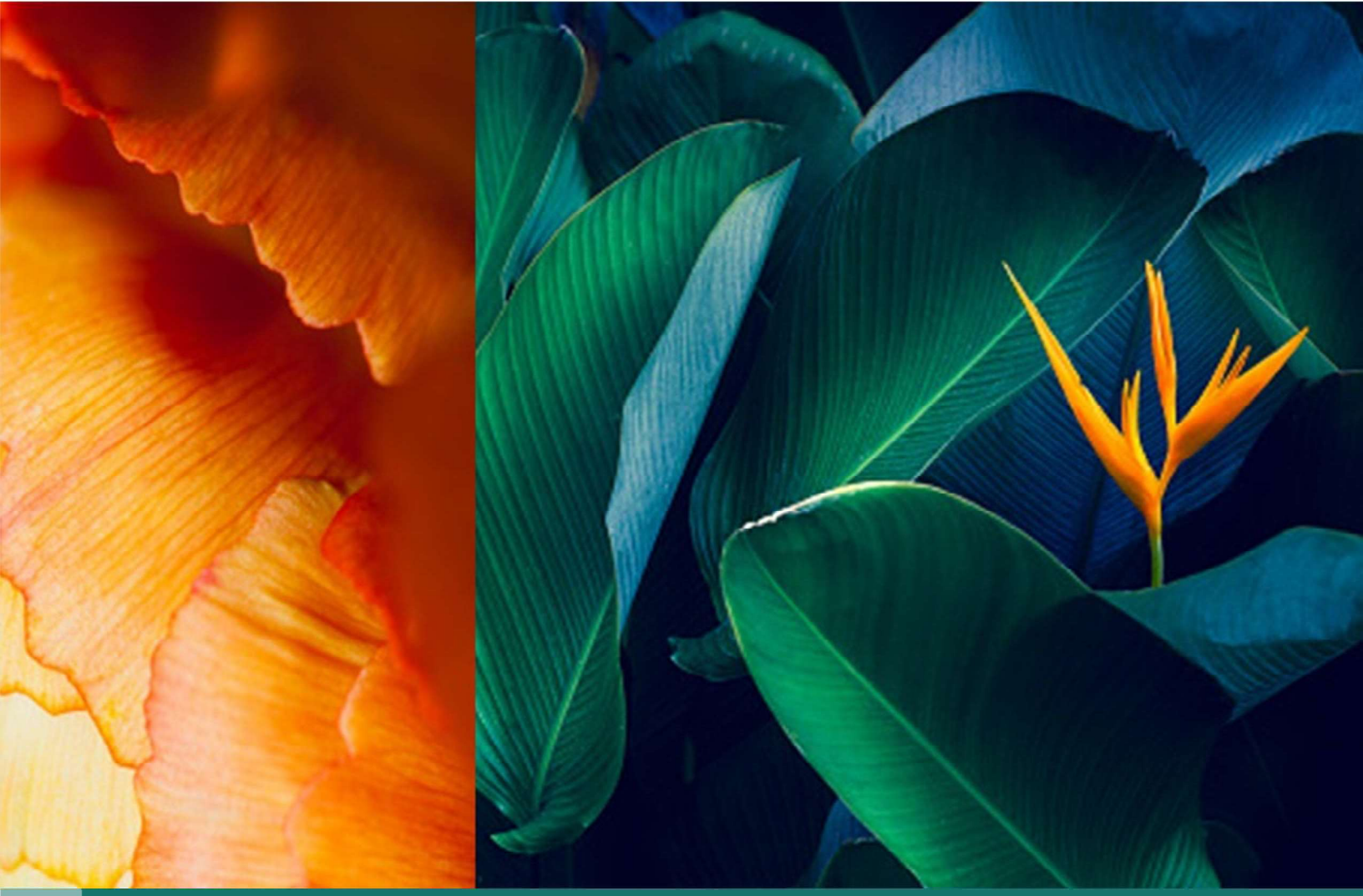
5) **Prioritize Maintenance and Repair of Water System**
The facility's water plant has been non-operational for over two years, requiring daily hauling of water. This issue has been repeatedly submitted for Capitol Improvement Funding (CIP) but remains unresolved. Non-portable water from the reservoir is repurposed for irrigation and fire control. The Department should prioritize securing CIP funding to repair the water system.

6) **Prioritize Maintenance and Repair of Dorm 7**
The Department should address long-standing needed repairs to plumbing, tiles, and leaking ceilings in the Dorm 7 bathroom. Additionally, the Department should address the lack of heat within the dorm given the cold temperatures that impact the facility.

7) **Improve Digital Connectivity**
The Department should secure funding to improve digital connectivity to support education and rehabilitation on tablets, computers, or other digital options. This is of particular importance given the distance of the facility from town and lack of in-person volunteers.

Systemic Reports

House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force Report



House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force

Report

Final report from the HCR23 Task Force examining existing procedures of the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority for setting minimum terms of imprisonment.

Authored by the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission,
Council of State Governments, and the Criminal Justice Research Institute.
January 21, 2025

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Introduction

During the 2023 Legislative Session, House Concurrent Resolution No. 23 was passed requesting the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission to convene a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures of the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment. The goal of the resolution was to explore parole models from other states and determine whether minimum sentencing responsibilities should be removed from the Paroling Authority. The task force included representatives from various sectors, including the judiciary, executive branch, legislature, and victims' advocates.

House Concurrent Resolution 23 (HCR23, HCR23 HD1 SD1) was introduced by Representative Gregg Takayama and passed with amendments by the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs (PSM), the Senate Committee on Judiciary (JDC), and the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs (JHA) during the 2023 legislative session. The task force was created whereas:

- Hawai‘i is one of thirty-three states that primarily utilizes an indeterminate sentencing system where courts can order a maximum and minimum term, or both, and then actual time served is determined by a parole board; and
- Under existing law, the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority retains the authority to set the minimum term of imprisonment a prisoner must serve before being eligible for parole; and
- This creates a two-step process in which the presiding judge determines the maximum term for a defendant convicted after reviewing the victims' statements, presentencing reports, criminal history, and other factors; and
- The Hawai‘i Paroling Authority then holds another hearing to determine the minimum term before a defendant is eligible for parole; and
- This two-step process is redundant and time consuming for the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority who spends approximately thirty percent of its time on the post-conviction minimum sentencing process; and
- Of the thirty-three states using an indeterminate sentencing system, Hawai‘i is the only state that requires a parole board to determine the minimum sentence of imprisonment.

For those reasons, the House of Representatives of the Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2023, and the Senate concurring, requested that the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission convene a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures

of the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment to increase efficiency of the procedures.

The resolution requested that the task force:

1) study whether parole system models utilized by other states might be suited for Hawai‘i; and
2) examine and compare the minimum sentences issued by the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority and the courts to determine whether there are significant differences; and
3) recommend whether the administration of justice may be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority, thereby enabling it to focus on determining and assisting prisoners’ fitness for parole and supervision of parolees.

The resolution further requested that members or designees from specific agencies be included in the task force. The HCR23 Task Force was comprised of the following members:

- The Chair of the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission or the Chair’s designee, who shall serve as the chairperson of the task force – *Mark Patterson, Chair of HCSOC*;
- The Chief Justice of the Hawai‘i Supreme Court or the Chief Justice’s designee – *Honorable Kevin Souza, First Circuit Court Judge*;
- The Attorney General or the Attorney General’s designee – *Lisa Itomura, Deputy Attorney General*;
- The Director of Health or the Director’s designee – *Brenda Bauer-Smith, Court Examiner Supervisor*;
- The Director of Public Safety or the Director’s Designee – *Tommy Johnson, Director of Public Safety*;
- The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs or the Chairperson’s designee – *Kū‘ike Kamakea-‘Ōhelo (‘Oia), Director of ‘Ōiwi Wellbeing and ‘Āina Momona*;
- The Chair of the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority or the Chair’s designee – *Fred Hyun, Chair of HPA*;
- The Public Defender or the Public Defender’s designee – *Ben Lowenthal, Deputy Public Defender*;
- One member of the House of Representatives, as appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives – *Representative Mark Hashem*;
- One member of the Senate, as appointed by the President of the Senate – *Senator Glenn Wakai*;
- The Prosecuting Attorney, or the Prosecuting Attorney’s designee, of each county;
    - Hawai’i County – *Kelden Waltjen, Prosecuting Attorney*

    - Kauai County – *Keola Siu, First Deputy*
    - Maui County – *Andrew Martin, Prosecuting Attorney*
    - Honolulu County – *Steve Alm, Prosecuting Attorney*
- A representative of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission – *Pamela Ferguson-Brey, Executive Director*
- Four representatives appointed by the Hawai'i Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, including one representative from each county;
    - Hawai'i County – *Andrew Kennedy*
    - Kauai County – *Craig DeCosta*
    - Maui County – *Brandon Segal*
    - Honolulu County – *Myles Breiner*
- One member of the public who is a victim of domestic violence and has knowledge and expertise with the criminal justice system appointed by the Director of Public Safety – *S.K.*; and
- One member of the public who is a victim of sexual assault and has knowledge and expertise with the criminal justice system appointed by the Director of Public Safety – *M.R.*

Additionally, the Judiciary and Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation were requested to provide administrative support to the task force; and the task force received assistance from the Research and Statistics Branch, Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division, Department of the Attorney General (*Dr. Michelle Masters, Research Analyst*) and the Criminal Justice Research Institute (*Dr. Erin Harbinson, Director; Dr. Samuel Choi, Research Analyst; Mariah McCaskill, Secretary; Aerielle Reynolds, Research Analyst*).

Lastly, the task force was requested to submit any request for proposed legislation, supporting documents, information, and materials deemed necessary, to the Legislative Reference Bureau no later than August 1, 2024, and submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than October 21, 2024.

The task force had six, 3-hour meetings enabling a thorough review process. The following report includes details of the process, partnerships, research and information examined, the voting and decision-making process, and the conclusion of the task force. Due to the plethora of information the task force needed to review; the Commission requested an extension from Representative Takayama which was approved. No legislation was submitted by the task force.

Partnerships

The HCSOC partnered with the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, the Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI), and the Department of Attorney General to assist with this task force.
The CSG Justice Center provided the following assistance to the task force:

- Provided context about parole systems across the United States.
- Conducted an analysis of Hawai'i's criminal justice data.
- Reviewed existing corrections, court, and other criminal justice policies and procedures.
- Engaged and collected input from a broad range of state and local stakeholders in the criminal justice system.
- Presented findings from the analyses to the task force and begin developing policy options.
- Produced a memorandum summarizing the analyses and policy options.

The Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI) was established by Act 179 (2019) following a recommendation from the Criminal Pretrial Task Force. The state of Hawai'i recognized a need to develop a research organization that could examine all aspects of the criminal justice system to help the state connect research and data in a comprehensive way. The criminal justice system is made up of several agencies, organizations, data systems, files, and rules. To study the state's criminal justice system and provide information on trends and evaluations, researchers must find ways to link these sources together (HRS § 614). As a research entity created to work in a statewide context, CJRI was listed in the resolution to provide support for the task force and as such, developed a research plan to work within the state's criminal justice landscape to provide data for the task force.

The Hawai'i Criminal Justice Data Center (HCJDC) is an agency of the Department of the Attorney General (AG) in the State of Hawai'i and is responsible for the statewide criminal history record information system (CJIS-Hawai'i), the statewide Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), the statewide Sex Offender and Other Covered Offender Registry, and the Adult Criminal Conviction Information Web Site (eCrim).

In terms of collecting and analyzing data, the Research and Statistics Branch of the Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division (CPJD), provided research staff and supported CJRI in data collection and analysis. The data collection and analysis were accomplished through partnerships with CJRI, CSG, and the divisions within the AG's office. Additional details of this are provided in their respective sections.

Council of State Government Findings

Examining Minimum Sentencing Policies in Hawai'i

The Hawai'i Paroling Authority (HPA) is primarily responsible for setting the minimum amount of time a person must serve in prison before becoming eligible for parole. This decision is made within six months of the individual's admission to prison. Once the person has served the minimum term, the HPA evaluates whether to grant parole at that point. Additionally, the HPA has the authority to reduce a previously set minimum term as a reward for prosocial behavior demonstrated by the individual while in prison.

HCR 23 directed the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) to convene a working group to do the following:

1. Study whether parole system models used by other states might be suited for Hawai'i.
2. Recommend whether the administration of justice may be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority.
3. Examine and make recommendations regarding existing procedures of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment to increase efficiency of the procedures.[1]

The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center provided HCSOC with technical assistance to meet these objectives, with funding and support provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) Assessment Center (JAC). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs. Specifically, the CSG Justice Center provided four presentations to the Task Force:

1. HCR 23 Task Force - The CSG Justice Center (Sep. 12, 2023) Background on various state systems for sentencing and release from prison
2. HCR 23 Task Force - The CSG Justice Center (Nov. 2, 2023) Constitutional and statutory framework for each of the roles represented on the task force (judges, prosecution, defense, HPA, victims, etc.)
3. HCR 23 Task Force - The CSG Justice Center (June 6, 2024) Common features of states using parole, statutory minimums used in Hawai'i, litigation involving HPA minimums, and data analysis based on HPA

[1] A fourth requirement in HCR 2023 could not be addressed due to lack of data: examine and compare the minimum sentences issued by the Hawai'i Paroling Authority and the courts to determine whether there are significant differences.

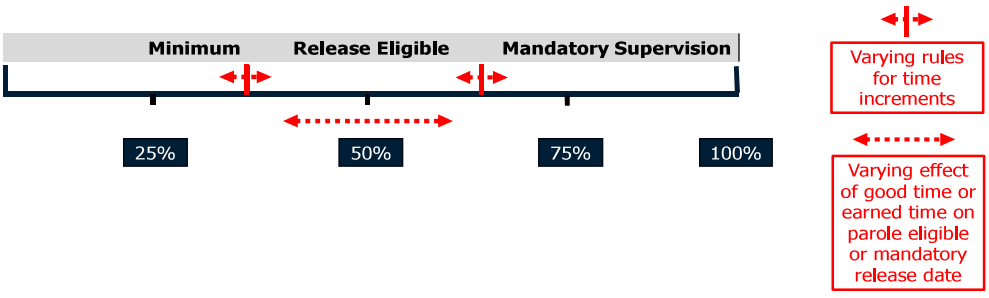
annual reports

4. HCR 23 Task Force - The CSG Justice Center (Sep. 12, 2024) (Sep. 12, 2024) Data analysis of 18 years of Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) administrative data

The following are key points from these presentations:

- In 2023, among the 34 states with paroling systems, it was not uncommon for parole boards to have authority over setting minimum terms and granting parole. In 6 states, parole boards had some authority to set minimum terms, typically following fixed rules outlined in board policy.
- Hawai'i is one of only five states that do not provide time credits to individuals serving prison sentences. [2]This means there are no "good time" credits for consistent good behavior or "earned credits" for completing programs or reaching specific milestones. In Hawai'i, individuals must serve their full sentence day-for-day up to the maximum term, with only the Hawai'i Paroling Authority (HPA) having the discretion to adjust the time served.
- In most state systems that use parole (excluding Hawai'i), the sentence length is determined either by a sentencing judge or within a statutory range. The sentence must include the maximum term and may also include both minimum and maximum terms. In these systems, a paroling authority decides the actual length of time a person serves in prison after they reach the minimum and become eligible for parole (represented by the red vertical line on the left below). Additionally, "good time" or "earned time" credits can reduce the time served, potentially leading to a mandatory release before the maximum term (represented by the vertical red line on the right below).

Typical Paroling State Sentence Schema



[2] The others are Idaho, Michigan, Montana, and Wisconsin. See Reitz, K., Rhine, E., Lukac, A., & Robin Institute, American Prison Release Systems (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2022), https://robinainstitute.umn.edu/sites/robinainstitute.umn.edu/files/2022-05/american_prison-release_systems.pdf.

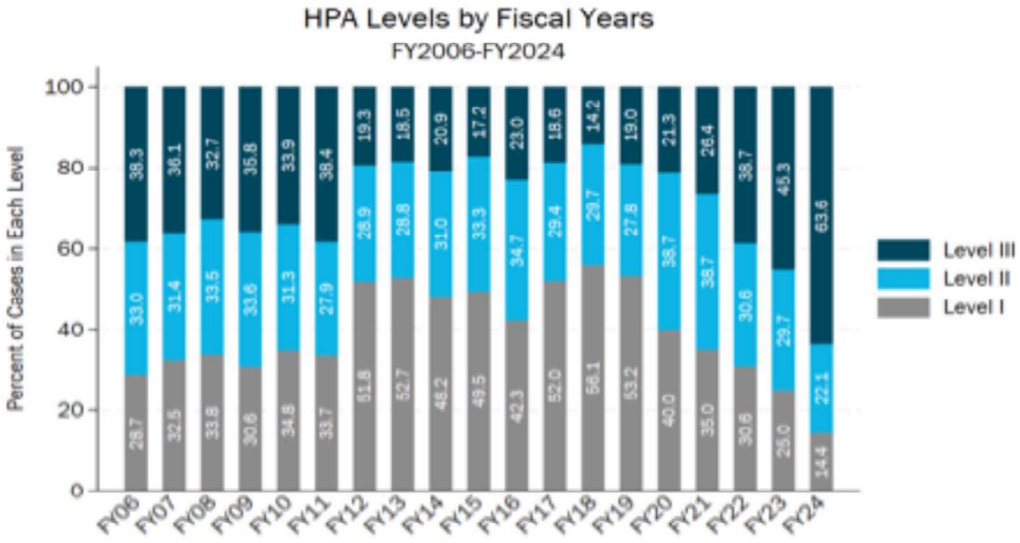
- Hawai'i uses statutory "fixed minimums" in two situations: cases that include the use of firearms and cases that involve repeat offenses.
- Analysis of 18 years of Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) administrative data showed that a higher proportion of people are receiving a Level III (aggravated) minimum term than in prior years. This has resulted in more people spending longer periods of time in DCR custody prior to reaching eligibility for parole release.[3]
- As shown below, in FY 2024 there were fewer Level I outcomes and significantly more Level III outcomes than in any prior year in the analysis.[4]

[3] Admissions data was provided by the (DCR) for January 2000 to May 2024. The DCR data included all pretrial admissions, misdemeanor and felony sentence admissions, as well as admissions due to revocations of probation or parole. From this large data file of over 200,000 cases, a cohort was created of people admitted to prison to serve a felony sentence either as a new commitment or as a probation revocation. Any decisions by HPA that were made following a parole revocation had to be excluded because it was unclear in the data whether a new sentence had been imposed. Additionally, data from CY 2000 to CY 2004 was excluded, as well as data from CY 2024. The earlier years were unreliable in terms of data accuracy, and the 2024 sample year was incomplete. The analysis also excluded outlier cases, defined as people convicted for life sentences and for people whose maximum sentence length exceeded the statutory maximum.

The goal of the second round of data analysis was to determine if there has been a change over time in the setting of minimum terms for people convicted of felony offenses and sentenced to prison. The analysis involved calculating the minimum amount of time to serve and then categorizing cases into the three HPA minimum term levels based on offense severity and sentence length. Due to data limitations, the final analysis was limited to providing a historical trend of minimum terms set by HPA from 2005 to 2023.

It was not possible to replicate the HPA process of setting minimum terms for each offense in the sentencing record. Only the most serious offense was available in the DOCR data, along with the severity level and sentence length associated with the most serious offense available, to calculate estimates of minimum terms. No additional data was available that would have enabled a more robust analysis. The lack of a complete criminal history for each case restricted our ability to incorporate one of the most significant factors into the analysis of how minimum terms are determined. While it was possible to estimate an individual's prior number of admissions using the DOCR data, this approach potentially biases older cases in the data. Further, risk and needs data were not available, nor was programming participation included.

[4] Analysis of Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation data conducted by The Council of State Governments Justice Center, August 2024.



- The length of minimum sentences has also increased over time. On average, people serve over 50 percent of their maximum sentence before parole eligibility, regardless of felony class.[5]
- Case law summarized in the Appendix demonstrates that the courts have been regularly involved in regulating HPA minimum setting, as it implicates due process of law.

[5] Ibid.

Criminal Justice Research Institute Findings and Methods

Summary of Findings Presented to the Task Force

Analysis Approach

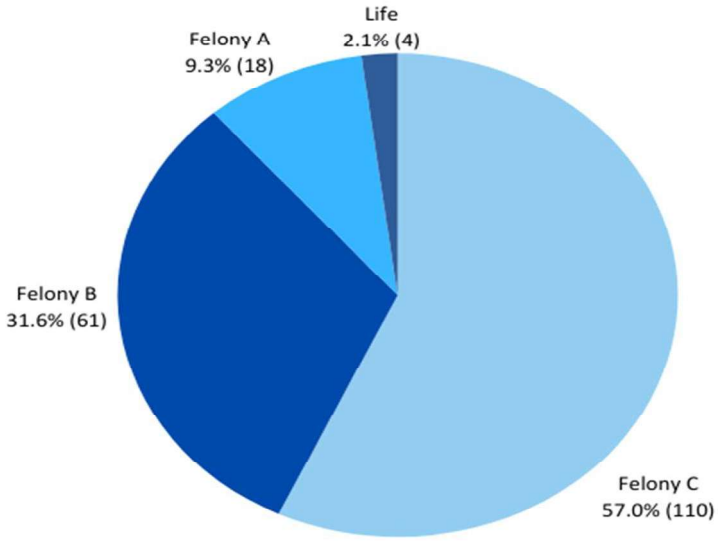
Data was analyzed with descriptive statistics using means, medians, modes, ranges, frequencies, and percentages. Sentenced individuals were the primary unit of analysis. If someone was convicted of more than one offense, their most serious offense classification was used. One set of analyses provided statistics for the twelve most frequent crimes and analyzed data across all convictions—as a single individual could be convicted of multiple crimes.

Findings

The sample (described below) ultimately consisted of 193 sentenced individuals whose minimum term hearing was held between January 2023 and June 2023. Sample characteristics were:

- Males comprised the vast majority (*n* = 179, 92.8%).
- The mean age was 39.8 years (range = 22-69 years).
- Hawaiians/part-Hawaiians were the largest group at a little over a third of the sample (*n* = 68, 35.4%), followed by Whites (*n* = 39, 20.7%).
- A little over two-thirds of the individuals committed the offense(s) related to their minimum term hearing in the City and County of Honolulu (*n* = 123, 64.8%).
- A majority of the individuals were on probation prior to their minimum term hearing (*n* = 115, 59.6%). A few individuals were on parole (*n* = 9, 4.7%).
- Over a third of individuals scored as high on the LSI-R (*n* = 74, 38.3%), followed by individuals who scored as medium (*n* = 48, 24.9%).
- Among the 193 individuals there were a total of 634 convictions comprised of 73 different offenses.
- Promoting a dangerous drug in the third degree, a class C felony, was the most frequently occurring offense in the sample (*n* = 78, 12.3%).
- There was an average of 3.2 convictions per person.
- For a little over half the individuals in the sample, class C felony was the most serious offense classification (57.0%), followed by class B felony, class A felony and Life with the Possibility of Parole.

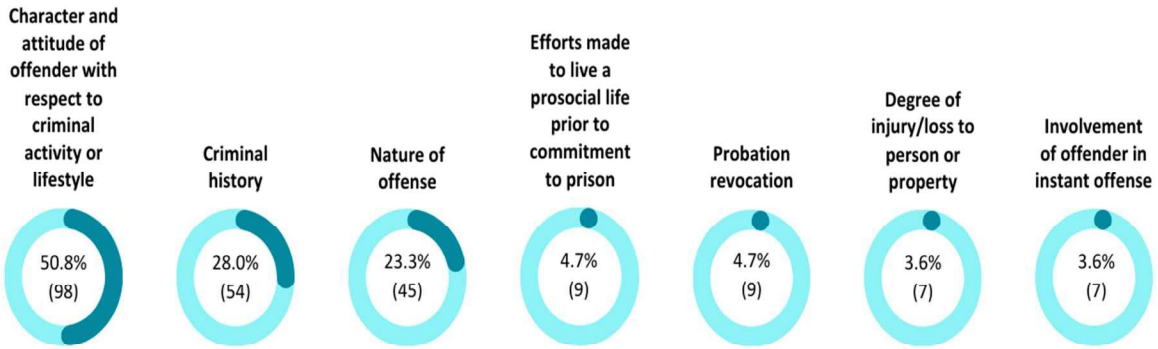
Most Serious Offense by Felony Classification of Sentenced Individuals with Minimum Term Hearing January - June 2023 (N = 193)



In addition to those characteristics, data on HPA's policy to set minimum terms was examined. The HPA guidelines policy specifies seven criteria for board members to consider when setting a punishment level for a minimum term. HPA stated they recorded the most applicable criteria in setting a minimum term in their files. File reviews resulted in these findings:

- One to three criteria were selected per individual, with an average of 1.2 criteria recorded per individual.
- The criterion "character and attitude of offender with respect to criminal activity or lifestyle" was the most frequently recorded (*n* = 98, 50.8%), followed by "criminal history" (*n* = 54, 28.0%), and "nature of offense" (*n* = 45, 23.3%).

Frequency of HPA Criteria Used to Set Minimum Terms January - June 2023



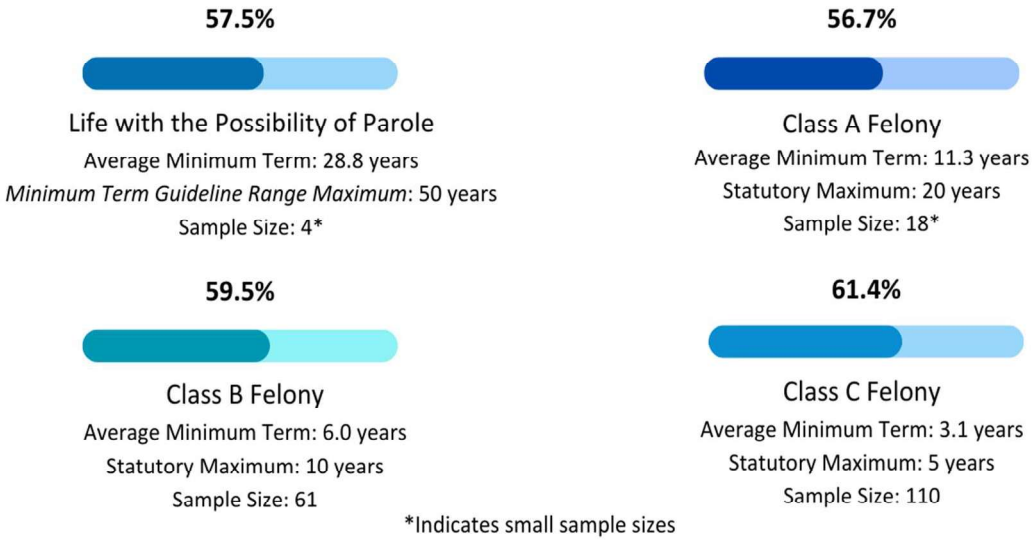
*Some cases recorded more than one criteria from HPA's guidelines policy, and therefore one case may have been counted more than once in the infographics presented here.

- Across the seven criteria, Level III punishments were selected most often, with Level III "character and attitude of offender with respect to criminal

activity or lifestyle" being selected most frequently, followed by Level III "criminal history," and Level III "nature of offense."

- Average minimum terms were 6-11 percentage points over 50% of the maximum term for all felony offense severity levels.
    - Class C felonies averaged 3.1 years, or 61.4% of the five-year statutory maximum.
    - Class B felony minimums averaged 6.0 years, or 59.5% of the 10-year statutory maximum.
    - Class A felonies (*n = 18)* averaged 11.3 years long, or 56.7% of the 20-year statutory maximum.
    - Life with the possibility of parole felonies (*n = 4)* averaged 28.8 years, or 57.5% of the 50-year minimum term guideline range maximum.

HPA Average Minimum Terms by Felony Classification Set Between January - June 2023 Relative to Statutory Maximum (N = 193)



Research Questions

The resolution outlined two potential areas where quantitative research could illuminate policies and practices around minimum terms for the task force:

- "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to examine and compare the minimum sentences issued by the Hawai`i Paroling Authority and the courts to determine whether there are significant differences; and

- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to recommend whether the administration of justice may be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai`i Paroling

Authority, thereby enabling it to focus on determining and assisting prisoners' fitness for parole and supervision of parolees."[6]

Research staff determined how the above focus areas could be operationalized by identifying the questions and data needed to measure and evaluate these focus areas. Additionally, research staff identified data sources that could address these questions in addition to the limitations or gaps that prevented them from being answered. The first topic area outlined above was not pursued, as HPA board members are the only people who set minimum terms in Hawai`i (with a few exceptions), and therefore there are no sentences from the courts to compare to at this time. The second topic area, which focuses on understanding the administration of justice, would require an outcome study, which could not be accomplished within the timeframe of the task force.

- **What are some of the trends around minimum terms and how might they vary over time and why might they vary?** While HPA provides the average minimum terms each year in annual reports, it is unclear how these trends have changed over time and what factors might be impacting these trends. Data from HPA was analyzed from six months of minimum term hearings to collect more information on sentencing related factors including offense classification, offense type, number of convictions at sentencing, prior supervision status, risk and needs assessments, and demographics. Additionally, data was collected from the DCR on minimum terms over a fifteen-year period to examine trends over time. These trends allow the state to monitor changes and establish benchmarks, which was analyzed by CSG.

- **How does HPA's policy for Guidelines on Setting Minimum Terms impact the minimum terms set?** Since HPA has a policy that outlines criteria to set minimum terms, data was collected to explore how the policy might relate to the decisions made by HPA board members in practice. Data on the criteria most applicable to setting a punishment level were collected to examine this administrative policy.

Research Methods and Data Collection

With the assistance of HPA, a list was generated of minimum term hearings that were held from January 1, 2023, through June 30, 2023. From this list, 193 individuals were identified as having a minimum term hearing and included in the study. HPA staff pulled these files in order for the research team to go on-site, review, code, and enter data into spreadsheets. These paper files included

[6] H.C.R. 23, H.D. 1, S.D. 1. Thirty-Second Legislature, 2023 Regular Session. (Hawai`i 2023). https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2023/bills/HCR23_SD1_.htm

information on the background of the case the board members reviewed before hearings, such as criminal history information and conviction information, but also included different documents that record the HPA board member decisions to set terms, and explain the criteria used to set them. Research staff reviewed these files, some of which contained hundreds of pages of information. Therefore, this data was collected at a smaller scale (smaller sample and fewer variables) due to time constraints.

A data collection protocol was developed to ensure research staff were reviewing the files and coding information accurately for analysis. All three staff who collected this data had in-depth knowledge of the criminal justice system and the minimum terms process, and experience coding data for research. Additionally, the CJRI director reviewed the data collection protocol and a sample of files and data entry for quality assurance purposes. This approach to data collection was undertaken because HPA does not have a case management system that can extract electronic files of data for research purposes.

Originally, the research team arrived at the HPA with a list of several variables of interest to collect during file review. After a few days on-site, the team narrowed its information to ensure data collection would occur within the task force time frame. One of the main challenges they faced was the lack of systematic tracking of certain information, which meant the only way to collect it was to read through several pieces of information to code it. This is one of the limitations of collecting data through case file review in agencies. In the end, The research staff focused on collecting information most relevant to the setting of minimum terms. In sentencing research,[7] many studies examine demographics, instant offense information (i.e., offense at conviction), and criminal history variables in relation to sentencing outcomes. Additionally, data related to the minimum terms policy used by the HPA board was prioritized.

Data

The research team collected demographic information for individuals who had minimum term hearings including age, sex, race and ethnicity, and county of offense. Data for all the study's demographic variables were obtained from the individual's criminal history record. The county of offense was obtained from the CJIS criminal history records.

[7] Ulmer, J. T. (2012). Recent Developments and New Directions in Sentencing Research, *Justice Quarterly, 29*:1, 1-40.

The research team also collected criminal justice status and legal characteristics information for people in the study, including each offense they were convicted of that resulted in the minimum term hearing (also called the instant offense), prior community supervision status (i.e., being on probation or parole at the time of their conviction), and their risk to reoffend (as determined by their *Level of Service Inventory - Revised* risk level). Offense related information, including the HRS statute and offense description, as well as offense severity level, were obtained from the individual's criminal history record and/or notice and order of fixing minimum terms of imprisonment. Prior community supervision status was obtained from orders of resentencing and/or revocation documents. LSI-R risk level was obtained from the individual's prescriptive plan or their risk assessment scoring sheet.

Term length information, including statutory maximum terms and minimum terms as determined by HPA, were obtained from an individual's notice and order of fixing minimum terms of imprisonment. Additionally, criteria that HPA board members found most applicable to setting the minimum term, was obtained from an individual's minimum term sentencing scoring sheet. This criterion relates to HPA's policy, Guidelines on Setting Minimum Terms.

Summary of Data Findings from CSG and CJRI Data Analyses

- **In recent years, the average minimum term has been set at more than halfway to the statutory maximum across offense classifications.**
  This finding was consistent in both studies.
  - Of the 193 people included in the HPA data, people convicted of a class C felony as their most serious offense received a minimum term set at 61.4% of the statutory maximum and those convicted of a class B felony received a minimum term set at 59.5%.
  - In the CSG data analysis, between FY 21 - FY 24, people convicted of a class A felony received a minimum term set at 64.8% of the range, those convicted of a class B felony received a minimum set at 55.6% of the range, and those convicted of a class A felony received a minimum term set at 54.0% of the range.

- **The distribution among levels of punishment stayed relatively consistent over time until FY 2018, when Level III outcomes for cases increased. In FY2022, level III punishment had become the most frequent outcome and continued to rise into 2024 where it represented 63.6% of cases.**

- **The "character and attitude of offender with respect to criminal activity or lifestyle" is the most relevant factor used to set a minimum term by HPA board members.**
  HPA board members can refer to an agency policy that lists seven criteria for setting minimum terms and within each criterion, additional guidance is provided to structure decision-making. The "character and attitude" criterion is one of the more subjective criteria and would be difficult to evaluate how often board members adhere to HPA policy in setting minimum terms. Some of the other criteria, such as criminal history, provide more objective guidance in applying the criterion to a minimum term and could be evaluated.

- **About two-thirds of individuals who go to HPA for a minimum term hearing are at moderate or higher risk to reoffend, indicating that a significant amount of the prison population requires prison programming and treatment in order to prepare them for release.**
  The minimum amount of time that a person is required to spend in prison needs to be balanced with several competing goals of sentencing. With regard to rehabilitative goals, higher risk individuals need enough time to

complete rehabilitative programming before being eligible for release, while lower risk individuals should not be incarcerated for longer than necessary, as this could worsen criminogenic risk factors.

- **Most people who are sentenced to prison and have a minimum term hearing are convicted of a class C felony as their most serious offense, followed by class B felony, then class A.**
  In part, this is expected because most arrests and convictions are for class C felonies, while violent and serious crimes are committed less often in the community. It is important to understand how less serious offenses result in incarceration to ensure that where possible, prison sentences are given because legal and community safety factors justify it.



Voting Process and Decision Making

After four three-hour meetings of background and research presented by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and a mock parole hearing presented by the Hawai'i Paroling Authority, the fifth meeting was dedicated to providing a summary of the work that task force had completed thus far, and a presentation of questions related to the work of the task force.

The Chair, Mark Patterson, presented four main discussion questions related to the charge of the task force. After asking a question, the Chair would call on each individual member to share their opinions. The questions included:

- Do you favor (a) the current practice, where the Hawai'i Paroling Authority continues setting the minimum terms of imprisonment, or (b) an alternative minimum setting, removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority?
- If we were to retain the current practice, would you favor (a) no changes at all or (b) consideration of other recommendations—e.g., statutory or policy changes or something else?
- If we were to change the current practice to an alternative, would you favor (a) judicial setting of minimums or (b) statutory set minimums?
- What additional information would help policymakers and stakeholders reach a resolution on the charge of the Task Force?

Members were given notice through the agenda to anticipate a vote during the meeting. The specific motions and corresponding votes depended on the will of the Task Force members and the discussion portion of the meeting. However, to provide notice and the opportunity for Task Force members to consider the potential motions, the following were included.

Initial: Would the administration of justice be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority?

- Based on the response to this question, there are several options Task Force members may consider:

Potential Options:

- *Option A:* If the Task Force determines that the administration of justice is best served by maintaining the status quo, are there any recommendations regarding the current practice of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment?
- *Option B:* If the Task Force determines that the administration of justice would be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority, would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility with the Judiciary?
- *Option C:* If the Task Force determines that the administration of justice would be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority, would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility in statute?

- **Additional Consideration if applicable:** Act 245, signed by Governor Green on July 9, 2024, requires the Judicial Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the Hawai'i Penal Code and recommend changes. Should the Task Force request that the recommendation of this task force be incorporated into this Penal Code review?

Ultimately, after much discussion, members voted on four questions individually:

- Question One: Would the administration of justice be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum sentences from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority?
- Question Two: Would the administration of justice be better served by keeping the current practice of the Hawai'i Paroling authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment with recommendations including review of the minimum setting guidelines and the recommendations presented by HPA Chair Hyun?
- Question Three: Would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility with the Judiciary?

- Question Four: Would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility in statute?

Outcome

Below is the breakdown of total responses to each question asked by the Chair.

- **Question One:** Would the administration of justice be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum terms of imprisonment from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority?
  Responses:
  Yes: 11 *(including proxy for Brandon Segal)*
  No: 7
  Abstention: 0
  Absent: 1 *(Judge Souza)*
  Note: Myles Breiner and *Senator Wakai didn't vote*

- **Question Two:** Would the administration of justice be better served by keeping the current practice of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment with recommendations—including review of the minimum setting guidelines and the recommendations presented by HPA Chair Hyun?
  Responses:
  Yes: 8
  No: 9
  Abstention: 2
  Absent: 1 *(Judge Souza)*
  Note: Brandon Segal didn't vote (didn't provide proxy for this)

- **Question Three:** Would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility with the Judiciary?
  Responses:
  Yes: 8
  No: 9
  Abstention: 2 *(Senator Wakai and Representative Hashem)*
  Absent: 1 *(Judge Souza)*
  Note: Ku'ike Kamakea-'Ōhelo didn't vote

- **Question Four:** Would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility in statute? This would be setting the minimum terms of imprisonment.
  Responses:
  Yes: 5
  No: 11
  Abstention: 2
  Absent: 1 *(Judge Souza)*
  Note: Brandon Segal (didn't provide proxy for this) and Craig DeCosta did not vote

Below is a breakdown of each member's response to the questions above that the Chair asked.

First	Last	Department	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Kevin	Souza	Judiciary	E	E	E	E
Lisa	Itomura	AG	No	Yes	No	No
Brenda	Bauer-Smith	DOH	No	Yes	No	No
Tommy	Johnson	DCR	No	Yes	No	No
Kūʻike	Kamakea-ʻŌhelo	OHA	Yes	No		Yes
Fred	Hyun	HPA	No	Yes	No	Yes
Ben	Lowenthal	Office of Public Defender	Yes	No	Yes	No
Mark	Hashem	House of Representatives	Yes	Abst.	Abst.	Abst.
Glenn	Wakai	Senate		Abst.	Abst.	Abst.
Steve	Alm	**Oahu** Prosecutor's Office	No	Yes	No	No
Keola	Siu	**Kauai** Prosecutor's Office	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Andrew	Martin	**Maui** Prosecutor's Office	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kelden	Waltjen	**Big Island** Prosecutor's Office	Yes	No	No	Yes
Pamela	Ferguson-Brey	Crime Victim Compensation Commission	No	Yes	No	No
Myles	Breiner	Hawaiʻi Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers		No	Yes	No
Brandon	Segal	Hawaiʻi Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers	Yes (P)		Yes (P)	
Andrew	Kennedy	Hawaiʻi Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers	Yes	No	Yes	No
Craig	DeCosta	Hawaiʻi Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers	Yes	No	Yes	
S.	K.	Member of the public who is a victim of domestic violence	Yes	Yes	No	No
M.	R.	Member of the public who is a victim of sexual assault	No	Yes	No	No
Mark	Patterson	HCSOC, Chair	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Although Question One *(Would the administration of justice be better served by removing the responsibility of setting minimum terms of imprisonment from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority?)* had a clear majority of 11 members answer YES and seven members answering NO, Question Two *(Would the administration of justice be better served by keeping the current practice of the Hawai'i Paroling Authority setting the minimum terms of imprisonment with recommendations—including review of the minimum setting guidelines and the recommendations presented by HPA Chair Hyun?)* and Question Three *(Would the administration of justice be better served by placing this responsibility with the Judiciary?)* were nearly split. The only clear consensus that came forward is the group's disagreement with placing minimum terms of confinement in statute. It should be noted that the voting options did not include the CSG recommendation on this report for default minimums, which shares minimum setting between statute and judicial discretion. It should also be noted that any change to current processes will require new legislation

Ultimately, the group did not come to a clear consensus of how to best move forward when considering whether the administration of justice would be better served by removing the responsibility of setting the minimum terms of imprisonment from the Hawai'i Paroling Authority. Therefore, the group did not submit legislation or include recommendations of what, if anything, should change.

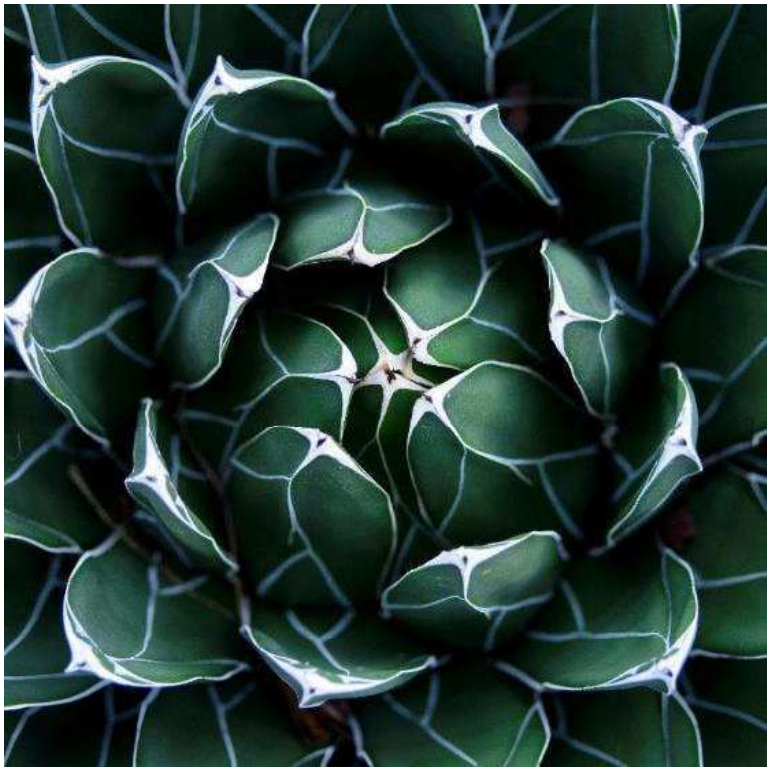


Conclusion

The HCR23 Task Force embarked on a comprehensive evaluation of the procedures employed by the Hawai‘i Paroling Authority (HPA) in setting minimum terms of imprisonment. Through collaborative partnerships, detailed data collection, and thorough analysis, the Task Force illuminated significant insights into the strengths and challenges of Hawai‘i's current system.

The Task Force acknowledges efficiency, equity and transparency are important in any minimum sentencing setting framework. Task Force members did not reach a unanimous recommendation regarding the optimal entity for determining minimum terms of imprisonment. Despite this, the discussions and findings emphasized the necessity for ongoing refinement of sentencing policies to better serve the administration of justice.

This report serves as a critical foundation for future legislative and policy discussions aimed at improving Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system. The dedication and contributions of all involved entities and individuals underscore a shared commitment to justice and the well-being of the community.



Mahalo to all Members and Contributors

The Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission shares a warm mahalo to all task force members, the Criminal Justice Research Institute, the Hawai‘i Criminal Justice Data Center, the Council of State Governments for the tremendous amount of time and effort put into this project, and to HPA and DCR for devoting staff, time, and resources to share their data for this project. Additionally, the Commission shares a warm mahalo to Representative Gregg Takayama for creating this informative task force and trusting the Commission to chair it.

All meeting information, agenda, meeting handouts, and meeting recordings can be found at https://hcsoc.Hawai‘i.gov/hcr23-task-force/.

Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, and Recommendations Report

Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission



Correctional Staff Survey, Findings, & Recommendations

A comprehensive overview of Hawaii correctional staff job satisfaction, workplace culture, staff health, facility conditions, and interactions with incarcerated individuals completed by the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission.



January 22, 2025

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- The over 800 staff who completed the survey and all those who took the time to engage in talk stories, calls, and written communications with the Commission – your contribution was essential. The Commission deeply appreciates your participation and acknowledges the challenging conditions you work under. Your dedication to the State of Hawai‘i is recognized and valued.

Executive Summary

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC) conducted a comprehensive survey to evaluate job satisfaction, workplace culture, staff health, and facility conditions across Hawaii's correctional facilities. This survey, which gathered responses from over 800 correctional staff, provides a critical assessment of systemic issues impacting staff well-being and facility operations. Key findings revealed significant concerns around leadership support, communication, inadequate resources, and high levels of staff stress and health challenges.

Key Findings:

- **Leadership and Communication**: Staff expressed dissatisfaction with leadership's engagement and transparency. A lack of inclusion in decision-making and perceived disconnect between central leadership ("Downtown") and facility operations contributed to low morale and trust issues.

- **Workplace Conditions**: Many staff cited unsustainable work conditions marked by mandatory overtime, insufficient staff, and inadequate wellness resources. The report noted that such conditions contribute to physical and mental health struggles, including high rates of PTSD, anxiety, and depression.

- **Health and Wellness**: Approximately 60% of staff reported developing serious health conditions due to job stress, with notable impacts on family life and mental well-being. Over 60% of staff cited inadequate wellness support, and 75% felt emotionally drained.

- **Interactions with Incarcerated Individuals**: Despite challenging conditions, most staff expressed a commitment to respectful and supportive interactions with those in custody. However, limited resources hindered efforts to foster rehabilitation and prepare individuals for reintegration.

- **Differentiation Between Jail and Prison Staff**: Jail staff reported more severe work and health challenges than their prison counterparts, with higher incidences of turnover, mandatory overtime, and mental health issues.

Additionally, the HCSOC conducted talk story sessions at each facility by meeting with various groups of staff members to share the survey results and request feedback for recommendations. All recommendations in this report came directly from staff as a result of the talk story sessions. Below are key recommendations.

Key Recommendations:

The HCSOC proposed systemic reforms to improve staff recruitment, retention, and overall workplace conditions. Recommendations included:

1. **Enhanced Training and Support**: Providing standardized, consistent training, especially in crisis intervention and mental health care, for both new hires and leadership.

2. **Improved Communication and Inclusion**: Establishing regular briefings and direct engagement from central leadership to build trust and transparency.

3. **Increased Compensation and Benefits**: Adjusting pay scales, adding bonuses, and increasing uniform allowances to reflect job demands and encourage retention.

4. **Focused Staff Wellness Initiatives**: Expanding mental health resources, reducing mandatory overtime, and promoting work-life balance to support long-term staff health and morale.

This report underscores the urgent need for reform within Hawaii's correctional facilities. The Commission urges stakeholders to prioritize these recommendations to build a more sustainable, safe, and supportive environment for correctional staff and the incarcerated population.

Introduction

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) was established through Act 179 of 2019 and embedded into law through Hawaii Revised Statute Chapter 353L. Act 179 of 2019 states, "The legislature finds that independent oversight of the State's correctional system **ensures transparency, supports safe conditions for employees**, inmates, and detainees, and **provides positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system**." The Commission believes that a crucial starting point to creating a therapeutic and rehabilitative correctional system is improving working conditions for staff in hopes of increasing retention and encouraging recruitment. Facilities cannot operate, much less provide meaningful programming, without staff. The research and recommendations included in this report represent a meaningful opportunity for change.

The HCSOC deliberately undertook this staffing survey and report as the Commission's first system-wide report due to the concerning conditions that staff are expected to work in. For years, the Commission has heard devastating stories from uniform and civilian correctional staff regarding their working conditions whether it be in person during facility tours, or through correctional staff contacting the Commission directly. Corrections staff are desperate to be heard and for meaningful change to occur. This report was intentionally prioritized by the HCSOC to address the critical issues outlined by staff.

The primary objectives of this correctional staff project are to, 1) gain a deeper understanding of the corrections environment and the complexities that staff are facing, 2) enhance data collection to support transparency and accountability, and 3) offer recommendations directly from corrections staff on how best to improve and support safe working conditions in Hawaii's jails and prisons.

The Commission requests and expects that this report will be used as a resource to create a new culture and experience for staff in our correctional facilities in Hawaii. It is not intended to be used as a retributive tool against staff or leadership—many have indicated that the culture of staff punishment is one of the most harmful aspects of the current environment. The Commission hopes this report will contribute to a cultural shift towards a more supportive and constructive environment.

It is important to note that the issues highlighted in this report are not the fault of any one person, the current leadership, or the Wardens. These issues have developed and worsened over many years and have now reached a critical state. The Commission believes that most staff and facility leadership are doing the best they can under challenging circumstances. The HCSOC hopes that the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) and facility leadership will act promptly on the information and recommendations provided in this report.

The Commission is grateful to all staff who show up to work every day, fully aware of the challenges they face on each shift. The Commission will continue to advocate for your safety, well-being, and dignity until it is realized.

Concerns Regarding Staff Health and Wellness

The Commission has consistently reported on concerns regarding unsafe working conditions in the Commission's facility-specific reports. However, the Commission wanted a better understanding of correctional staff health and wellness as a whole. Prior to undertaking this project, the Commission reviewed the research findings of Dr. Sophie Gralapp's dissertation on *Job Stress Experienced by Correctional Officers in Hawai'i Related to Working in a Carceral Space*.

The findings from the research align with what the Commission observed and heard from staff, highlighting significant issues faced by adult correctional officers (ACOs) in Hawaii's correctional facilities including job stress, health challenges, and lack of organizational support. The Commission requested Dr. Gralapp present her research during a public Commission meeting so that the public could better understand the hardships that corrections staff face. The presentation occurred on December 21, 2023. It's important to note that Dr. Gralapp's research is limited to the experiences of Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) staff.

Dr. Gralapp's research found that ACOs experience considerable job stress, leading to serious health issues such as PTSD, heart disease, and substance use. This stress is exacerbated by a lack of adequate organizational support and resources, leaving ACOs feeling undervalued and unsupported by the administration. ACOs reported strong camaraderie among their peers but a significant lack of support from the larger organization. This disparity in support affects their job satisfaction and overall well-being.

Dr. Gralapp's research also suggests that the stress experienced by ACOs not only affects their health but also their interpersonal relationships outside of work. Many ACOs struggle with separating their work life from their personal life, leading to strained family relationships and increased divorce rates. This finding highlights the broader implications of job stress beyond the workplace, affecting the overall quality of life for ACOs.

Overall, the research from Dr. Gralapp and the Commission's general observations indicate a critical need for better support systems, including mental health resources, debriefing after traumatic incidents, and a more supportive organizational culture. As a result of this research, the Commission's observations, and concerning communication from staff about working conditions, the HCSOC decided to undertake this staffing survey to address these issues across the state.

Research Methods

Throughout this process, the HCSOC reviewed numerous correctional surveys conducted across the nation and spoke with several groups—researchers, state agencies, and oversight bodies—who have successfully administered correctional staff surveys. After this review process, the Commission chose the correctional staff survey developed under the Urban Institute's Prison Research and Innovation Initiative (PRII), supported by Arnold Ventures. This survey has been successfully distributed in correctional facilities throughout Vermont, Delaware, Iowa, Missouri, and Colorado. It was created using participatory research methods focused on elevating the voices and perspectives of correctional staff.

To finalize the survey, the HCSOC met with leadership from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) and representatives from both unions, the United Public Workers (UPW) Hawaii and the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). These discussions were intended to ensure that the survey addressed relevant issues and concerns of the correctional staff here in Hawaii and had the support of all key stakeholders.

This survey was conducted by the HCSOC by administering the surveys both in-person via paper format throughout the facilities, and online to ensure maximum participation. The Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI) assisted with creating a secure database for survey submissions. All submissions, regardless of the submission method—paper or online—were completely anonymous and kept confidential by the HCSOC and CJRI. The CJRI and HCSOC manually entered the answers from the paper surveys into a secure computer system.

HCSOC staff administered the surveys in person via paper format at all state correctional facilities by walking post to post and speaking with correctional staff. The following schedule outlines the facilities and the dates of paper survey distribution and collection:

- Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC):
  - Wednesday, January 3, 2024
  - Friday, January 5, 2024
  - Tuesday, January 23, 2024
- Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF):
  - Thursday, January 4, 2024
  - Friday, January 5, 2024
- Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF):
  - Monday, January 8, 2024
  - Thursday, January 25, 2024
- Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC):
  - Tuesday, January 9, 2024
  - Monday, January 29, 2024
- Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC):
  - Wednesday, January 10, 2024
  - Wednesday, January 31, 2024
- Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC):
  - Friday, January 12, 2024
  - Tuesday, January 30, 2024
- Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF):
  - Tuesday, January 16, 2024
  - Thursday, February 1, 2024
  - Friday, February 1, 2024
- Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC):
  - Thursday, January 25, 2024
  - Friday, January 26, 2024

Once surveys were collected and responses were input and computed, the HCSOC conducted talk stories with staff at each facility to review the results and compile recommendations to improve the health, safety, and environment for corrections staff. This report is a result of all these efforts.

The Survey

The survey, attached to this report in the addendum, consists of 106 questions, divided into eight sections focusing on various aspects of the work environment and staff experiences within the correctional facilities. The survey took between 20 and 45 minutes to complete.

1. **Job Satisfaction, questions 1 through 9**
   This section explores staff feelings towards their job, including their enthusiasm for coming to work, pride in their job, clarity on job success, skill adequacy, appreciation from leadership, supervisory support, fairness in promotions, willingness to change jobs if given the chance, and perceptions of fair compensation.

2. **Consider the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Overall ("Downtown"), questions 10 through 14**
   This section assesses staff perceptions of Downtown, focusing on the clarity of communication regarding the vision for corrections, inclusiveness in discussions about corrections and rehabilitation, understanding of the staff's work environment, and the respect and seriousness with which Downtown takes staff input.

3. **Workplace Culture, questions 14 through 46**
   Questions in this section evaluate the general culture within the facility, including trust among staff, teamwork, coordination across departments, effectiveness of communication, inclusion in change processes, comfort in discussing mistakes, support for staff well-being, stress levels, emotional health, staff safety, and turnover issues.

4. **Staff Health, questions 47 through 62**
   This section focuses on the physical and mental health of staff, including the prevalence of health conditions developed since starting work, general health ratings, satisfaction with social activities and relationships, and experiences of feelings such as worthlessness, helplessness, depression, and hopelessness. It also includes questions about traumatic experiences.

5. **Purpose of Incarceration, questions 63 through 72**
   Questions in this section explore staff beliefs about the purpose of incarceration, such as rehabilitation possibilities, the importance of punishment, ensuring public safety, preventing future crimes, and helping people make positive changes. It also asks staff to prioritize these purposes and assess how well the facility achieves them.

6. **Facility Conditions, questions 73 through 81**
   This section examines staff views on the physical conditions within the facility, including adequacy of food and hygiene provisions, sleep quality for incarcerated individuals, accessibility for those with disabilities, availability of natural light, cleanliness, and the overall quality of living spaces.

7. **Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions, questions 82 through 95**
   Questions here assess the quality of interactions between staff and incarcerated individuals, focusing on respect, professional boundaries, empathy, resources available to help,

influence on behavior, encouragement of participation in activities, and fairness in treatment regardless of age, religion, disability, charge type, gender identity, or race.

8. **Correctional Practices and Sanctions, questions 96 through 106**
   This section explores staff perceptions of disciplinary practices within the facility, including the adequacy of alternatives to segregation, fairness and consistency of discipline, effectiveness of holding people accountable, options for rewarding good behavior, availability of activities to keep people busy, and preparation for release. It also examines the manageability of caseloads in supporting incarcerated individuals.

Overall, the survey aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the work environment, challenges, and experiences of staff in correctional facilities.

Survey Participation Overview

The survey received responses from a total of 771 staff members across the eight Hawaii correctional facilities. Out of these, 694 participants specified their roles, with 463 being uniformed staff and 231 being civilian staff. The survey was conducted both online and in person, with 152 participants completing the online survey and 542 participating in person. Among the online respondents, 71 were uniformed staff, while 81 were civilian staff. For the in-person survey, 392 were uniformed staff, and 150 were non-uniformed staff.

The breakdown of participation by facility follows—

For prisons, Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) had 118 staff members complete the survey, representing 42% of the facility staff. Of these, 70 were security/custody staff, accounting for 31% of the facility's security staff, and 39 were civilian staff, representing 72% of the civilian workforce. There were 9 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

At Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF), 49 staff members participated in the survey, representing 73% of the facility's staff. Of this group, 30 were security/custody staff, accounting for 65% of the total security personnel, and 16 were civilian staff, representing 76% of the civilian workforce. There were 3 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

At Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF), 54 staff members took the survey, representing 47% of the facility's total staff. Of these, 32 were security/custody staff, accounting for 43% of security personnel, and 19 were civilian staff, representing 46% of the civilian workforce. There were 3 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

At the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), 83 staff members participated in the survey, accounting for 61% of the total staff. Of this group, 51 were security/custody staff, representing 59% of the security workforce, and 28 were civilian staff, making up 57% of the civilian workforce. There were 4 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

For jails, at Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), 205 staff members completed the survey, representing 53% of the total staff. Of this total, 143 were security/custody staff,

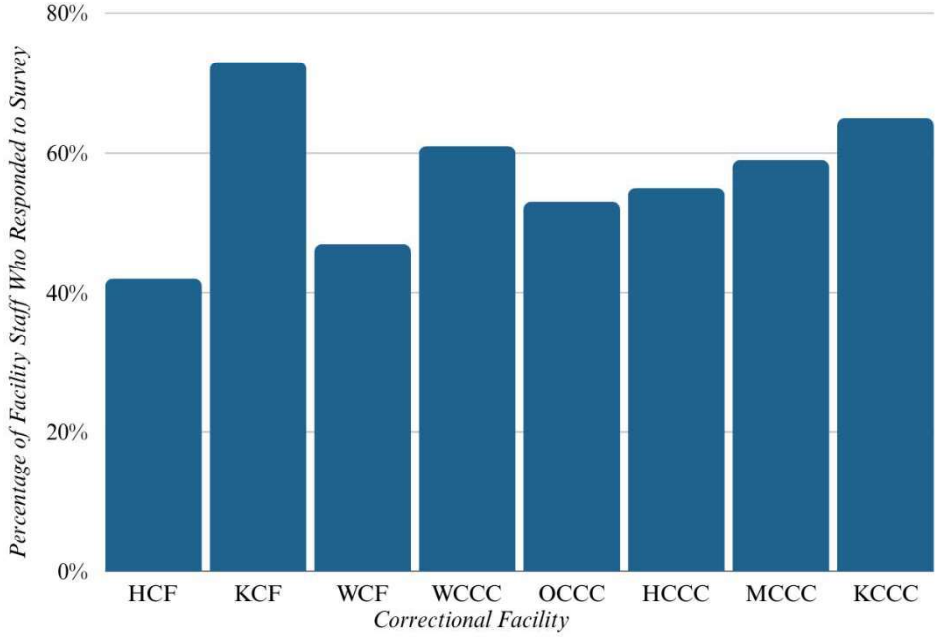
accounting for 46% of the security workforce, and 58 were civilian staff, representing 83% of the civilian workforce. There were 4 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

At Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), 76 staff members took the survey, representing 55% of the facility's total staff. This included 48 security/custody staff, making up 41% of the security workforce, and 21 civilian staff, 100% of the total civilian workforce.[1] There were 7 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

At Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC), 78 staff members participated in the survey, representing 59% of the facility's total staff. Of these, 55 were security/custody staff, accounting for 47% of the security workforce, and 17 were civilian staff, making up 100% of the civilian workforce.[2] There were 6 individuals who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

Finally, at Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC), 42 staff members participated in the survey, accounting for 65% of the facility's total staff. Of these, 22 were security/custody staff, representing 49% of the security workforce, and 19 were civilian staff, representing 95% of the civilian workforce. There was 1 individual who did not indicate what their role within the facility was.

Figure 1. Survey Response Rates, by Facility



[1] The total number of civilian staff who completed the climate survey was slightly higher than the total number of civilian staff reported at HCCC. There was one more civilian survey submitted from HCCC than the total number reported by the facility. One possible reason for this discrepancy is that facility reports for the total number of civilian staff was received approximately two months after the survey participation period for HCCC. It is possible that there was a slight change in the staffing during the period after survey participation terminated.

[2] The total number of civilian staff who completed the climate survey was slightly higher than the total number of civilian staff reported at MCCC. There were two more civilian surveys submitted from MCCC than the total number reported by the facility. One possible reason for this discrepancy is that facility reports for the total number of civilian staff was received approximately one month after the survey participation period for MCCC. It is possible that there was a slight change in the staffing during the period after survey participation terminated.

Survey Findings

The results of this survey highlight systemic issues within Hawaii correctional facilities that are not the fault of any one person or position, but rather the culmination of years of neglect. It was the Commission's original intent to break up the survey findings by each facility, however, all facilities had similar findings. The survey paints a picture of an unsustainable work environment, marked by difficult and dangerous conditions, a shortage of training opportunities, harmful culture, inadequate facilities, a workforce too small to meet the demands of the jobs, unsustainable expectations of overtime, and significant health concerns among staff.

The correlation between these challenging conditions and the deteriorating health of staff is evident, emphasizing the need for both large-scale reforms and smaller, targeted changes to create a healthier work environment, as well as policies and programs to better the lives of staff and the incarcerated individuals in Hawaii's facilities. However, within these results also lie the positive aspects of dedicated and devoted staff, as well as the opportunity to learn from best and promising practices in other facilities in Hawaii.

Overview of Findings

The survey findings highlight several key issues within the correctional facilities. There are significant concerns about leadership and communication, with many staff members feeling unappreciated and unsupported by their supervisors and leadership. This lack of engagement and understanding from leadership contributes to a disconnect and low morale among staff.

Working conditions are another major area of concern. Staff report inadequate cleanliness, poor living spaces for incarcerated individuals, and challenges related to mandatory overtime and frequent staff turnover. These conditions contribute to a stressful and emotionally draining work environment, with many staff feeling they are not fairly compensated and lacking sufficient wellness and support resources. Health issues among staff are also prevalent, with a notable number experiencing conditions such as high blood pressure, anxiety, and insomnia, and some reporting serious mental health concerns.

Despite these challenges, staff generally believe they treat people in custody with respect and positively influence their lives. However, there are concerns about the adequacy of programs and opportunities for incarcerated individuals to stay busy and prepare for release. Staff feel that more resources are needed to help people in custody with their problems and promote activities that support their health and well-being. Overall, the findings suggest a need for improved leadership engagement, better working conditions, and enhanced support for both staff and incarcerated individuals.

Section One: Job Satisfaction (Questions 1-9)

The *Job Satisfaction* section (questions 1 through 9) of the HCSOC Climate Survey explores how staff feel about their roles within the correctional facilities. The results reveal mixed feelings among staff regarding their work environment. While many staff members take pride in their jobs and feel equipped to perform their duties, there are notable concerns regarding leadership support and fair compensation, and career development.

Over half of respondents report that they sometimes or never look forward to coming to work (Q1). Almost two-thirds of staff feel that leadership in the correctional facilities does not show appreciation in meaningful ways (Q5). Supervisory support is another area of concern, with over half of staff indicating that their supervisors are not invested in their career paths and do not help them achieve their career goals (Q6).

Fair compensation is an issue, as two-thirds of staff feel they are not fairly compensated for the duties and tasks they are required to perform (Q9). Furthermore, just over two-thirds of staff members would leave their current job for another opportunity outside of corrections at the same pay rate if given the chance (Q8).

Despite these challenges, the vast majority of staff take pride in their job (Q2). Additionally, over two-thirds of the staff have clarity on what it means to be successful in their roles (Q3).

Table 1. Job Satisfaction Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response %
	Response*: Sometimes/Never*
1) I look forward to coming to work.	55%
	Response*: Disagree/Strongly Disagree*
5) Leadership in this correctional facility show appreciation for staff in meaningful ways.	63%
6) My supervisors are invested/interested in my career path and help me achieve my career goals.	55%
9) Staff in this facility are fairly compensated for the duties and tasks they are required to perform.	65%
	Response*: Agree/Strongly Agree*
8) If I have a chance, I will change to some other job outside of corrections at the same rate of pay.	64%
2) I take pride in my job.	88%
3) It is clear what it means to be successful in my job.	69%

Section Two: Downtown (Questions 10-13)

The *Consider the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Overall* section (questions 10 through 13) results provides insights into staff perceptions of the central management and overall direction of the Department. The results indicate that staff feel disconnected and undervalued by central management.

Three-quarters of staff feel that the administration does not communicate a clear vision for Corrections (Q10). Additionally, the vast majority of staff indicated that there are not enough

discussions involving all staff about the vision for Corrections and rehabilitation and ways to achieve it (Q11). Furthermore, over nine-tenths of staff feel that central management does not have a clear understanding of what it is like for staff to work in their facility (Q12).

Additionally, over four-fifths of staff feel that central management does not take the things they say seriously or treat their ideas with respect (Q13).

Table 2. Downtown Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response % Response: *Disagree/Strongly Disagree*
10) Downtown communicates a clear vision (mission) for Corrections.	75%
11) There are discussions involving all staff about the vision for Corrections and Rehabilitation and ways to achieve it.	85%
12) Downtown has a clear understanding of what it's like for staff to work in this facility.	91%
13) Downtown takes the things I say seriously and treats me and my ideas with respect.	82%

Section Three: Workplace Culture (Questions 14-46)

The *Views on Workplace Culture* section (questions 14 through 46) examines various aspects of the work environment, including trust, teamwork, communication, and support within the correctional facilities. Overall, the results indicate significant challenges in these areas, with concerns about trust, communication, and support from leadership, but also some positive and hopeful indicators regarding fairness and teamwork.

In terms of trust and teamwork, almost two-thirds of staff do not feel a strong sense of trust among staff in the facility (Q19), and three-fifths feel that staff do not operate as a real team (Q20). Communication also appears to be a significant issue, with slightly under three-quarters of staff indicating that communication within the facility does not work well and that they do not have the information they need to do their job effectively (Q32). Moreover, almost three-quarters of staff feel excluded from the process when changes are made in the facility that affect them (Q33), and almost two-thirds of staff do not feel comfortable discussing mistakes or problems with their supervisors (Q35).

Staff well-being is another area of concern, with just over two-thirds of staff indicating that the facility's policies and practices do not support staff well-being (Q38), and almost three-quarters expressing that there are not enough employee wellness and support resources available (Q45). Additionally, more than two-thirds of staff feel emotionally drained from their work (Q46), and the vast majority do not believe there are enough staff to meet the current needs of the facility

(Q25). Furthermore, mandatory overtime is reported as a problem by almost three-quarters of staff (Q22), and frequent staff turnover is cited as an issue by just over four-fifths of staff (Q21).

Despite these challenges, there are positive and hopeful results in the section. For example, seven-tenths of staff feel that they can rely on other staff in the facility (Q14), and just over four-fifths feel that they can rely on their coworkers to respond quickly during an emergency (Q16). In terms of fairness, just over four-fifths believe that staff in the facility treat each other the same regardless of age (Q26), the vast majority regarding religion (Q27), almost three-quarters regarding disability (Q28), just over three-quarters regarding gender identity or sexual orientation (Q29), and three-quarters regarding race or ethnicity (Q30). Additionally, over four-fifths appreciate having the option to work overtime as a helpful way to increase their paycheck when needed (Q42).

Table 3. Workplace Culture Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response %
	Response: *Disagree/Strongly Disagree*
19) There is a strong sense of trust among staff in this facility.	61%
20) Staff in this facility operate as a real team.	60%
32) Communication in this facility works well – I have the information I need, when I need it, to do my job.	68%
33) When changes are made in this facility that affect me, I am included in the process.	71%
35) Staff generally feel comfortable discussing mistakes, errors, or problems with supervisors.	62%
38) This facility's policies and practices support staff well-being.	66%
45) I feel there are enough employee wellness and support resources I can access if I need them.	74%
25) There are enough staff to meet the current needs of this facility.	91%
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*
46) I feel emotionally drained from my work.	67%
22) Mandatory overtime is a problem at this facility.	72%
21) Frequent staff turnover is a problem at this facility.	81%
14) I feel I can rely on other staff in this facility.	70%
16) I can rely on my coworkers to respond quickly during an emergency.	81%
26) Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their age.	71%
27) Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their religion.	85%

28) Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their disability or ability.	74%
29) Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.	78%
30) Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their race or ethnicity.	75%
42) I like having the option to work overtime as a helpful way to increase my paycheck when I need it.	84%

Section Four: Staff Health (Questions 47-62)

The *Staff Health* section (questions 47 through 62) provides an overview of the health challenges, including physical and mental health conditions, faced by correctional facility staff. The findings reveal alarming health concerns, mental health challenges, and frequent exposure to traumatic events among staff. *A more detailed analysis and breakdown of staff health is included in the addendum*.

Since starting work in corrections, many staff members have developed various health conditions. Specifically, nearly two-thirds of staff report high blood pressure, over half overweight or obese, over half experience anxiety, almost half suffer from insomnia, almost one-third depression, a little over a quarter Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), about a quarter diabetes, almost one-fifth alcohol or substance use disorder, about one-sixth suffer from gout, and just over 1 in 10 heart disease since starting work in corrections (Q47).

In terms of mental health, slightly over one-third of staff rate their mental health as fair or poor (Q50). Within the seven days prior to survey completion, a little over a quarter of staff reported sometimes, often, or always feeling worthless (Q52), one-third felt helpless (Q53), four in ten felt depressed (Q54), and almost one-third felt hopeless (Q55). Furthermore, just under one in ten seriously thought about trying to kill themselves in the last 12 months (Q56).

Traumatic experiences and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are prevalent for the staff. The survey reveals that over one-quarter of staff have been physically assaulted (Q57), a little over one in ten have been assaulted with a weapon (Q58), about half have experienced the sudden or unexpected death of someone close to them (Q59), and almost 40% have encountered other very stressful events or experiences (Q60). As a result, almost two-thirds of staff report some symptoms associated with PTSD, including physical reactions like heart pounding, trouble breathing, or sweating when reminded of stressful experiences (Q61), while two-thirds report emotional reactions such as feeling numb or distant from people, trouble with sleep, and avoiding thoughts or activities related to the trauma (Q62).

Also, two-thirds of staff do not feel that the facility's policies and practices support their well-being (Q38) and almost three-quarters indicated there is not enough employee wellness and support resources available(Q45).

Table 4. Staff Health Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response %
	Response: *Poor/Fair*
50) In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and your ability to think.	35%
	Response: *Sometimes, Often, Always*
52) In the past 7 days, I felt worthless.	28%
53) In the past 7 days, I felt helpless.	33%
54) In the past 7 days, I felt depressed.	40%
55) In the past 7 days, I felt hopeless.	32%
	Response: *Yes*
56) At any time in the last 12 months, did you think seriously about trying to kill yourself.	7%
	Response: *Happened to me*
57) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: physical assault.	27%
58) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: assault with a weapon.	13%
59) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: sudden or unexpected death of someone close to you.	48%
60) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: any other very stressful event or experience.	39%
	Response: *A little bit, moderately, quite a bit, extremely*
61) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having physical reactions (e.g. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or seating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	62%
62) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	67%

Section Five: Purpose of Incarceration (Questions 63-72)

The *Purpose of Incarceration* section (questions 63 through 72) provides insights into staff beliefs and perceptions about the goals and effectiveness of the correctional system in Hawaii. Overall, the results indicate that staff have a generally positive view of the goals of incarceration, with many believing in the importance of rehabilitation, public safety, and helping people make positive changes in their lives.

A majority of staff, slightly over two-thirds, believe that rehabilitation is possible for incarcerated individuals (Q63). Over four-fifths of staff view ensuring public safety as a crucial objective of prisons and jails (Q64), virtually all believe punishing people for the crimes they have committed is an important or very important goal (Q65), virtually all believe preventing people from committing future crimes is an important or very important purpose (Q66), and almost all consider helping people make changes for a better life as an important or very important goal of incarceration (Q67).

In terms of overall purpose, 39% of staff believe that the most important purpose of incarceration is to ensure public safety, 36% believe it is to help people make changes for a better life, 16% believe it is to punish people for the crimes they have committed, and 10% believe it is to prevent people from committing future crimes (Q72). These results demonstrate a commitment among staff to rehabilitation and support for incarcerated individuals as they transition back into society. Overall, the survey highlights a constructive perspective among staff regarding the purpose and goals of incarceration.

However, when evaluating how well the facility achieves these goals, the responses are less favorable. Just under one-third of staff feel the facility prevents future crimes (Q70) and close to two-fifths believe the facility helps individuals make positive changes (Q71).

Table 5. Purpose of Incarceration, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response %
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*
63) I believe that rehabilitation is possible for the people incarcerated here.	66%
	Response: *Important/Very Important*
64) It is important that prisons and jails punish people for the crimes they have committed.	84%
65) It is important that prisons and jails ensure public safety.	99%
66) It is important that prisons and jails prevent people from committing future crimes.	98%
67) It is important that prisons and jails help people make changes for a better life.	97%
	Response:

	Well/Very Well
70) How well does this facility prevent people from committing future crimes.	31%
71) How well does this facility help people make changes for a better life.	38%

Section Six: Facility Conditions (Questions 73-81)

The *Facility Conditions* section (question 73 through 81) provides insights into staff perceptions of the living conditions for incarcerated individuals and the environment within the facility. Overall, the results indicate significant concerns regarding cleanliness, the quality of living spaces, and the impact of the facility environment on staff morale.

Regarding cleanliness, four-tenths of staff feel that the facility is clean (Q79). When it comes to the quality of living spaces for incarcerated individuals, a little over two-fifths believe the quality of incarcerated people's living space is good (Q80). Additionally, almost over two-thirds of staff report that working in the facility makes them feel like they are "doing time" as well (Q81). Staff perceptions of living conditions for incarcerated individuals contribute to their work experience, where many staff feel as if they are enduring similar conditions to those in custody.

Table 6. Facility Conditions Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	**Response %**
	Response: *Agree/ Strongly Agree*
79) This facility is clean.	40%
80) The quality of incarcerated people's living space is good here.	41%
81) Working in this facility makes me feel like I am doing time too.	65%

Section Seven: Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions (Questions 82-95)

The *Staff-Incarcerated People Interaction* section (question 82 through 95) provides insights into staff perceptions of their interactions with incarcerated individuals and the treatment of those in custody. Overall, the results indicate positive interactions and fair treatment, with staff generally showing respect and empathy towards incarcerated individuals.

A significant percentage of staff, over 80%, report that they treat incarcerated individuals with respect (Q82). Additionally, seven-tenths of staff believe they positively influence the lives of those in custody through their work (Q83). In terms of empathy, two-thirds of staff feel that they have empathy for incarcerated individuals and their problems (Q86). Furthermore, slightly under

nine-tenths of staff agree that their behavior influences the behavior of those incarcerated in their unit (Q88), and slightly under nine-tenths urge incarcerated individuals to take part in activities (Q89).

When it comes to fairness, slightly under nine-tenths of staff believe they treat incarcerated individuals the same regardless of age (Q90), nine out of ten regardless of religion (Q91), a little over four-fifths regardless of disability (Q92), over three-quarters regardless of charge type or classification (Q93), a little over four-fifths regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation (Q94), and a little over four-fifths regardless of race or ethnicity (Q95).

Table 7. Staff-Incarcerated People Interactions Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response % Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*
82) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people with respect.	82%
83) Most incarcerated people treat staff with respect.	70%
86) Staff in this facility have empathy for incarcerated people and their problems.	66%
88) Staff behavior influences the behavior of those incarcerated in the unit.	85%
89) I try to urge incarcerated people to take part in activities.	86%
90) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's age.	86%
91) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's religion.	91%
92) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's disability or ability.	84%
93) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's charge type or classification.	79%
94) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's gender identity or sexual orientation.	84%
95) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's race or ethnicity.	83%

Section Eight: Correctional Practices and Sanctions (Questions 96-106)

The *Correctional Practices and Sanctions* portion (question 96 through 106) evaluates staff perceptions of incentives, programs and practices, and disciplinary measures. Overall, the results indicate concerns regarding the adequacy of alternatives to segregation, the use of disciplinary measures, and the availability of programs to support rehabilitation and prepare incarcerated individuals for release.

Regarding disciplinary practices, almost over two-thirds of staff feel that the facility does not have adequate alternatives to segregation (Q96), and just over half believe that staff are more likely to use segregation over other disciplinary options (Q97).

With respect to programs and opportunities, almost two-thirds of staff feel that there are not enough options to reward incarcerated individuals for good behavior (Q100), and about two-thirds believe that the facility does not provide enough opportunities for incarcerated individuals to stay busy throughout the day (Q101). Additionally, a little under 40% of staff feel that the facility does not offer sufficient activities promoting health and well-being (Q102).

Preparation for release is another critical area, with almost 60% of staff stating that the facility does not do a good job preparing individuals for release (Q104), and almost two-thirds0 believing that the programs do not give incarcerated individuals the skills they need to be successful in the community (Q105). Furthermore, just over two-thirds of staff feel that caseloads are not manageable enough to adequately support incarcerated individuals as they get ready for release (Q106).

Table 8. Correctional Practices and Sanctions Responses, Overall Results

Survey Question	Response %
	Response: *Disagree/Strongly Disagree*
96) This facility has adequate alternatives to segregation.	65%
100) There are options for staff to reward incarcerated people for good behavior.	63%
101) This facility provides enough opportunities so incarcerated people can stay busy all day.	62%
102) People incarcerated in this facility can participate in activities that promote their health and well-being.	43%
104) This facility does a good job preparing people for release.	59%
105) The programs in this facility give incarcerated people the skills they need to be successful in the community.	60%
106) Caseloads are manageable to adequately support incarcerated people as they get ready for release.	65%
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*
97) Staff in this facility are more likely to use segregation over other disciplinary options.	56%

Jail and Prison Distinctions

This section compares the collective responses of staff in the four Hawaii jails (OCCC, HCCC, MCCC, and KCCC, and HCCC) and four Hawaii prisons (HCF, WCF, KCF, and WCCC). This analysis focuses on notable differences of 10% or more between the jail and prison survey

responses, with prison staff generally reporting more positive results than jail staff throughout all sections of the survey. However, even though these indicate more positive responses from prison staff, it does not mean that the prison or system-wide results are not troubling, because they are. It only indicates varying degrees of concern on specific issues the survey addresses.

Overview of Jail and Prison Distinctions

System-wide and prison results highlight severe issues, and the situation in jails is more hazardous and critical. Both prison and jail staff report problems with safety, mandatory overtime, and frequent turnover, with jail staff indicating notably more severe issues. The insufficiency of staffing, high turnover rates, and mandatory overtime exacerbate these issues, making the work environment unsustainable. Furthermore, many staff report that their work schedules cause significant conflict at home, with jail staff being more affected.

Staff health is another critical concern, with prison staff generally reporting troubling outcomes and their jail counterparts reporting alarming results. Health indicators among jail staff are consistently more severe across various conditions, including higher incidences of depression, insomnia, PTSD, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, gout, obesity, anxiety, and substance use issues. Moreover, jail staff reported serious thoughts about suicide at twice the rate of prison staff, underscoring the severe mental health crisis within these facilities.

Facility conditions in jails are notably more troubling compared to prisons, with significant issues reported in food quality, natural sunlight, sleep, cleanliness, and the quality of living spaces for people in custody. These conditions create hazardous conditions for both staff and incarcerated individuals, making it extremely challenging to manage and maintain a safe environment. The more severe lack of correctional practices and sanctions in jails further exacerbates these challenges—the absence of adequate alternatives to segregation, opportunities to reward good behavior, and sufficient opportunities for incarcerated individuals to stay busy indicate potential for dangerous outcomes. Specifically, the sentiment that working in the facility feels like "doing time" too, was reported more by jail staff, highlights the disheartening working conditions faced by staff, particularly in jails.

Section One: Job Satisfaction (Questions 1-9)

With respect to job satisfaction, prison staff responses were slightly more positive overall compared to jail staff. Key areas with slight differences included leadership appreciation, supervisors' investment in career paths, opportunities for professional growth, and willingness to stay in their job.

Section Two: Downtown (Questions 10-13)

In terms of Downtown communication and involvement, prison staff feel slightly more engaged and informed through discussions and communication from Downtown compared to jail staff.

Section Three: Workplace Culture (Questions 14-46)

Prison staff generally report more favorable workplace culture compared to jail staff throughout this section of the survey. The prison results in the Workplace Culture section indicate significant issues, and the situation in jails is more alarming and precarious. Staff in both prisons and jails

report problems with safety, mandatory overtime, and frequent turnover, and the issues reported from jail staff are notably more severe.

Table 9. Workplace Culture Responses, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
		Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*
18) Overall, I feel this is a safe facility.	35%	55%
21) Frequent staff turnover is a problem at this facility.	85%	42%
22) Mandatory overtime is a problem at this facility.	82%	60%
25) There are enough staff to meet the current needs of this facility.	5%	17%
31) This facility has a high level of coordination across departments when it comes to delivering services and programs to incarcerated people.	32%	50%
41) My work schedule causes conflict at home.	47%	31%
44) I have healthy coping mechanisms to help me manage the stress of the job.	64%	75%
45) I feel there are enough employee wellness and support resources I can access if I need them.	21%	32%

Section Four: Staff Health (Questions 47-62)

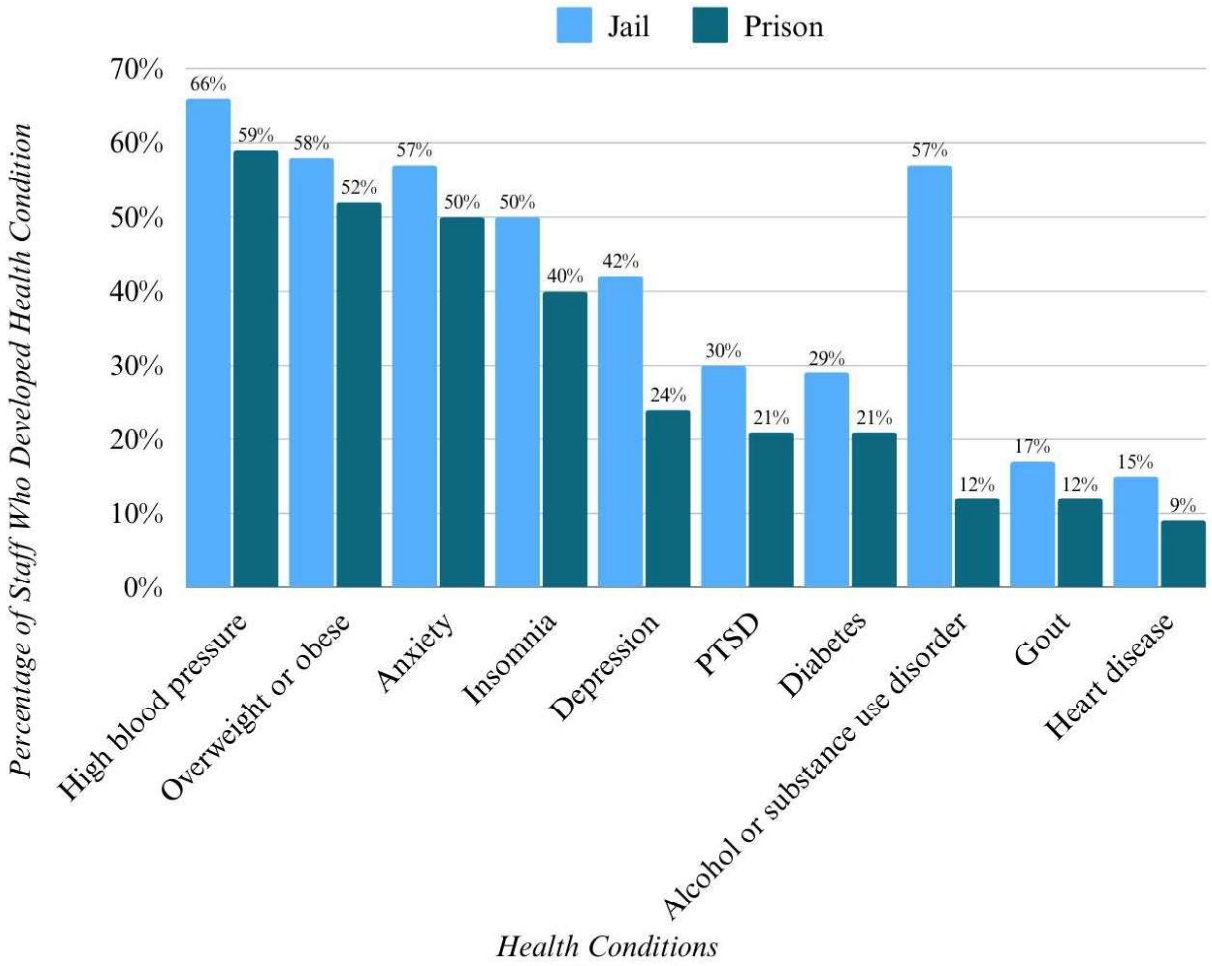
All of the survey health outcomes are troublesome, and health indicators among jail staff are consistently more concerning compared to their prison counterparts across various health conditions. In each category, jail staff reported higher incidences of health issues.

Table 10. Staff Health Responses, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
	Response: *Good, Very Good, Excellent*	
50) In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and your ability to think.	60%	73%
	Response: *Sometimes, Often, Always*	
53) In the past 7 days, I felt helpless.	39%	27%
54) In the past 7 days, I felt depressed.	48%	28%
55) In the past 7 days, I felt hopeless.	36%	25%
	Response: *Moderately, Quite a Bit, Extremely*	
61) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having physical reactions (e.g. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or seating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	39%	25%
62) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	49%	33%

In terms of staff developing health conditions since starting work in corrections, the systemwide results are concerning with jail results even more so. Conditions surveyed are reported in the figure below.

Figure 3. Since starting work in corrections, I have developed the following health conditions, Jail and Prison Results



*Some individuals responded that they developed more than one of the above health conditions since starting work in corrections, thereby the above percentages exceed 100%.

Additionally, 8% of jail staff reported seriously thinking about trying to kill themselves in the last 12 months, compared to 4% of prison staff, indicating that jail staff reported serious thoughts about suicide at twice the rate of prison staff (Q56).

See the tables below for facility specific results.

Table 11. Staff Health Responses, Jail Facility Specific Results

Survey Question	OCCC Response Percentage	HCCC Response Percentage	MCCC Response Percentage	KCCC Response Percentage
			Response: *Yes*	
47) Since starting work in corrections, I have developed the following health conditions:				
— High blood pressure	70%	57%	67%	57%
— Overweight or obese	59%	52%	55%	67%
— Anxiety	57%	59%	57%	50%
— Insomnia	48%	54%	53%	50%
— Depression	43%	43%	37%	40%
— PTSD	30%	38%	27%	20%
— Diabetes	35%	17%	27%	27%
— Alcohol or substance use disorder	18%	22%	23%	23%
— Gout	17%	13%	23%	10%
— Heart disease	14%	14%	15%	17%
			Response: *Poor/Fair*	
50) In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and ability to think?	39%	53%	34%	32%
51) In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships?	41%	47%	33%	39%
			Response: *Sometimes, Often, Always*	
52) In the past 7 days, I felt worthless.	32%	39%	26%	17%
53) In the past 7 days, I felt helpless.	43%	42%	27%	29%
54) In the past 7 days, I felt depressed.	50%	54%	36%	40%
55) In the past 7 days, I felt hopeless.	38%	42%	30%	27%
			Response: *Yes*	
56) At any time in the last 12 months, did you seriously think about trying to kill yourself?	7%	11%	9%	0%

	Response: *Moderately, Quite a Bit, Extremely*			
61) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having physical reactions (e.g. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or seating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	39%	49%	34%	31%
62) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	46%	57%	48%	47%

Table 12. Staff Health Responses, Prison Facility Specific Results

Survey Question	HCF Response Percentage	KCF Response Percentage	WCF Response Percentage	WCCC Response Percentage
			Response: *Yes*	
47) Since starting work in corrections, I have developed the following health conditions:				
— High blood pressure	61%	56%	62%	58%
— Overweight or obese	49%	41%	56%	62%
— Anxiety	56%	56%	47%	39%
— Insomnia	49%	44%	18%	38%
— Depression	29%	26%	12%	23%
— PTSD	28%	31%	12%	12%
— Diabetes	26%	18%	15%	20%
— Alcohol or substance use disorder	18%	13%	9%	5%
— Gout	16%	18%	9%	5%
— Heart disease	14%	5%	6%	6%
			Response: *Poor/Fair*	
50) In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and ability to think?	30%	30%	17%	25%
51) In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships?	36%	30%	19%	29%
			Response: *Sometimes, Often, Always*	
52) In the past 7 days, I felt worthless.	26%	10%	19%	26%
53) In the past 7 days, I felt helpless.	33%	22%	20%	25%
54) In the past 7 days, I felt depressed.	32%	25%	20%	29%
55) In the past 7 days, I felt hopeless.	29%	22%	17%	25%
			Response: *Yes*	
56) At any time in the last 12 months, did you seriously think about trying to kill yourself?	8%	2%	4%	1%

	Response: *Moderately, Quite a Bit, Extremely*			
61) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having physical reactions (e.g. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or seating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	35%	18%	19%	19%
62) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	40%	34%	22%	28%

Section Five: Purpose of Incarceration (Questions 63-72)

Prison and jail staff generally reported similar responses, however, there were some notable differences.

Table 13. Purpose of Incarceration Responses, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
63) I believe rehabilitation is possible for the people incarcerated here.	62%	75%
	Response: *Well/Very Well*	
70) How well does this facility prevent people from committing future crimes.	28%	38%
71) How well does this facility help people make changes for a better life.	30%	51%

Section Six: Facility Conditions (Questions 73-81)

Prison staff generally report more favorable conditions compared to jail staff throughout the *Facility Conditions* section of the survey. Every question in this section shows a notable difference, indicating more problematic conditions in jail and highlighting the impact of facility conditions on both people in custody and staff. Notably, jail staff reported feeling that working in their facility makes them feel like they are "doing time too" more often than their prison counterparts. This highlights the difficult and challenging working conditions faced by staff, but this is particularly disheartening for those who work in the jails.

Table 14. Facility Conditions Responses, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
73) Incarcerated people get enough to eat here.	63%	75%
74) The quality of food provided to incarcerated people here supports a healthy lifestyle.	39%	62%
75) This facility gives incarcerated people what they need (e.g. soap, regular showers, sanitary products) for good personal hygiene for free.	77%	87%
76) Incarcerated people are usually able to get a good night's sleep here.	59%	84%
77) Its easy for incarcerated people with physical disabilities to get around in this facility.	54%	67%
78) Incarcerated people get enough natural light in this facility.	51%	91%
79) This facility is clean.	30%	57%
80) The quality of incarcerated people's living space is good here.	27%	64%
81) Working in this facility makes me feel like I am "doing time" too.	70%	58%

Section Seven: Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions (Questions 82-95)

The results of this section are similar among jail and prison staff, with prison staff reporting slightly more favorable interactions. When asked if staff in this facility have the resources to help incarcerated people with their problems, just over half of prison staff agree, compared to just over a third of jail staff, indicating more supportive conditions in prisons (Q87).

Table 15. Staff-Incarcerated People Interactions, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
87) Staff in this facility have the resources to help incarcerated people with their problems.	34%	52%

Section Eight: Correctional Practices and Sanctions (Questions 96-106)

The results of this section indicate that prison staff generally report more favorable correctional practices and sanctions compared to jail staff. Most questions in this section have a difference of over 10% when comparing the responses of prison and jail staff. The lack of adequate alternatives to segregation, opportunities to reward good behavior, and sufficient opportunities to stay busy can create institutional management problems and potential for dangerous conditions for all involved. All jail results are even more concerning than the prison results, indicating additional challenges in jails.

Table 16. Correctional Practices and Sanctions Responses, Jail and Prison Results

Survey Question	Jail Response Percentage	Prison Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
96) This facility has adequate alternatives to segregation.	25%	50%
99) Incarcerated peoples' discipline procedures are effective at holding them accountable.	45%	57%
100) There are options for staff to reward incarcerated people for good behavior.	33%	43%
101) This facility provides enough opportunities so incarcerated people can stay busy all day.	25%	58%
102) Incarcerated people in this facility can participate in activities that promote their health and well-being.	45%	78%
104) This facility does a good job at preparing	31%	55%
105) The programs in this facility give incarcerated people the skills they need to be successful in the community.	27%	61%
106) Caseloads are manageable to adequately support incarcerated people as they get ready for release.	28%	49%

Uniform and Civilian Staff Distinction

This section compares the survey results of uniform and civilian staff working at Hawaii prisons and jails, highlighting notable differences of more than 10% between the responses of uniform and civilian staff. In some cases, the responses of civilian or uniform staff are noted as more or less favorable; this doesn't imply that the more favorable responses are free from problems, just that they are less severe in comparison.

Overview of Civilian Staff Distinction

The survey results reveal many similarities and several notable differences in responses from uniform and civilian staff. In terms of job satisfaction, civilian staff report higher levels of enthusiasm for coming to work, feeling appreciated by leadership, and receiving support for career goals compared to uniform staff, while uniform staff report a greater willingness to change jobs if given the chance.

Both uniform and civilian staff have concerns about communication and inclusiveness within the DCR. However, uniform staff report greater dissatisfaction with Downtown's communication of a clear vision and the respect shown for their input compared to civilian staff.

Workplace culture shows several areas of contrast, with civilian staff indicating more favorable outcomes in terms of support from leadership, facility safety, and staffing levels. They feel that leadership does more to keep them safe, experience fewer work schedule conflicts, and report better employee wellness resources. On the other hand, uniform staff feel they can rely more on their coworkers during emergencies, have healthier coping mechanisms for managing stress, and see more opportunities for professional growth within the facility.

Health challenges are significant among both uniform and civilian staff, though they are more severe among uniform staff. Uniform staff report higher incidences of physical health issues like high blood pressure and obesity, as well as traumatic experiences and mental health concerns including PTSD and emotional drain. Civilian staff also face considerable health challenges but at generally lower rates compared to their uniform counterparts.

Overall, both civilian and uniform staff share a rehabilitative and safety-focused perspective regarding the purpose of incarceration. However, civilian staff are more likely to believe in the possibility of rehabilitation for people in custody and place a higher importance on helping people make positive changes for a better life.

Facility conditions are perceived similarly by both groups, with some differences. Uniform staff are more likely to believe that incarcerated people are able to get a good night's sleep and more frequently feel like they are "doing time" too compared to non-uniform staff.

Uniform and civilian staff have mixed responses regarding interactions with and treatment of people in custody, with both shared perceptions and notable differences. There are notable differences in areas such as respect, professional boundaries, and equitable treatment regardless of disability, gender identity, or race.

There are no differences to note regarding correctional practices and sanctions.

Section One: Job Satisfaction (Questions 1-9)

In terms of job satisfaction, both uniform and civilian staff show varied levels of satisfaction with their work. Civilian staff generally report slightly higher levels of enthusiasm toward coming to work and feeling appreciated. But both groups express concerns about leadership appreciation and career advancement opportunities.

Table 17. Job Satisfaction Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Often/Always*	
1) I look forward to coming to work.	40%	52%
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
5) Leadership in this correctional facility show appreciation for staff in meaningful ways.	31%	46%
6) My supervisors are invested/interested in my career path and help me achieve my career goals.	39%	53%
8) If I have a chance, I will change to some other job outside of corrections at the same rate of pay.	68%	58%

Section Two: Downtown (Questions 10-13)

When considering the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation overall, both uniformed and civilian staff share concerns about communication and inclusiveness. Uniformed staff, however, report a higher level of dissatisfaction with Downtown's communication of a clear vision and the respect shown for their input compared to civilian staff.

Table 18. Downtown Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
10) Downtown communicates a clear vision (mission) for Corrections.	20%	31%
13) Downtown takes the things I say seriously and treats me and my ideas with respect.	14%	25%

Section Three: Workplace Culture (Questions 14-46)

The workplace culture section of the survey reveals several differences between uniformed and civilian staff, particularly in areas related to safety, coworker reliability, and overall well-being. The survey results highlight that some responses are more positive for uniform staff, while others are more favorable for civilian staff. Civilian staff reported better outcomes in areas such as leadership support, safety, and staffing levels. Civilian staff felt that facility leadership does more to keep them safe and a higher percentage felt the facility is safe. They also reported better (though still insufficient) staffing levels, fewer work schedule conflicts, and better support from employee wellness resources. Additionally, civilian staff were less likely to feel alienated from "normal" society due to their job.

Conversely, uniform staff reported more favorable experiences regarding teamwork, coping mechanisms, and opportunities for professional growth. Uniform staff felt they could rely more on their coworkers to respond quickly during emergencies and reported having healthier coping mechanisms to manage job stress. They also perceived more opportunities for professional growth within the facility.

Table 19. Workplace Culture Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
15) This facility's leadership does everything possible to keep staff safe here.	34%	48%
16) I can rely on my coworkers to respond quickly during an emergency.	86%	74%
18) Overall, I feel safe in this facility.	36%	55%
25) There are enough staff to meet the current needs of this facility.	9%	12%
41) My work schedule causes conflict at home.	51%	23%
42) I like having the option to work overtime as a helpful way to increase my paycheck when I need it.	90%	73%
43) Because of this job, I don't think I fit in "normal" society anymore.	42%	23%
45) I feel there are enough employee wellness and support resources I can access if I need them.	21%	32%
46) I feel emotionally drained from my work.	72%	61%

Section Four: Staff Health (Questions 47-62)

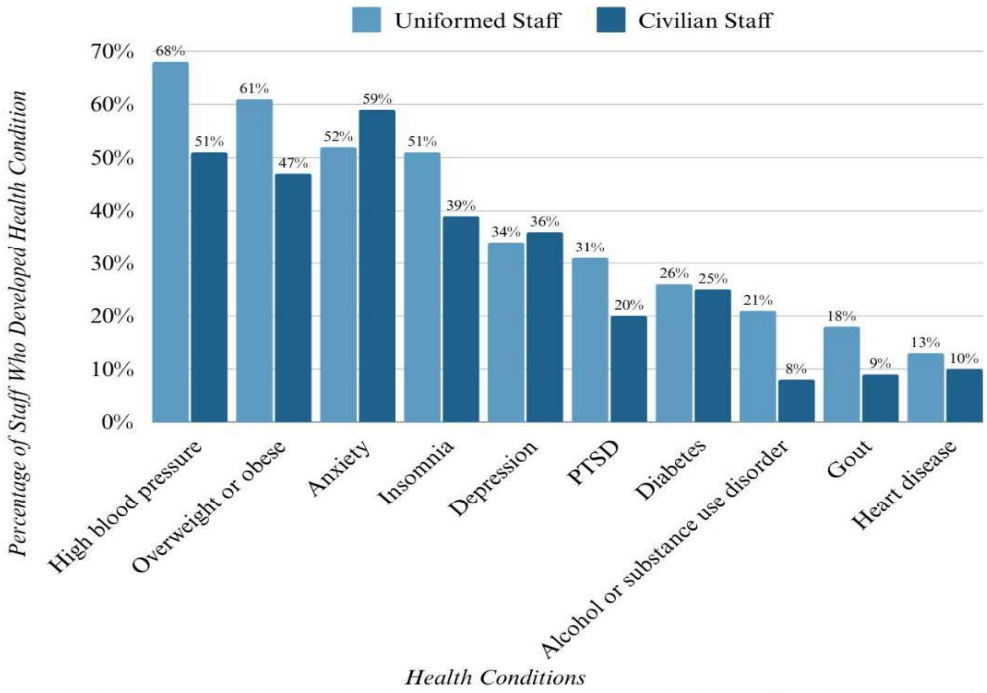
Health challenges are prominent among both uniformed and civilian staff, though are more severe among uniformed staff. Uniformed staff report higher incidences of physical health issues like high blood pressure and obesity, traumatic experiences, as well as mental health concerns including PTSD and feelings of emotional drain. Civilian staff also face significant health challenges but at generally lower rates compared to their uniformed counterparts.

Table 20. Staff Health Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Poor*	
48) In general, how would you rate your physical health.	17%	8%
	Response: *Happened to me*	
57) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: physical assault.	28%	25%
58) Traumatic experiences throughout your entire life: assault with a weapon.	15%	9%
	Response: *Moderately, Quite a Bit, Extremely*	
61) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having physical reactions (e.g. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or seating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	38%	28%
62) Problems or complaints people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences, within the past month: having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	49%	33%

In terms of staff developing health conditions since starting work in corrections, the systemwide results are concerning with uniform staff results even more so. Conditions surveyed are reported in the figure below.

Figure 4. Since starting work in corrections, I have developed the following health conditions, Jail and Prison Results



*Some individuals responded that they developed more than one of the above health conditions since starting work in corrections, thereby the above percentages exceed 100%.

Additionally, for the question, at any time in the last 12 months, did you seriously think about trying to kill yourself, 8% of uniform staff responded "Yes" compared to 5% of civilian staff (Q56).

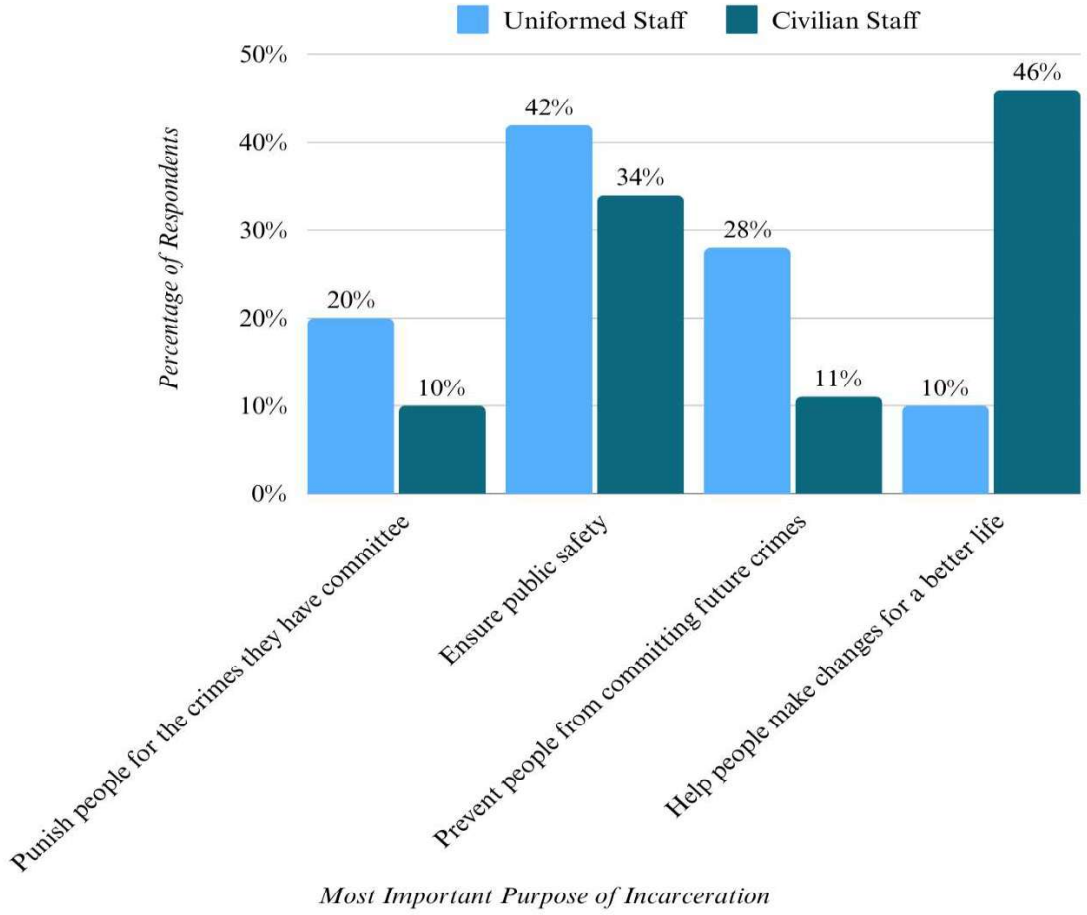
Section Five: Purpose of Incarceration (Questions 63-72)

Overall, the survey results indicate that the large majority of staff, both civilian and uniform, share a rehabilitative and safety-focused perspective. There were, however, a few notable differences in the responses between uniform and civilian staff.

Table 21. Purpose of Incarceration Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
63) I believe rehabilitation of possible for the people incarcerated here.	59%	79%
	Response: *Well/Very Well*	
68) How well does this facility punish people for the crimes they have committed.	40%	57%

Figure 5. What is the most important purpose of incarceration? Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results.



Section Six: Facility Conditions (Questions 73-81)

Civilian staff and uniform staff have similar perceptions of facility conditions, with a notable differences.

Table 22. Conditions Responses, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
76) Incarcerated people are usually able to get a good night's sleep here.	73%	60%
81) Working in this facility makes me feel like I am "doing time" too.	74%	52%

Section Seven: Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions (Questions 82-95)

Uniform and civilian staff have different perceptions of interactions with and treatment of people in custody. While the section results are positive overall, civilian staff perceive more disparate treatment of people in custody for several questions.

Table 23. Staff-Incarcerated People Interactions, Uniformed and Civilian Staff Results

Survey Question	Uniformed Staff Response Percentage	Civilian Staff Response Percentage
	Response: *Agree/Strongly Agree*	
82) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people with respect.	88%	74%
83) Most incarcerated people treat staff with respect.	66%	76%
84) People who work in this facility have appropriate professional boundaries with people incarcerated here.	78%	68%
92) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's disability or ability.	88%	78%
94) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's gender identity or sexual orientation.	88%	77%
95) Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's race or ethnicity.	88%	76%

Section Eight: Correctional Practices and Sanctions (Questions 96-106)

There were no notable differences in the responses of uniform and civilian staff noted in this section. Both uniform and civilian staff have concerns about the reliance on segregation, lack of options to reward good behavior, staff caseload sizes, and the availability of activities and programs for people in custody to stay busy and prepare for release.

Facilitation of Talk Stories

After all the surveys were completed by staff and input and calculated with the assistance of the Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI), the Commission conducted talk story sessions with both uniform and civilian staff of all ranks and time on the job, ranging from recent hires to those approaching retirement, at all eight Hawaii Correctional facilities. The Commission was intentional about staying at the facility for at least 10 hours to ensure staff members could be grouped in applicable ranks and separate from uniform and civilian staff as each group may have had different experiences and expectations. These sessions were designed to review the results and speak directly with staff about potential solutions.

The Commission visited the facilities on the following dates:

- Tuesday, March 19 – Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF)
- Friday, March 22 – Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF)
- Monday, March 25 – Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)
- Wednesday, March 27 – Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)
- Wednesday, April 3 – Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC)
- Thursday, April 4 – Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC)
- Tuesday, April 9 – Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)
- Wednesday, April 10 – Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF)

Themes Pulled from Each Facility:

Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC)

Overall, staff talked about the conditions of the facility and lack of resources far more than any other facility. Staff also showed an immense amount of empathy towards the incarcerated population and their living conditions.

Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)

KCCC staff appeared to be, undoubtedly, the most burned-out team within the correctional system. Staff are working consistent 16- and 24-hour shifts. Staff are working in multiple posts at a time. Staff do not get breaks, and the burnout was very clear.

Staff do feel very appreciated by their Warden, Jerry Jona, and mentioned numerous ways in which he has tried very hard to boost morale. Unfortunately, the constant overtime and multiple posts issues overshadow any other efforts towards uplifting morale.

Note: Only two uniformed staff chose to speak with us – they felt confident they could cover ACO concerns, and made it clear that, unfortunately, officers are so burned out, they do not believe this report will change anything. Additionally, due to severe staffing shortages, uniformed staff could only talk to us one at a time which most likely deterred ACO's from speaking with us. KCCC was the only facility where this was a problem.

Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC)

Training, particularly in communication and leadership, as well as staff wellness were main priorities for staff at MCCC. Staff were very concerned regarding the lack of supportive communication from Lieutenants in particular. Staff continuously noted that they feel very supported by the Warden (some noted this was the first time they had seen a Warden ask staff for feedback and input in 30 years).

Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)

Overall, OCCC staff were concerned about the lack of staff who come to work at the facility. Staff feel burned out from having to do so much more with less, and they do not feel heard or valued by facility leadership or Downtown.

Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF)

HCF staff showed the most frustration regarding individuals not coming to work, and they wanted the strictest forms of accountability to prevent people from gaining the system.

Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF)

Overall, the staff's largest concern is the facility leadership – specifically the Warden. Staff do not feel supported or valued by the Warden. Staff also feel the Warden is unnecessarily restrictive, especially since KCF is a minimum level facility. Staff want more programming and more people in custody at KCF as they see the potential the facility has.

Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)

Overall, the staff's largest anxieties seem to stem from the lack of preparation regarding the incoming jail population and feeling unsupported by the Warden.

Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF)

WCF has great communication between all teams throughout the facility. They have weekly supervisory meetings, so teams know exactly what is to come that week. The facility appreciates the Warden and facility leadership overall. Mandatory overtime is not an issue at the facility – they typically have enough staff to volunteer if needed.

System-wide Recommendations

The talk stories naturally resulted in conversations focused on the following areas: training, communication, trust, compensation and benefits, recruitment and retention, overtime, staff health and wellness, and concerns regarding incarceration.

Although every facility is different and details of the talk stories varied at each facility, the themes from the talk stories were quite similar at every facility. Therefore, the recommendations were focused on system-wide instead of facility by facility.

The recommendations detailed below came *directly* from staff at the eight correctional facilities in Hawaii.

Recommendation Area One: Training

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have expressed significant concerns regarding the current state of training. A primary issue is the lack of consistency and comprehensiveness in the training programs. Many staff members reported that training is often informal and relies heavily on staff teaching each other, which leads to varied standards and significant knowledge gaps. There is a strong need for continuous, meaningful, and consistent training that covers all necessary areas, including professional development, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and trauma-informed care.

Another major concern is the inadequate training provided to leadership. Staff feel that supervisors, including Wardens, Chiefs, Captains, and Lieutenants, lack proper training in key areas such as leadership, communication, management, and empathy. There is a call for mandatory training upon promotion (on the topics from the previous sentence) and regular refreshment courses to ensure that leaders are well-equipped to support and manage their teams effectively. Staff emphasized the importance of training that fosters a supportive and empathetic work environment rather than one that is punitive.

Additionally, there are concerns about the preparation and practical skills of new recruits. Many recruits arrive at facilities unprepared for the realities of their roles, lacking essential skills in standardized report-writing, handcuffs, communication, and managing mental health populations. Staff highlighted that the academy's curriculum is not adequately tailored to the specific needs of correctional facilities, focusing too much on police-centric training rather than correctional-specific issues. These concerns underscore the need for a comprehensive overhaul of the training programs to ensure consistency, relevance, and support for all staff levels within the correctional facilities.

Recommendations for Training:

1. *Comprehensive and Consistent Training for All Staff:*
   Provide continuous, meaningful training that includes professional development, rehabilitative training, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and conflict mitigation. This training should be standardized across all facilities to ensure consistency and clarity.

2. *Leadership, Communication, and Empathy Training:*
   Implement specific training for supervisors (Wardens, Chiefs, Captains, Lieutenants) focusing on communication, leadership, management, interpersonal skills, and empathy. This training should be mandatory upon promotion and include annual refreshment courses to ensure leaders are equipped to support their teams effectively.

3. *Mental Health and Crisis Intervention:*
   Establish regular training sessions on trauma-informed care and crisis intervention, particularly for handling mental health populations and suicide prevention. This training should be provided by mental health professionals with a background in corrections and include both theoretical and practical components.

Recommendation Area Two: Communication

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have highlighted several key concerns regarding communication. One major issue is the lack of effective and consistent communication within the facilities and between Downtown leadership and facility staff. Staff feel excluded from decision-making processes that directly affect their daily duties. They have requested regular

updates and clear communication of changes or new policies to ensure everyone is on the same page and to foster a more inclusive environment.

Additionally, there is a significant need for improved internal communication within facilities. Staff have suggested mandatory paid briefings between shifts to ensure all team members are informed about previous shifts' activities, any serious situations, and any updates to policies. This would help create a more cohesive and informed workforce, reducing misunderstandings and improving overall efficiency.

Furthermore, staff have expressed a desire for more open and direct communication from their supervisors and facility leadership. They feel that current communication practices are often top-down and lack transparency. Staff have called for an open-door policy that allows them to reach out to their supervisors without having to go through multiple levels of hierarchy, which often leads to delays and a lack of discretion in handling personal matters.

Recommendations for Increased Communication:

1. *Include Staff in Decision-Making:*
   Downtown should include staff in decision-making processes that directly affect their work. This involvement enhances appreciation for staff's contributions and ensures that policies and changes reflect their day-to-day realities. Regular in-depth talk stories specific to each department in each facility should be conducted by Downtown leaders.

2. *Regular and Transparent Communication:*
   Establish regular communication channels such as quarterly meetings hosted by Downtown leadership at each facility and recorded Director updates that staff can tune into. These meetings should provide updates, address concerns, and ensure staff are informed about changes within the department. Additionally, Downtown leaders should tour facilities consistently to increase transparency and trust.

3. *Improve Internal Communication Within Facilities:*
   Implement mandatory paid briefings between watches to ensure staff are informed about what happened during previous shifts and any new policies or critical information. Facilities should also encourage open communication from the Warden and Chief's office down to all staff levels, fostering an environment where staff feel heard and respected.

Recommendation Area Three: Trust

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have voiced significant concerns regarding trust within their work environment. A primary issue is the lack of consistent and fair policies, which has led to perceptions of favoritism and unfair treatment. Staff have called for the consistent application of rules and transparent disciplinary processes to ensure that all staff members are treated equally, regardless of their position.

Additionally, there is a strong desire for regular and meaningful engagement from Downtown leadership. Staff want Downtown leaders to conduct consistent, unannounced tours of facilities to engage directly with staff, listen to their concerns, and show genuine interest in their well-being. They feel that this would help bridge the disconnect between Downtown and facility staff, fostering a sense of support and trust.

Furthermore, staff have emphasized the importance of being included in decision-making processes. They believe that involving staff in decisions that affect their work environment would help them feel valued and respected. This inclusion would also help reduce the sense of being undervalued and unappreciated, which has been a significant concern among staff.

Recommendations for Increased Trust:

1. *Consistent and Fair Policies:*
   Ensure that policies and procedures are applied consistently across all facilities to prevent favoritism and unfair treatment. This includes fair and transparent disciplinary processes, consistent enforcement of rules, and equal accountability for all staff members regardless of their position.

2. *Regular Leadership Engagement:*
   Downtown leadership should conduct regular, unannounced tours of facilities to engage with staff directly, listen to their concerns, and show genuine interest in their well-being. These tours should be conducted without facility administration present to encourage open communication and build trust.

3. *Involvement in Decision-Making:*
   Include staff in the decision-making processes that affect their work environment and duties. This helps staff feel valued and respected, reduces the disconnect between Downtown and facility staff, and fosters a more collaborative and trusting work culture.

Recommendation Area Four: Compensation and Benefits

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have expressed significant concerns regarding their compensation and benefits. A prevalent issue is the perception that they are not fairly compensated for the demanding nature of their jobs. Many staff feel that their base pay does not reflect the cost of living and the complexity of their duties. They have recommended several measures to address this, including the addition of hazardous pay, retention bonuses, and longevity pay. They also suggested implementing signing bonuses and multi-duty compensation for staff who are assigned multiple roles.

Another major concern is the inadequate uniform allowance. Staff have noted that the current allowance of $135 every six months has not changed for over 20 years, despite significant increases in the cost of living and uniform expenses. They propose increasing the uniform allowance to $250

twice per year and improving the quality of uniform pants due to their rapid wear and tear. Additionally, staff have highlighted the need for better access to compensatory time off (CTO) to ensure a better work-life balance, particularly for those who work excessive hours and are primary caregivers.

There is also a pressing need to re-price positions, especially for civilian staff, as their current pay is not competitive and often lower than entry-level positions in other sectors, such as fast food. Staff have called for step movements to be reinstated and for pay rates to be adjusted to keep up with inflation and economic changes. They emphasized the importance of ensuring correct and timely payment for overtime, addressing payroll errors, and introducing premium pay for holidays and weekends to encourage staff attendance.

Recommendations for Compensation and Benefits:

1. *Increase Base Pay and Bonuses:*
   Add hazardous pay, retention bonuses, longevity pay, and signing bonuses. Adopt practices similar to the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), such as providing significant signing incentives for consistent attendance without using sick leave.

2. *Improve and Expand Uniform Allowance to Support Professionalism:*
   Increase the uniform allowance to $250 twice per year to keep up with rising costs. Provide higher quality uniform pants and jackets to enhance professionalism and self-image, as well as how staff are perceived by others.

3. *Ensure Accurate and Timely Payment:*
   Implement a scan-in system to accurately log work hours and reduce paperwork. Ensure accountability for payroll errors and correct and timely payment for all work, including overtime and premium pay for holidays and weekends.

Recommendation Area Five: Recruitment/Retention

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have raised several concerns regarding recruitment and retention. They highlighted the lengthy and cumbersome hiring process, which often takes a year or more, causing potential recruits to lose interest or find other employment opportunities. Staff emphasized the need to streamline and shorten the hiring process, reduce redundancy, and improve communication with recruits during the process. They suggested hiring recruits as 89-day emergency hires initially to allow them to start working immediately while completing the necessary background checks and evaluations on the job.

Another significant concern is the psychological evaluation process, which many believe is too stringent and eliminates candidates who could otherwise be good fits for the job. Staff proposed revising this process to involve a board of psychologists rather than a single evaluator and allowing Wardens more input on hiring decisions. They also suggested that recruits who successfully

complete the 89-day hire period should be allowed to bypass the psychological evaluation, as they have already demonstrated their capability to perform the job effectively.

Additionally, staff emphasized the importance of prioritizing staff wellness and creating a supportive work environment to enhance retention. They recommended improving facility conditions, providing better mental health support, and ensuring fair treatment and opportunities for advancement. They also highlighted the need for more seasoned leaders with significant training and experience to guide and support new recruits effectively.

Recommendations for Recruitment/Retention:

1. *Shorten the Hiring Process:*
   Implement emergency hires for the first 89 days to allow recruits to start working immediately while completing background checks and other evaluations. Also work with human resources to shorten the hiring process as to not lose qualified candidates.

2. *Revise the Psychological Evaluation:*
   Revamp the psychological evaluation process, this could involve a board of psychologists in the evaluation process and allow Wardens to have input on hiring decisions to prevent disqualifying good candidates unnecessarily.

3. *Enhance Training and Support:*
   Conduct initial training at the facility where recruits will be working to provide them with practical, hands-on experience and implement mentorship programs pairing new hires with experienced staff.

Recommendation Area Six: Overtime

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have voiced significant concerns regarding overtime. One major issue is the high frequency of mandatory overtime, which leads to severe burnout and exhaustion among staff. They feel that the current policies do not provide adequate breaks between overtime shifts, making it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Staff often return home too exhausted to spend quality time with their families or attend to personal errands.

Additionally, staff are frustrated with the inconsistent and often unfair distribution of overtime. Newer staff members frequently find themselves held back for overtime shifts more often than their senior counterparts. This practice not only affects morale but also leads to increased tension among staff members. There is a call for a more equitable system where overtime is distributed fairly, allowing those who have not been recently held back to be considered first.

Finally, staff highlighted the lack of adequate incentives to encourage attendance and reduce the frequency of sick leave abuse. They suggested implementing attendance programs that reward staff for consistent attendance and reduce the reliance on sick leave. These incentives could include

bonuses, compensatory time off, and other benefits that acknowledge and reward the effort staff put into maintaining regular attendance despite the demanding nature of their work.

The salutation to this problem cannot be just to hire more individuals, it must be accompanied by a culture shift to retain and support the wellbeing of staff.

This was one of the largest issues brought to the attention of the Commission.

Recommendations for Overtime:

1. *Limit Burnout:*
   Develop policies that provide adequate breaks between overtime shifts to prevent staff burnout and ensure a healthier work-life balance.

2. *Fair Overtime Distribution:*
   Implement a more equitable system for distributing overtime, ensuring that newer staff are not disproportionately held back and that those who have not been recently held back are considered first.

3. *Incentives for Attendance:*
   Establish attendance programs that reward consistent attendance with bonuses, compensatory time off, and other benefits to reduce reliance on sick leave and encourage regular attendance.

4. *Implement 12-hour Shifts:*
   Consider implementing 12-hour shifts as a pilot program to give staff more time off, reduce burnout, and potentially decrease sick leave usage. Staff believe that longer shifts would provide adequate breaks and improve morale, while also decreasing the frequency of overtime shifts.

5. *Re-evaluate Staffing Plans and Posts:*
   Reassess and reallocate staff positions to ensure that essential posts are adequately staffed. This includes re-evaluating black and red posts to ensure they are categorized correctly and that there are sufficient personnel on each watch to reduce the need for overtime.

6. *Enhance Policies for Time Off and Overtime Distribution:*
   Create policies that allow staff more time off, such as ensuring breaks after consecutive overtime shifts, and offer incentives for consistent attendance. Additionally, develop a more equitable system for distributing overtime, prioritizing staff who have not been recently held back, and allow staff to swap shifts when needed.

7. *Hire More Staff and Streamline Hiring Process:*
   Increase recruitment efforts to hire more staff, reducing the overall workload and the need for overtime. This includes streamlining the hiring process to quickly fill vacant positions and ensuring competitive pay and benefits to attract and retain qualified candidates.

8. *Improve Scheduling Flexibility:*
   Allow more flexible scheduling options, such as part-time or flexible shifts, to accommodate staff needs and reduce the need for mandatory overtime. This can help improve work-life balance and reduce burnout among staff.

9. *Implement a Voluntary Overtime Program:*
   Develop a voluntary overtime program where staff can sign up for overtime shifts in advance, rather than being held back unexpectedly. This approach ensures that those who are willing and able to work extra hours can do so, while reducing the burden on those who need time off.

By incorporating these recommendations, facilities can better manage overtime, reduce staff burnout, and improve overall morale and job satisfaction.

Recommendation Area Seven: Staff Health and Wellness

Staff across various correctional facilities in Hawaii have raised significant concerns about their health and wellness, emphasizing the detrimental effects of chronic understaffing and excessive workloads. They frequently face long shifts and mandatory overtime, often working 16-hour days and sometimes even 24 to 36-hour shifts over weekends, leading to severe burnout and exhaustion. This intense workload has adverse effects on their physical health, contributing to issues like insomnia, reliance on substances for sleep, and the overconsumption of energy drinks, which can impact heart health. The demanding job also strains personal relationships and overall mental health.

Additionally, staff highlighted the need for robust mental health support. They advocated for a mental health program based in Downtown with practitioners trained in trauma-informed care specific to correctional settings. Mandatory trauma-informed training for all leadership levels and the establishment of a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) to provide debriefings and follow-up support after traumatic incidents were also recommended. Staff emphasized the importance of having a mental health team that can offer immediate and continuous support, including group debriefings and individual follow-ups after critical events.

Furthermore, staff called for better physical wellness resources, such as onsite gyms and improved dining options that are distinct from those provided to inmates. They stressed the need for a supportive environment where staff feel valued and respected by Downtown leadership, including addressing basic facility conditions like adequate restroom facilities and the maintenance of working equipment and infrastructure to prevent additional stress and anxiety related to poor working conditions.

Recommendations for Staff Health and Wellness:

1. *Mental Health Support:*
   Implement a mental health program based in Downtown with practitioners trained in trauma-informed care specific to correctional settings. This includes mandatory trauma-informed training for all leadership levels and the establishment of a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) to provide debriefings and follow-up support after traumatic incidents (this recommendation is intentionally included in two sections because it was present in staff discussion in this section and the training section).

2. *Physical Wellness Resources:*
   Establish facilities and opportunities for physical health activities, such as onsite gyms, group fitness classes, and better dining options that offer nutritious meals distinct from those provided to inmates. These resources aim to enhance staff well-being and promote a healthier work environment.

3. *Work-Life Balance:*
   Develop policies to address chronic understaffing and excessive workloads by hiring more staff and implementing flexible scheduling options. This approach will help reduce burnout, improve mental health, and allow staff to maintain a healthier work-life balance.

Recommendation Area Eight: Concerns Regarding Incarceration

Staff from eight different facilities expressed a variety of concerns regarding incarceration, highlighting significant issues in the treatment and management of people in custody. A common theme was the need for a consistent process for transferring individuals between facilities to ensure access to necessary programs, especially for those with medical conditions or protective custody status. Staff emphasized the importance of providing educational and rehabilitative services to all individuals to facilitate successful reentry into society.

Another major concern was the lack of support and resources for mental health care. Staff recommended creating dedicated mental health units, increasing the number of mental health professionals, and ensuring that security staff receive appropriate training to work with this population. They also stressed the need for more comprehensive and consistent programming, including vocational training and educational opportunities, to better prepare individuals for life after incarceration.

Staff highlighted the importance of better coordination between security and civilian staff, improved communication, and ensuring that all staff have the necessary tools and support to perform their duties effectively. They called for increased incentives for both staff and people in custody to encourage participation in programs and adherence to facility rules. Overall, staff across these facilities emphasized the need for a more structured and supportive approach to

incarceration, focusing on rehabilitation, proper care, and ensuring that individuals in custody receive the support they need to succeed.

Recommendations for Concerns Regarding Incarceration:

1. *Ensure Consistent Transfers and Access to Programs:*
   Implement a consistent process for transferring individuals between facilities, and guarantee access to educational and vocational programs for all, including those with special statuses.

2. *Enhance Mental Health and Rehabilitative Services:*
   Create dedicated mental health units, increase mental health professionals, and provide appropriate training for staff, ensuring comprehensive mental health care and rehabilitation for all individuals in custody.

3. *Expand Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Programming:*
   Increase the availability of educational and vocational programs, focus on rehabilitative and therapeutic efforts, and strengthen partnerships with community organizations to support reentry and reduce recidivism.

Conclusion

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission's (HCSOC) survey highlights urgent challenges facing correctional staff across Hawaii's facilities, from health risks and inadequate workplace resources to systemic issues around leadership, communication, and wellness support. This report underscores the importance of addressing these issues to build a more sustainable and positive environment for both staff and the incarcerated population.

Correctional staff play a pivotal role in promoting public safety and supporting rehabilitation efforts, yet they face considerable barriers that undermine their ability to perform their duties effectively. Chronic staffing shortages, mandatory overtime, insufficient health resources, and workplace stress have created an unsustainable environment that threatens staff retention and recruitment, further compounding these issues.

The Commission's recommendations aim to improve the correctional system by focusing on training, equitable compensation, staff wellness, and enhanced leadership communication. If implemented, these reforms could transform Hawaii's correctional facilities, creating a culture that values and supports staff, encourages professional growth, and ultimately fosters a rehabilitative environment for those in custody. The HCSOC remains committed to advocating for these essential changes to uphold the safety, health, and dignity of all individuals within Hawaii's correctional system.

Addendum

Survey and Corresponding Documents

- Statewide Survey Results
- Statewide Jail Survey Results
- Statewide Prison Survey Results
- Statewide Uniform Staff Survey Results
- Statewide Civilian Staff Survey Results

Prison Specific Survey Results

- Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF)
- Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF)
- Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF)
- Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)

Jail Specific Results

- Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC)
- Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC)
- Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)
- Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)

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Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC)
Information Sheet – Hawaii Correctional Staff Survey 2023/2024

Title of Project: Hawaii Correctional Staff Survey 2023/2024

Project Leads: Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator, HCSOC
Cara Compani, Reentry and Diversion Oversight Specialist, HCSOC

Sites Where Survey is Being Conducted:
Hawaii State Jails:
Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC)
Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)
Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC)
Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC)
Hawaii State Prisons:
Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)
Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF)
Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF)
Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF)

Introduction

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, the Commission) has prioritized an all-encompassing staff survey to better understand the corrections environment; enhance data collection capacities to promote transparency and accountability; and recommend evidence-based policies to improve conditions for those working in our jails and prisons.

This survey was created under the Urban Institute's Prison Research and Innovation Initiative (PRII), supported by Arnold Ventures. The survey has been distributed in facilities throughout five states (Vermont, Delaware, Iowa, Missouri and Colorado) and was developed using participatory research methods, elevating the voices and perspectives of correctional staff.

Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to get the perspectives of all the staff who work in OCCC, HCCC, KCCC, MCCC, WCCC, HCF, WCF, and KCF to better understand specific work conditions, health

impacts, and the culture and climate within correctional facilities. As surveys are submitted, the HCSOC will be able to separate the survey responses by facility as we recognize every correctional facility is different and responses will vary.

Once surveys are collected and answers are analyzed, the HCSOC will conduct talk stories with staff to review the results and work together to collectively create and finalize recommendations to improve the health, safety, and environment for corrections staff.

With all recorded information, the HCSOC will submit a report of findings and recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Hawaii Government Employee's Association (HGEA), United Public Workers (UPW), Governor's Office, Legislature, Judiciary, and post the final report to the HCSOC's website for greater transparency and public accountability. While individual survey results and identifying information will be kept confidential, system-wide results will be made public. It is the HCSOC's goal to guide changes to make correctional facilities better for staff wellbeing.

Study Procedures

This research study is being conducted by the HCSOC with the support of the Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI). This study involves a survey about work conditions, health impacts, and the culture and climate within Hawaii's correctional facilities. HCSOC staff will administer the surveys in person via paper format at all state correctional facilities (OCCC, HCCC, KCCC, MCCC, WCCC, HCF, WCF, and KCF). Additionally, the survey will be available to take online. All submissions, regardless of the submission method—paper or online—are to be completely anonymous and will be kept confidential by the HCSOS. Below are a few notes regarding the survey:

- This survey is intended to be completely anonymous. Please do not include your name anywhere on the survey.
- This survey asks questions on things like work conditions, health impact, and prison culture and climate inside your applicable facility.
- This survey is offered as paper or electronic and should take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.
- For paper-based surveys, HCSOC staff will hand each staff member a copy of the survey, a copy of this information sheet, and an envelope marked "confidential."
- Because there are some sensitive questions on the survey that address issues like mental health, relationships among staff, relationships between staff and corrections leadership, and traumatic experiences such as physical assaults and other stressful events, we encourage you to take the survey in private.
- We ask that each person complete the survey independently and complete only one survey.

- You may take the survey wherever you feel most comfortable, but ask that you return the survey to HCSOC staff within two weeks of receiving it (sooner is encouraged!).
- Please contact Christin Johnson at christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov or 808-900-2200 if you do not finish the survey before the HCSOC staff leave the facility. HCSOC staff will return to the facility to pick up the survey at a later date.

  You will not be asked for your name or other identifying information in this survey. Please do not include any identifying information in this survey so that your responses will be completely anonymous.

Risks or Discomforts of Participating

Answering questions about working inside a correctional facility may be upsetting. There are questions on the survey about trauma (such as physical assaults and other stressful events), physical and mental health, what you think prisons should be like, and more. Although we hope to have complete surveys from all staff, you can choose not to answer any question you don't want to answer.

If you should become upset during the survey, we encourage you to seek support. When we distribute the survey, we will provide a page of resources for you to access help if you need it.

These resources include:

1) **Office of Wellness and Resilience**
   Call (808) 586-0805
   Email gov.owr@hawaii.gov
   Visit https://governor.hawaii.gov/office-of-wellness-and-resilience/

2) **Hawaii Cares**
   Call/Text 988
   Visit https://hicares.hawaii.gov/

3) **Hawai'i UTelehealth**
   Call/Text 808-375-2745,
   Email utele@hawaii.edu
   Visit hawaiiutelehealth.org

4) **REACH**
   Oahu, Call 808-543-8445
   Neighbor Islands, Call 1-800-994-3571

We will not collect any information that will identify you, to protect your confidentiality.

Benefits of Participating

Information from this study may benefit corrections staff now or in the future. Potential benefits of completing the survey may be:

- Opportunity for correctional staff to be heard by an outside entity.
- Survey results and recommendations from the results will be shared with people who can implement change.
- The changes implemented can be measured over time.

Confidentiality

The surveys are anonymous, which means that even the HCSOC team will not know who responded or which survey is yours. All information collected about you during the course of this study will be stored without any identifiers. No one will be able to match you to your answers.

- Only the HCSOC team and the CJRI data entry team will see the surveys after submission.
- The CJRI researchers will enter the answers from the paper surveys into a secure computer.
- The CJRI researchers will destroy the paper surveys once the information is entered into the computer. The information will be kept on the secure computer system.
- If there are answers that might identify someone (for example, if fewer than 5 people identify as a certain race or ethnicity), that information **will not** be shared as part of the findings from the study in order to protect privacy and confidentiality.
- The HCSOC and CJRI research team will keep your study data as private as possible, except for certain information that we must report for legal or ethical reasons, such as child abuse, elder abuse, or intent to harm yourself or others. However, the HCSOC and CJRI researchers would not be able to report individuals as no names are included in the survey.

Can you Withdraw from the Study?

You may discontinue your participation in this study at any time. If you complete and submit the survey and then wish to withdraw, we won't be able to remove any information you have given us already because it won't be connected to your name, and we won't be able to figure out which information is yours.

The HCSOC may discontinue your participation in this study at any time. For example, we may do this if you are disruptive to the survey process, attempt to complete the survey more than once, *etc*. There would be no other consequences for you.

Contact Information
Below is contact information for the HCSOC staff who are in charge of the study, in addition to the CJRI staff who are assisting with analyzing the survey results.

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Oversight Coordinator
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
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Call/Text 808-900-2200

Cara Compani
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Dr. Erin Harbinson
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cjri@hawaii.courts.gov
808-539-4881

By completing and returning a survey, you are giving consent for us to use your answers.
You may keep this research summary for your own records, whether you participate or not.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

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CHAIR

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OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

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HAWAII CORRECTIONAL STAFF SURVEY

Thank you for taking the survey! We greatly appreciate your completing the survey in its entirety, but as a reminder you can skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering.

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

	Job Satisfaction	Always	Often	Sometime	Never
1	I look forward to coming to work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
2	I take pride in my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	It is clear what it means to be successful in my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I have the skills I need to do my job well here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Leadership in this correctional facility show appreciation for staff in meaningful ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	My supervisors are invested/interested in my career path and help me achieve my career goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Promotions in this facility are done fairly.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	If I have a chance, I will change to some other job outside of corrections at the same rate of pay.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Staff in this facility are fairly compensated for the duties and tasks they are required to perform.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

	Consider the Dept of Public Safety/Corrections & Rehabilitation overall ("Downtown")	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
10	Downtown communicates a clear vision (mission) for Corrections.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	There are discussions involving all staff about the vision for Corrections and rehabilitation and ways to achieve it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Downtown has a clear understanding of what it's like for staff to work in this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	Downtown takes the things I say seriously and treats me and my ideas with respect.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Views on Workplace Culture	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
14	I feel that I can rely on other staff in this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	This facility's leadership does everything possible to keep staff safe here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	I can rely on my coworkers to respond quickly during an emergency.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	Staff in this facility make newer employees feel welcome.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	Overall, I feel this is a safe facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	There is a strong sense of trust among staff in this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Staff in this facility operate as a real team.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	Frequent staff turnover is a problem at this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	Mandatory overtime is a problem at this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	Staff in this facility enforce the rules consistently.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24	Staff in this facility behave professionally.	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	There are enough staff to meet the current needs of this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

Staff are treated the same in this facility regardless of their:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
26	Age……	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	Religion……	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	Disability or ability……	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	Gender identity or sexual orientation…	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	Race or ethnicity……	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Views on Workplace Culture, cont.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
31	This facility has a high level of coordination across departments when it comes to delivering services and programs to incarcerated people.	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	Communication in this facility works well - I have the information I need, when I need it, to do my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐
33	When changes are made in this facility that affect me, I am included in the process.	☐	☐	☐	☐
34	When changes are made in this prison, we assess the impact to see how they worked.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35	Staff generally feel comfortable discussing mistakes, errors, or problems with supervisors.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36	I feel safe speaking up about staff misconduct.	☐	☐	☐	☐
37	Staff investigations are conducted with fairness.	☐	☐	☐	☐
38	This facility's policies and practices support staff well-being.	☐	☐	☐	☐
39	My coworkers show signs of stress.	☐	☐	☐	☐
40	Generally, staff morale is high.	☐	☐	☐	☐
41	My work schedule causes conflict at home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
42	I like having the option to work overtime as a helpful way to increase my paycheck when I need it.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

	Views on Workplace Culture, cont.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
43	Because of this job, I don't think I fit in "normal" society anymore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
44	I have healthy coping mechanisms to help me manage the stress of the job.	☐	☐	☐	☐
45	I feel there are enough employee wellness and support resources I can access if I need them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
46	I feel emotionally drained from my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Staff Health

47 Since starting work in corrections, I have developed the following health conditions. (check all that apply):

- ☐ High Blood Pressure
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Heart Disease
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Insomnia
- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- ☐ Being Overweight or Obese
- ☐ Alcohol or Substance Use Disorder
- ☐ Gout

	Staff Physical Health	**Excellent**	**Very good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
48	In general, how would you rate your physical health?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Completely	**Mostly**	**Moderately**	**A little**	**Not at all**
49	To what extent are you able to carry out your everyday physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, carrying groceries, or moving a chair?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Staff Mental Health	**Excellent**	**Very good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
50	In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and your ability to think?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
51	In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	In the past 7 days…	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
52	I felt worthless…...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
53	I felt helpless…...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
54	I felt depressed…...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
55	I felt hopeless…...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

		Yes	No
56	At any time in the last 12 months, did you seriously think about trying to kill yourself?	☐	☐

If you are struggling with thoughts of suicide, please consider the below resources:

Hawaii Office of Wellness and Resilience: Call 808-586-0805, Email gov.owr@hawaii.gov

Hawaii Cares: Call/Text 988, Visit https://hicares.hawaii.gov/

Hawai'i UTelehealth: Call/Text 808-375-2745, Email utele@hawaii.edu, Visit hawaiiutelehealth.org

REACH: Oahu Call 808-543-8445, Neighbor Islands Call 1-800-994-3571

Traumatic Experiences

Listed below are a number of difficult or stressful events or experiences. For each event **check one or more of the boxes to the right.** Be sure to consider **your entire life** as you go through this list of events.

		Happened to me	Witnessed it	Happened at work	Not applicable
57	Physical assault.	☐	☐	☐	☐
58	Assault with a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐
59	Sudden or unexpected death of someone close to you.	☐	☐	☐	☐
60	Any other very stressful event or experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Post-traumatic Stress

Below is a list of problems and complaints that people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences. Please read each one carefully and **mark one box per row** to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem **in the past month**.

		Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
61	Having physical reactions (*e.g*. heart pounding, trouble breathing, or sweating) when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
62	Having emotional reactions (e.g. feeling numb or distant from people; trouble with sleep; avoiding thoughts, memories, or activities; feeling irritable, jumpy, or "super alert") when something reminded you of a stressful experience from the past.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

Purpose of Incarceration		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
63	I believe rehabilitation is possible for the people incarcerated here.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	It is important that prisons and jails:	Very important	Important	Not very important	Not at all important
64	Punish people for the crimes they have committed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
65	Ensure public safety.	☐	☐	☐	☐
66	Prevent people from committing future crimes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
67	Help people make changes for a better life.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	How well does this facility do these things?	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all well
68	Punish people for the crimes they have committed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
69	Ensure public safety.	☐	☐	☐	☐
70	Prevent people from committing future crimes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
71	Help people make changes for a better life.	☐	☐	☐	☐

72 ***Which of these things do you think should be <u>the most important</u> purpose of incarceration? (choose one)***

- ☐ To punish people for the crimes they have committed.
- ☐ To ensure public safety.
- ☐ To prevent people from committing future crimes.
- ☐ To help people make changes for a better life.

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

Facility Conditions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
73	Incarcerated people get enough to eat here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
74	The quality of food provided to incarcerated people here supports a healthy lifestyle.	☐	☐	☐	☐
75	This facility gives incarcerated people what they need (e.g. soap, regular showers, sanitary products) for good personal hygiene for free.	☐	☐	☐	☐
76	Incarcerated people are usually able to get a good night's sleep here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
77	It's easy for incarcerated people with physical disabilities to get around in this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
78	Incarcerated people get enough natural light in this facility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
79	This facility is clean.	☐	☐	☐	☐
80	The quality of incarcerated people's living space is good here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
81	Working in this facility makes me feel like I am "doing time" too.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
82	Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people with respect.	☐	☐	☐	☐
83	Most incarcerated people treat staff with respect.	☐	☐	☐	☐
84	People who work in this facility have appropriate professional boundaries with people incarcerated here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
85	I positively influence incarcerated people's lives through my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
86	Staff in this facility have empathy for incarcerated people and their problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐
87	Staff in this facility have the resources to help incarcerated people with their problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐
88	Staff behavior influences the behavior of those incarcerated in the unit.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

	Staff – Incarcerated People Interactions, cont.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
89	I try to urge incarcerated people to take part in activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Staff in this facility treat incarcerated people the same regardless of the incarcerated person's:	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
90	Age….....	☐	☐	☐	☐
91	Religion……	☐	☐	☐	☐
92	Disability or ability……	☐	☐	☐	☐
93	Charge type or classification…….	☐	☐	☐	☐
94	Gender identity or sexual orientation…	☐	☐	☐	☐
95	Race or ethnicity…… ……	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Correctional Practices and Sanctions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
96	This facility has adequate alternatives to segregation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
97	Staff in this facility are more likely to use segregation over other disciplinary options.	☐	☐	☐	☐
98	Incarcerated peoples' discipline procedures are applied fairly and consistently**.**	☐	☐	☐	☐
99	Incarcerated peoples' discipline procedures are effective at holding them accountable**.**	☐	☐	☐	☐
100	There are options for staff to reward incarcerated people for good behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐
101	This facility provides enough opportunities so incarcerated people can stay busy all day.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Correctional Practices and Sanctions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
102	People incarcerated in this facility can participate in activities that promote their health and well-being.	☐	☐	☐	☐
103	When incarcerated people do not have enough to do they are more likely to engage in negative behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐
104	This facility does a good job preparing people for release.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

	Correctional Practices and Sanctions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
105	The programs in this facility give incarcerated people the skills they need to be successful in the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
106	Caseloads are manageable to adequately support incarcerated people as they get ready for release.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Staff Demographics

107 ***What year were you born in? (YYYY)_____***

108 ***What racial or ethnic group or groups do you consider yourself to be a part of?***

(check all that apply)

- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Guamanian or other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Micronesian
- ☐ Native American/American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

109 ***What is your gender identity?***

"Gender" is social; it refers to a person's internal identity and how they present themselves to the world.

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Non-Binary/Third Gender

110 ***Do you identify as transgender?***

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

111 ***Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?***

- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual or straight
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

112 ***What is the highest level of education you have <u>completed</u> to date?***

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ GED
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ 2-year college degree
- ☐ 4-year college degree
- ☐ Graduate school/master's degree
- ☐ Vocational Training/Certification
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

113 ***What is your employment status at this facility?***

- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Contractual work
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

114 ***What is your annual household income?***

- ☐ Less than $20,000
- ☐ $20,000 - $29,999
- ☐ $30,000 - $39,999
- ☐ $40,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $59,999
- ☐ $60,000 - $69,999
- ☐ $70,000 - $79,999
- ☐ $80,000 - $89,999
- ☐ $90,000 - $99,999
- ☐ Greater than $100,000

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

115 ***What is your current living situation?***

- ☐ Own my own place (apartment/house)
- ☐ With my family, in a place they own (apartment/house)
- ☐ Rental (apartment/house)
- ☐ Subsidized housing
- ☐ Shelter
- ☐ Couch surfing
- ☐ Homelessness
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

Staff Employment Information

116 ***How long have you been employed by or contracted for the Department of Public Safety?***

- ☐ Less than 12 months
- ☐ 1 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

117 ***How long have you been employed at or contracted in this facility?***

- ☐ Less than 12 months
- ☐ 1 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

118 ***Which category best describes your current role in this facility? Mark all that apply.***

- ☐ Administrative
- ☐ Clergy
- ☐ Culinary
- ☐ Educational, vocational, or other programming
- ☐ Facility maintenance/Grounds keeping
- ☐ Medical
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Security/Custody
- ☐ Substance abuse treatment/counseling
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

Please respond to each question or statement by marking one box per row.

Staff Employment Information, cont.

119 ***Are you a contractor?***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

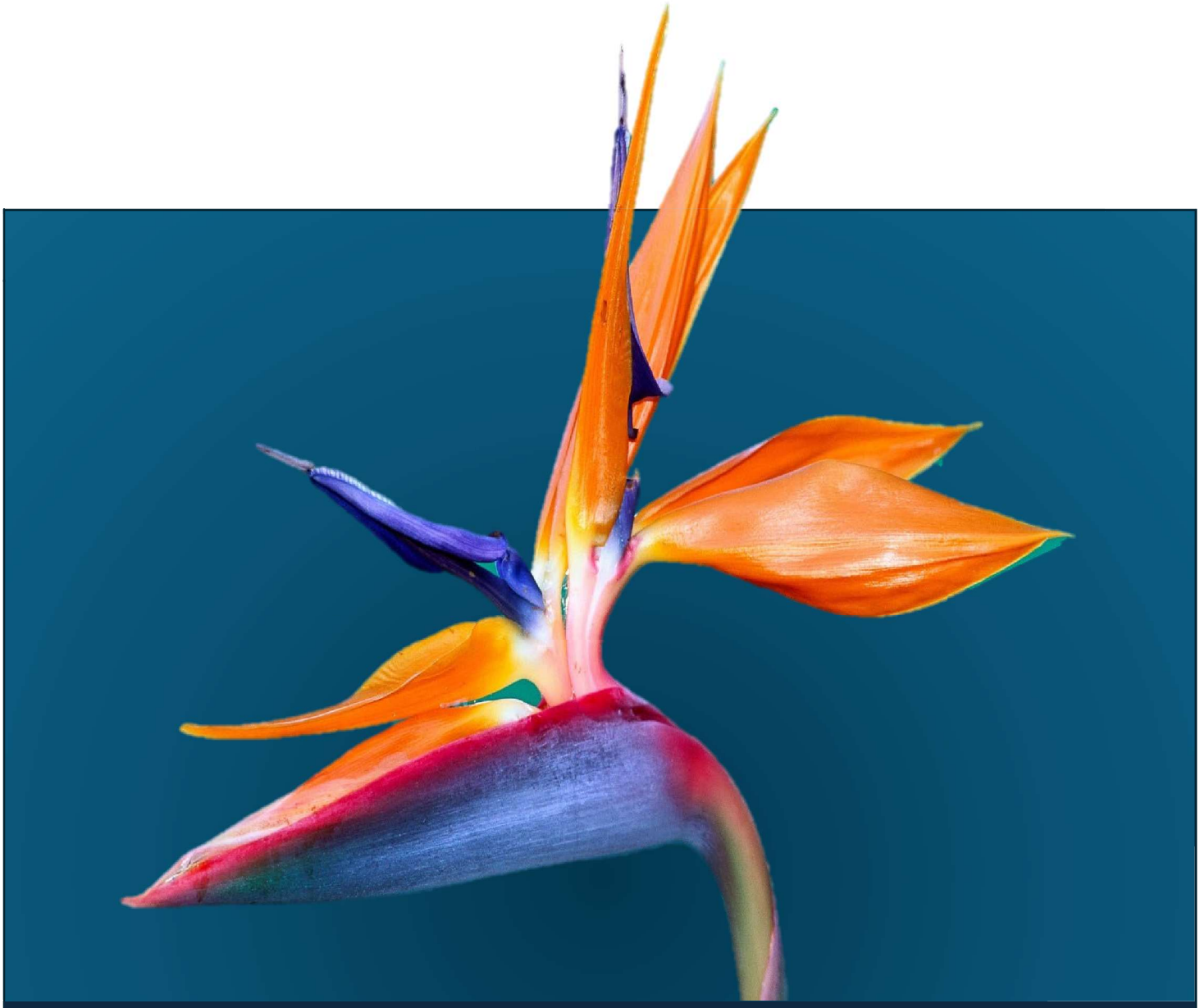
120 ***If security/custody staff, which best describes your current level?***

- ☐ Management (*e.g. Warden, Assistant Warden*)
- ☐ Supervisor (*e.g. Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain*)
- ☐ Direct line staff (*e.g. ACO*)
- ☐ Administration (*e.g. Downtown*)
- ☐ Not security/custody staff (*e.g.* Administrative, medical or mental health contractor)
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

Thank you for completing this survey!
Please place the survey in the envelope marked "confidential" and return it to the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission by handing it to a Commission staff member or contacting Christin Johnson at 808-900-2200 or christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov.

Please remember not to put your name or other identifying information anywhere on the survey or the envelope!

Hoe Amau:
The current state of reentry in Hawaii



Hoe Amau

The current state of reentry in Hawaii.

Hoe amau (pull for the shore) represents the desperate effort to reach a safe and stable place, symbolizing the hope for salvation and opportunity for a new beginning.

March 7, 2025

Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

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Acknowledgements

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, the Commission) wishes to extend its heartfelt gratitude to the many partners who contributed to this report, including Cara Compani, former Reentry and Diversion Oversight Specialist, who authored and spent countless hours perfecting this report.

Special thanks are extended to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, specifically the Deputy Director for Rehabilitation Services and Programs, the Acting Corrections Program Services Development Officer of the Reentry Coordination Office, and the previous Corrections Program Services Development Officer for their time, collaboration, and support in advancing transparency and commitment to reentry initiatives. The Commission also appreciates the assistance of the DCR Research Statistician, whose contributions were instrumental in providing data critical to this report.

The Commission recognizes the facility wardens and leadership who facilitated numerous facility tours and provided insights into the daily operations and challenges of Hawaii's correctional facilities. Their cooperation was helpful in developing a comprehensive understanding of the reentry system. The Commission recognizes the contributions of current and former DCR staff, who provided valuable insights and engaged in meaningful discussions despite operating in an under-resourced and often challenging environment. The dedication and commitment of these staff members are deeply appreciated.

The Commission thanks the Hawaii Paroling Authority Chair and Administrator for their support, transparency, and the provision of essential data that informed this report.

The Commission extends gratitude to all the people in custody who truthfully shared their experiences, challenges, and hopes for the future. Their input is critical to understanding the state and impacts of the current system and creating a path forward.

Finally, the Commission recognized the many community advocates and members who provided valuable input. Their work remains a cornerstone of ongoing efforts to create a system that prioritizes rehabilitation, reintegration, and human dignity.

It is the author's profound hope that this report serves as a catalyst for furthering meaningful transformation and a guiding framework for building a new system. The author holds deep faith in and appreciation for that state of Hawaii and its people. Achieving this vision will require continued collaboration and partnership with all stakeholders dedicated to creating a more rehabilitative and effective correctional system, which is entirely possible through shared commitment and effort. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important work.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, the Commission) prepared this inaugural report to provide a comprehensive evaluation of Hawaii's reentry system. While significant challenges are highlighted, the report also underscores the immense potential for meaningful systemic transformation. Transforming any system requires understanding its current state, defining a clear vision for the future, and taking deliberate actions aligned with that vision. This report offers that framework by presenting Hawaii's existing foundational vision for a new correctional system, assessing the current state of its reentry framework, and offering actionable recommendations to bridge the gap between the present and the envisioned future.

A. Foundational Documents: Hawaii's Vision for Corrections and Rehabilitation

Hawaii's vision for corrections is guided by key documents including various Hawaii Revised Statutes, Acts, Executives Orders, House and Senate Resolutions, and task force reports. The key documents – detailed in the below report – emphasizes rehabilitation, cultural integration, human dignity, and trauma-informed practices. The Commission measured the compliance of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) with each guiding document and submitted applicable recommendations to encourage further compliance with the guiding documents. By aligning with these principles, Hawaii has an immense opportunity to transition to a correctional model that prioritizes its vision for corrections and rehabilitation: healing, accountability, and community safety.

B. Current State of the Reentry System

To evaluate the current state of Hawaii's reentry system, the Commission reviewed DCR's compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), progress and outcomes stemming from House and Senate resolutions, current community services, housing, programs, and treatment options, as well as additional data from the DCR and the Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA). The report's information was gathered through data requests to the DCR and HPA, facility tours, and engagement with additional stakeholders.

Compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes

One of the largest challenges is inadequate staffing levels and limited resources, as current reentry office staffing levels and the absence of dedicated reentry staff at facilities make effective implementation impossible. These issues result in unaddressed statutory requirements, insufficient reentry service contracts, and gaps in identification (ID) assistance, all of which impact compliance and overall effectiveness. Statutory requirements—such as comprehensive reentry planning, the creation of model programs, and performance reporting—underscore ongoing challenges that hinder the system's ability to evaluate and meet the needs of individuals in custody and support successful reintegration.

The table below summarizes key findings and implementation determinations for relevant sections of Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes:

Statute	Requirement/Focus	HCSOC Finding
§353H-2.5 Offender Reentry Office	Reentry planning, risk assessments, program placement	Dire staffing and resources shortages
§353H-3 Reentry System Plan	Comprehensive plan with tailored and gender-responsive programs	Delays in program access, limited implementation
§353H-4 Model Programs	Reduce recidivism through skilled staff and individualized care	Programs do not meet standards for model program
§353H-5 Children of Incarcerated Parents	Preserve parent-child relationships, research impacts	No policies or research conducted
§353H-6 Employment of Ex-Offenders	Promote training and tax incentives for employers	No collaboration or progress on statutorily required
§353H-7 Return of Out-of-State Inmates	Ensure timely return one year before parole eligibility	Over half not returned within the required timeframe
§353H-8 Performance Indicator Reporting	Measure reentry outcomes such as recidivism	Missing key reporting, limiting effectiveness
§353H-9 Annual Reporting Requirements	Detailed reporting on programs and Performance Indicators	Critical omissions hinder evaluation
§353H-31 Reentry Programs and Services	Implement 27 initiatives including housing and family support	Only 5 initiatives implemented, significant gaps remain
§353H-32 Offender Identification Documents	Provide ID assistance prior to release	Limited implementation, language and access barriers

Assessment of House and Senate Concurrent Resolutions

This assessment evaluates the progress made on key legislative resolutions addressing reentry. The resolutions emphasize culturally responsive programming, ID provision, and investment in reentry support but minimal progress has been made, and unmet needs and barriers hinder effective implementation.

The table below summarizes findings and implementation determinations for these resolutions:

Resolution	Requirement/Focus	HCSOC Finding
Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1 (2023)	Report on assisting people in custody obtaining ID cards	Only 150 IDs issued out of 10,580 releases
Senate Concurrent Resolution 25 (2021)	Establish faith pods based on Kapu Aloha	No action taken
House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021)	Promote culture-based rehabilitation	Limited offerings, not scaled to meet population needs
Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 (2021)	Increase investment in reentry training programs	Limited collaboration and statewide expansion
Senate Resolution 84 (2021)	Dismantle barriers to ID provision	Minimal progress, ongoing barriers

Summary of Community Services, Housing, Programs, and Treatment
The HCSOC analyzed community services, housing, and programming for people in custody, highlighting concerns about excessive idle time and limited in-cell programming, which impact parole eligibility and reentry success. While service provider contracts exist, gaps remain, especially in housing and culturally based programs. Neighbor islands face resource shortages, and existing housing contracts are underutilized, emphasizing the need for systemic improvements.

The table below summarizes key findings and implementation determinations:

Category	Key Information	HCSOC Analysis
Community Service Provider Contracts	Includes contracts with community service providers for domestic violence treatment, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), and substance abuse treatment.	Contracts provide valuable services but are limited in scope. Expansion and better utilization are needed.
Housing Provider Contracts	Includes clean and sober housing on Oahu but extremely limited for neighbor islands.	Contracts are underutilized, with significant gaps on neighbor islands. Expanding housing support is critical.
GED and High School Equivalency Programs	30 general education diploma (GED) completions in 2023; 338 college enrollments, with 134 earning credits and several degrees awarded.	GED completion rates are alarmingly low, with significant room for improvement to meet population needs.
Native Hawaiian Cultural Programs	No contracts in place for Hawaiian cultural programming; trauma treatment primarily provided by Pua Foundation at WCCC.	Native Hawaiian cultural programming is critically lacking, given their overrepresentation in the correctional system.

Analysis of DCR and HPA Data and Numbers
The Commission collected data from the DCR and HPA to evaluate reentry outcomes and the Commission's mandate under §353L-3(b)4 to ensure the timely release of people in custody when minimum terms have been served. The data highlights systemic challenges in achieving timely parole releases, including high rates of individuals maxing out without parole supervision and significant delays in transitioning to furlough or parole. Key findings reveal that 47% of individuals released from DCR custody maxed out their sentences, with a higher percentage, 67%, of individuals in high-security settings such as Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) maxing out. The max-out population faces the highest risk of recidivism.

The table below summarizes key findings and determinations from the parole data:

Category	Key Information	HCSOC Analysis
Release to the Community	506 released (203 paroled; 303 maxed out). Max-outs face higher recidivism due to lack of reintegration support.	47% max-out rate highlights systemic barriers. Parole releases are too low, especially in secure facilities like HCF.
FY 2023 Parole Denials	1,058 parole denials due to incomplete programs, misconduct, or lack of parole plan.	Lack of data tracking hinders ability to assess whether denials result from systemic gaps in programs or services.

FY 2024 Data on Parole	821 individuals in custody beyond minimum release dates. Annual cost exceeds $77 million.	Financial and social costs of delays are substantial. System improvements could decrease reliance on AZSC.
Parole Hearing Trends	Parole hearing acceptance rates dropped from 37% (FY 20-21) to 26.5% (FY 22-23); denial rates increased to 62.8%.	Declining acceptance rates and barriers to parole release undermine reentry goals and increase recidivism risks.

Positive System Highlights

Despite challenges, Hawaii's correctional system is making progress toward a rehabilitative model. Dedicated correctional staff and community organizations play key roles in advancing rehabilitation, housing, and reentry support. The HCSOC acknowledges these efforts to highlight progress and encourage further transformation.

C. Recommendations: Bridging the Gap Between the Current State and Envisioned Future

Based on the current state of the reentry system and the vision for a therapeutic and rehabilitative correctional model, the following recommendations are presented in four key focus areas to promote clarity and alignment with the HCSOC mandate:

> **Part I—Statutory Compliance Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes:** Ensure the proper functioning of the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System under Chapter 353H.
>
> **Part II—Statewide Reentry: Programs, Education, Treatment, and Transitional Services; §353L-3(b)(3):** Collaborate with DCR to monitor and review reentry in addition to the oversight of facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the HPA.
>
> **Part III—Facilitating a Correctional System Transition to a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Model, §353L-3(b)(1):** Transition Hawaii's correctional system to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model.
>
> **Part IV—Preventing Overcrowding and Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4):** Prevent the correctional population from exceeding the capacity of each facility as mandated by §353L-3(b)(2) and ensure the timely release of individuals on parole upon serving minimum terms, in accordance with §353L-3(b)(4).

Part I: Statutory Compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes

HRS Section	Recommendations
§353H-2.5	1.1 Expand Reentry Staffing at Facilities and Department-wide as the Reentry Coordination Office (RCO) is critically understaffed. 1.2 Increase Case Management Staffing as current case managers have unmanageable caseloads of up to 100 people in custody per case manager. 1.3 Enhance the Reentry Checklist to provide more support as the current three-page form lacks the necessary detail to support comprehensive reintegration. 1.4 Expand partnerships with organizations providing reentry services and establish contracts

HRS Section	Recommendations
	for new services to meet growing needs. 1.5 Enhance training in evidence-based reentry practices to provide regular training for the Department. 1.6 Address, standardize, expand, and strengthen jail reentry planning.
§353H-3	1.7 Revise the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (CORP) to align with DCR's transition to a rehabilitative model. 1.8 Develop and implement a standardized operational philosophy across all facilities to ensure reentry begins on the first day of incarceration. 1.9 Establish and enforce a comprehensive strategy to ensure reentry programs are gender-responsive. 1.10 Identify and implement model reentry programs aligned with statutory requirements.
§353H-4	1.11 Implement model programs, as outlined in the statute, to reduce recidivism through skilled case management, life skills, family support, and community engagement.
§353H-5	1.12 Develop policies and procedures to address family needs, including placement considerations that support family connections and research on the impact of incarceration.
§353H-6	1.13 Strengthen partnerships with DLIR and Taxation Departments to ensure people in custody and those released from DCR custody are included in state and private reentry resources. 1.14 Collaborate with the Departments of Taxation and Labor and Industrial Relations to develop tax incentives for employers hiring formerly incarcerated people.
§353H-7	1.15 Return people in custody from out-of-state facilities at least one year prior to parole or release date per statutory requirements. 1.16 Conduct an independent investigation to identify barriers to returning people in custody within this timeline. 1.17 Update DCR's Transfer of Adult Inmates policy to align with §353H-7 requirements.
§353H-8	1.18 Define and track performance indicators to set clear, quantifiable metrics to evaluate program efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.
§353H-9	1.19 Revise the reporting process to fully comply with statutory requirements by ensuring reporting includes the required program information.
§353H-31	1.20 Expand and fully utilize service contracts to increase the scope of contracts beyond housing and job placement to encompass all 27 authorized reentry support areas.
§353H-32	1.21 Provide identification upon release, addressing insufficient ID issuance rates. Specifically: a) Designate staff for ID assistance. b) Utilize funding to cover ID costs. c) Initiate ID applications at admission. 1.22 Ensure all people in custody are informed about assistance in obtaining identification documents. 1.23 Develop a system to initiate ID assistance 90 days prior to release. 1.24 Translate forms or partner with agencies to ensure availability in person in custody's primary language. 1.25 Improve data collection and reporting to comply with Chapter 353H.

Part II: Statewide Reentry: Programs, Education, Treatment, and Transitional Services; §353L-3(b)(3)

Category	Recommendations
Educational and Programs	2.1 Prioritize GED completion by making GED programs a core focus across facilities. 2.2 Expand education staff capacity by filling current vacancies and creating new positions. 2.3 Empower staff to advance programs with decision-making authority and support. 2.4 Fix technology issues to prevent disruptions during lockdowns and staff shortages. 2.5 Partner with local technical colleges and provide facility space for their use. 2.6 Develop a statewide College Education Network to expand college programs statewide, including AZSC, leveraging Pell Grant eligibility.
Treatment	2.7 Establish ongoing, independent, publicly available reviews of parole-recommended programs to determine their effectiveness. 2.8 Conduct a data-driven assessment to determine projected demand for parole-recommended programs and identify providers and staffing needs. 2.9 Pay providers offering RAD, parole, and committee-recommended programs to ensure sustainable service delivery. 2.10 Broaden program offerings beyond RAD-recommended options to provide meaningful opportunities while waiting for required programs. 2.11 Establish and strengthen partnerships with community organizations for programming. 2.12 Gather input from people in custody to inform program development and support. 2.13 Implement a Lifers and Longtimers Pod at AZSC to address the needs of this population. 2.14 Equip all people in custody with tablets to increase access to programming, education, and communication tools. 2.15 Expand programming access for people in protective custody by providing individual tablets or laptops.
Rehabilitative and Transitional Services	2.16 Expand housing support by: a) Compiling a list of housing providers throughout Hawaii. b) Fully utilizing existing housing contracts at 100% capacity. c) Expanding transitional housing options on neighbor islands. d) Collecting data on housing needs to address gaps. 2.17 Partner with Unite Us to create real-time connections between people in custody and community services. 2.18 Strengthen, fund, and formalize partnerships with community organizations providing reentry services. Specifically: a) Fund and formalize key contracts with local organizations. b) Expand partnerships with reentry service providers. c) Fund chaplain positions to ensure longevity for critical roles.

Part III: Facilitating a Correctional System Transition to a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Model; §353L-3(b)(1)

Category	Recommendations
Rehabilitative Model	3.1 Create an action plan with defined steps, timelines, strategies, goals, and milestones for actualizing the new model of corrections. 3.2 Develop new DCR policies and procedures aligned with a rehabilitative model outlined in foundational documents such as HCR 85 and the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Reports. 3.3 Provide training for staff to align with the therapeutic and rehabilitative correctional philosophy and updated policies. 3.4 Establish consistent in-person contact visitation policies across all facilities to maintain family and community ties essential for successful reentry. 3.5 Shift to a public health approach, starting with a comprehensive needs assessment. 3.6 Create a vision and strategic plan for returning all people in custody to Hawaii and ending out-of-state housing contracts.
Trauma-Informed Care	3.7 Implement statewide trauma-informed care training for all staff by collaborating with specialists. 3.8 Offer trauma treatment programs in every facility through contracts with mental health professionals. 3.9 Collaborate with the Veterans Administration (VA) to provide specialized PTSD support for justice-involved veterans. 3.10 Collect data and allocate resources to address the needs of specific populations, including Native Hawaiians, kupuna, women, and individuals with mental health needs. 3.11 Partner with Amend and their Prison Culture Change initiative to transform facility culture through health-centered, trauma-informed practices.
Cultural Practices: Transform Facilities into Pu‘uhonua	3.12 Create a comprehensive inventory of Native Hawaiian cultural programs and service providers to align with recommendations from the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force. 3.13 Establish system-wide Native Hawaiian cultural programs and faith pods in each facility by partnering with ‘Ohana Ho‘opakele and other Native Hawaiian practitioners.

Part IV: Preventing Overcrowding and Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4)

Category	Recommendations
Hawaii Paroling Authority	4.10 Enhance HPA data collection to systematically track parole denials and improve analysis. 4.11 Conduct an independent analysis to investigate barriers to parole release and explore opportunities for meaningful sentence reduction, including: a) Analyzing parole denials. b) Exploring opportunities for sentence reductions.

Introduction

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, Commission) was created by Act 179, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, to "ensure transparency, support safe conditions for employees, inmates, and detainees, and provide positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system." Now, embedded in Chapter 353L of Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Commission has four core functions:

§353L-3(a)(b)(1) Oversee the State's correctional system and have jurisdiction over investigating complaints at correctional facilities and facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model;

§353L-3(a)(b)(2) Establish maximum inmate population limits for each correctional facility and formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each correctional facility;

§353L-3(a)(b)(3) Work with the department of corrections and rehabilitation in monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees. The commission may make recommendations to the department of corrections and rehabilitation, the Hawaii paroling authority, and the legislature regarding reentry and parole services; and

§353L-3(a)(b)(4) Ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole when the minimum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services.

This report serves as the Commission’s inaugural oversight report on Hawaii's Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program under Chapter 353H and is intended to fill the statutory obligations above of §353L-3(a)(b)(1), (2), (3), & (4). As such, this report:

- Defines components necessary for successful reentry,
- Provides a thorough examination of reentry in the State of Hawaii and key data points,
- Specifically evaluates whether reentry is working properly as outlined in Chapter 353H,
- Provides an overview of existing programs and highlights best and promising practices,
- Identifies areas for improvement, and
- Offers actionable and targeted recommendations to stakeholders.

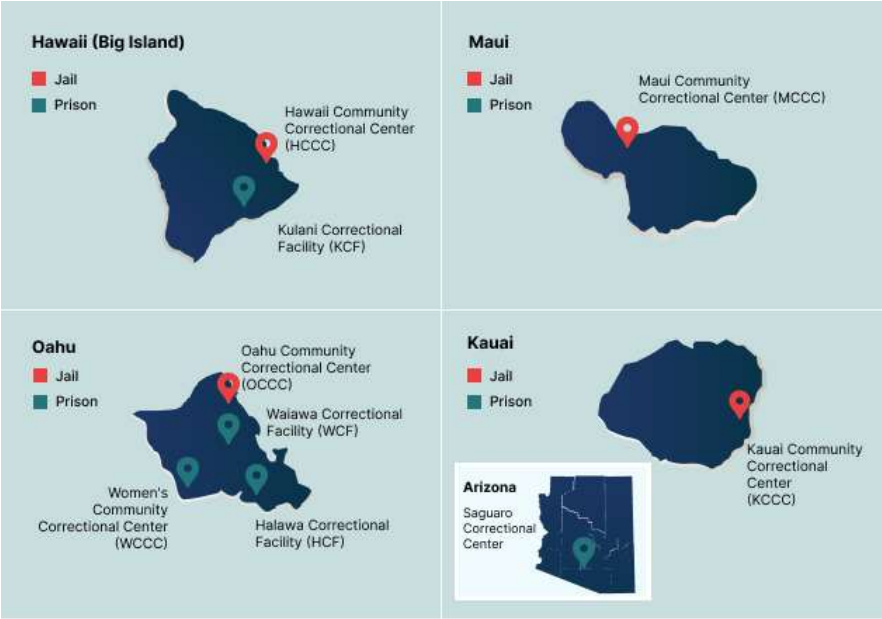
Background

Reentry is defined not merely as a specific point in time, such as a number of years or days before release, but as a comprehensive lifestyle and systemic approach that begins on day one of incarceration. This perspective emphasizes that successful reentry involves continuous support and resources throughout an individual’s time in custody and beyond, fostering a seamless transition back into the community. Reentry is crucial for individuals in custody, their families, and the

broader community in Hawaii. Successful reentry offers opportunities for healing and growth, reducing recidivism, promoting public safety, and fostering stronger and safer communities.

Below are important contextual points about Hawaii's correctional system:

- Hawaii operates four jails— 1) Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), 2) Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC), 3) Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), and 4) Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC)—and four prisons—1) Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), 2) Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), 3) Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF), and 4) Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF). Additionally, Hawaii contracts with Saguaro Correctional Center (AZSC), a private prison in Eloy, Arizona operated by CoreCivic.



- Work furlough is a transitional program for individuals nearing the end of a felony sentence that allows people in custody to leave the facility temporarily for employment and transition-related activities. For men, work furlough sites are in Hawaii's jails including OCCC, MCCC, HCCC, and KCCC. For women, furlough is onsite at WCCC and at Fernhurst operated by the YWCA, though occasionally a small number of women may participate in work furlough at neighbor island sites MCCC, HCCC, and KCCC.

- As of January 1, 2024, Hawaii's Department of Public Safety (PSD) transitioned to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR). This restructuring marks a significant shift, acknowledging the distinct roles of public safety and rehabilitative corrections. DCR's focus post-transition now centers on reentry, rehabilitation, and community reintegration, embodying a new correctional model. In this report, both PSD and DCR are referenced to reflect the Department's name and work before and after 2024.

Foundational Documents: Hawaii's Vision for Corrections and Rehabilitation

Hawaii has various foundational documents that highlight a comprehensive and forward-thinking vision for corrections rooted in rehabilitation, human dignity, safety, and trauma-informed practices. Rather than creating a *new* framework or additional legislation, the path forward should be implementing, integrating, and harmonizing the principles already established.

The state's framework and commitment are anchored in key statutes, such as Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes, which sets forth a reentry framework for the state, and Chapter 353L, which established the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission tasked with, among other mandated activities, facilitating the transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model of corrections. This transition is reinforced by Act 278 (2022), which separates the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation from public safety functions. Governor Josh Green, MD, issued Executive Order No. 24-01 (2024), formalizing trauma-informed principles across Hawaii and various House and Senate resolutions highlight the importance of reentry support and cultural practices.

Hawaii does not need a new vision; the path forward is already defined within State documents.

Each state document contributes a unique aspect to Hawaii's comprehensive framework for a correctional system grounded in a rehabilitative and therapeutic model. The Commission focused on the below guiding documents to determine the DCR's compliance to a dedicated shift to rehabilitative and therapeutic practices:

1. **Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes**
   Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes establishes a comprehensive reentry system designed to support individuals transitioning from correctional facilities back into the community. This structured approach seeks to reduce recidivism by equipping individuals for successful reintegration and promoting long-term success beyond incarceration. The statute emphasizes collaboration with government agencies, nonprofits, the community, and private organizations to deliver essential resources and services. Through continuous program evaluation and the use of model and evidence-based practices, Chapter 353H of the Hawaii Revised Statutes works to ensure reentry programs remain effective and responsive to individuals' needs.

   - ❖ Chapter 353H is attached to Appendix A-1 of this report.

2. **Chapter 353L of Hawaii Revised Statutes**
   Chapter 353L of Hawaii Revised Statutes established the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission. The Commission is tasked with overseeing the state's correctional system, facilitating the transition to a therapeutic and rehabilitative corrections model, investigating complaints, setting population limits, and ensuring that the correctional system and reentry processes are functioning effectively to support timely parole and comprehensive rehabilitation.

   - ❖ Chapter 353H is attached to Appendix A-2 of this report.

3. **Shift to Corrections and Rehabilitation (Act 278 of 2022)**
   This Act transitions the Department of Public Safety to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, effective January 2024. By separating law enforcement from corrections, the state aims to align correctional operations with a dedicated rehabilitative model. The reorganization allows the Department to dedicate resources to a mission focused on the transformation of Hawaii's unified correctional system, which has historically been based on a punitive model, into a rehabilitative, restorative, and reentry focused system.

   - ❖ Act 278 (2022) is attached to Appendix A-3 of this report.

4. **Senate and House Resolutions**
   Various legislative resolutions underscore Hawaii's commitment to a new corrections model by calling for enhanced access to identification, essential services, and reentry support, along with culturally based programming. Together, these resolutions reinforce Hawaii's goal of establishing a correctional system focused on rehabilitation and reintegration, supporting individuals as they transition from custody to community.

   These include improving the process for providing identification to people in custody Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1 (2023) and Senate Resolution 84 (2021), creating faith pods Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1 (2021), expanding culture-based programming House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021), and increasing investment in reentry support Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 (2021).

   Central to these efforts is the emphasis on cultural and community-based healing as foundational to transformation. Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1 (2021) specifically calls for the establishment of faith pods and *Pu'uhonua*—places of refuge and healing deeply rooted in Hawaiian cultural practices. These decentralized wellness centers are designed to heal individuals and reintegrate them into the community, aligning closely with the broader cultural programming recommendations put forth by the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force (detailed below).

   - ❖ Senate and House Resolutions are attached to Appendix A-4 of this report.

5. ***Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities*** **– House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 85 Task Force Report**
   The HCR 85 Task Force Report calls for a transformative shift from punitive to rehabilitative corrections, advocating for a model that aligns correctional practices with humane, community-based principles inspired by the Norwegian approach. The report indicates "Our justice system should focus on the root causes of crime, not just the symptoms." This principle lays the groundwork for a transformative approach centered on addressing the underlying factors contributing to criminal behavior. The most critical guiding document shaping Hawaii's future correctional system is the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force Report, which presents a comprehensive vision for the future of corrections here in Hawaii. This report should serve as binding guidance for DCR and Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA) policy and practice, with leadership and staff thoroughly trained to embody and execute its principles in daily operations. Key recommendations

include establishing a new Corrections Academy model focused on equipping staff with the tools and training necessary to address the root causes of crime to ensure standardized and principle-driven staff training, as well as implementing a comprehensive reentry model that supports individuals from intake through reintegration. The report emphasizes the need for reentry planning, humane conditions, and cultural programming and responsiveness.

Initiatives championed by Hawaii's leaders, including Senator Brian Schatz's efforts to reinstate Pell Grant eligibility for incarcerated individuals and expand compassionate release programs, support this model. The three guiding principles offered by the task force are included below.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1——Our justice system should focus on the root causes of crime, not just the symptoms. Among the many causes of crime in our community are poverty, unemployment, underemployment, racism, lack of affordable housing, substandard housing, lack of education, mental illness, broken families, childhood trauma, abuse and neglect that lead to drug and alcohol abuse.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2——Our justice system must reaffirm each inmate's inherent humanity and continuity of citizenship despite his or her loss of freedom.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3——Hawaii's justice system should focus on accountability and rehabilitation instead of retribution.

The remainder of the report further details the essential components for Hawaii's new correctional system. Were it not for report length constraints, the full task force report would be incorporated into this report and included here in its entirety. The HCR 85 Task Force Report offers a vital roadmap for shifting to evidence-based, rehabilitative practices rooted in humane treatment and rigorous root cause analysis.

- ❖ Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities – HCR 85 Task Force Report is attached to Appendix A-5 of this report.

6. Native Hawaiian Cultural and Healing Practices and Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report

Native Hawaiian overrepresentation in Hawaii's criminal justice system calls for culturally specific reforms. Recommendations include enhancing in-prison cultural programs, supporting culturally based reentry services, and addressing the impact of out-of-state incarceration. The task force also advocates for a dedicated body to monitor progress on these issues and integrate community voices into decision-making.

The Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report underscores the trauma experienced by Native Hawaiians, stating: "Native Hawaiians have suffered from severe intergenerational, historical, and political trauma. Any effort to reduce the number of Native Hawaiians who come in contact with the criminal justice system must include a multi-pronged approach to addressing this trauma." It further warns that failure to provide culturally based opportunities for healing undermines the rehabilitative process.

- ❖ The Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report is attached to Appendix A-6 of this report.

7. **Executive Order No. 24-01 Trauma-Informed State**
   In 2024, Governor's Executive Order No. 24-01 designates Hawaii as a trauma-informed state, requiring all executive departments to integrate trauma-informed practices. The Order highlights, "the concept of Aloha is to have compassion and empathy" and recognizes the critical role of addressing trauma—an issue research consistently shows affects individuals in custody at significantly higher rates than the general population. Unresolved trauma creates substantial barriers to healing, rehabilitation, and successful reintegration into the community. By addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), this initiative promotes resilience.

   - ❖ Governor's Executive Order No. 24-01(2024) is attached to Appendix A-7 of this report.

Consolidating Hawaii's Corrections Vision

Hawaii has outlined a transformative vision for its correctional system, emphasizing humane treatment, public safety, and cultural inclusivity. This vision, inspired by the Aloha Spirit, focuses on implementing the existing structures above to create a correctional system that prioritizes healing, growth, accountability, and reintegration into society. Rather than crafting something new, Hawaii's leadership and stakeholders now have the opportunity to bring this established vision to life by implementing and harmonizing existing structures.

To meaningfully transform Hawaii's correctional and reentry system, it is essential to highlight the above vision, in addition to understanding the current state of the system, detailed in this report, and the necessary steps to bridge the gap between present conditions and the envisioned future.

Procedure for This Report

The information included in this report was compiled from a variety of sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of Hawaii's Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program. The data collection process involved:

1. **Data Request Submitted to Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:**
   A request was made to DCR to gather information pertinent to reentry in Hawaii. This request included:

   Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes——Information was collected on the specific components outlined in Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes, focusing on the elements that govern reentry within the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

   Update on House and Senate Resolutions——An update was requested regarding the status of specific Senate and House resolutions related to reentry programs, including those addressing identification cards for people in custody and cultural practices.

   Education, Programs, and Treatment———A request was made for details on educational programs available to individuals in custody, including GED and high school equivalency completions, college class enrollments, and specific treatment programs offered at each facility.

   Community Services and Connections———Information was gathered about contracts with community service providers and transitional housing providers, detailing the services offered and the number of beds available.

   Release to the Community————————Data was requested on the number of individuals released from custody straight to the community or maxed out during the specified time frame.

   - ❖ A copy of this DCR data request is attached to Appendix B-1 of this report.

2. **Data Request Submitted to Hawaii Paroling Authority:**
   A request was made to the HPA to gather data and information regarding parole release decisions and outcomes. This request focused on understanding the number of individuals denied parole due to incomplete program requirements, those who maxed out of custody

without HPA supervision, and individuals currently in custody beyond their minimum sentences. Additionally, it sought data on the outcomes of initial parole consideration hearings and individuals who remain incarcerated after being granted parole on a chair to set basis.

- ❖ A copy of this HPA data request is attached to Appendix B-2 of this report.

3. **Facility Tours:**
   Over the past 18 months, facility tours were conducted at all Hawaii prisons and jails, including the following jails: OCCC, MCCC, HCCC, and KCCC. The prisons included HCF, WCF, KCF, and WCCC, as well as AZSC. These tours provided insight into the conditions and the reentry framework within the DCR.

4. **Engagement with Stakeholders:**
   Commission staff conducted talk stories with individuals currently and formerly incarcerated in DCR facilities, corrections staff, community service providers, and community members. Additionally, relevant letters received from people in custody were reviewed.

5. **DCR Reentry Report Review:**
   HCSOC provided DCR with a confidential draft of this report to ensure accuracy and to provide an opportunity for feedback and updates. As part of their review, DCR submitted a written response, which the HCSOC appreciates and has attached at Appendix G-1. In their response, DCR indicated specific updates that the HCSOC is eager to follow, including:
   - The outcome and implementation of the classification study conducted by Dr. Janet Davidson, with a focus on less restrictive placements;
   - A pilot project to return people in custody within five years of their tentative parole date; and
   - Updates to align with statutory reporting requirements under §353H-8 and 353H-9, addressing areas for improvement noted throughout this report.

   The HCSOC remains committed to working with DCR to monitor and review the reentry system, transition to a therapeutic model of corrections, and better serve all the people of Hawaii. The HCSOC appreciates DCR's review and looks forward to continuing this collaborative partnership.

Current State of the Reentry System: Compliance with Chapter 353H Comprehensive Offender Reentry System

This section provides a comprehensive review of the current state of Hawaii's reentry system, focusing on key elements outlined in Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes and the broader DCR reentry framework. Each component of the reentry statute is analyzed in conjunction with DCR's responses, highlighting existing practices and procedures. Where additional context or clarification is beneficial, HCSOC's analysis provides a deeper perspective on the reentry system's implementation and effectiveness. The Commission determined that the DCR was in compliance with 21 sections, mostly in compliance with 11 sections, mostly not in compliance with 18 sections and not in compliance with 51 sections of Chapter 353H. The statute is further broken down below.

§353H-2.5 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Offender Reentry Office

There shall be established within the department of corrections and rehabilitation an offender reentry office to oversee the development and implementation of the comprehensive offender reentry system. The offender reentry office shall:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-2.5(1): Ensure that the present and future reentry needs of persons committed to correctional facilities are being evaluated and met in an effective and appropriate manner.	Reentry plans are created at admission and updated as needed to reflect changes in an individual's incarceration status. These plans are maintained in institutional records and reviewed regularly. Jails assist with obtaining identification documents and provide community resource information. The Department of Corrections is revising the Reentry Plan to offer a more comprehensive approach, including housing, job training, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, education, family support, legal aid, and transportation assistance.	**Mostly not in compliance**— The reentry plan is largely non-compliant, as it is too brief and limited to effectively address individuals' present and future needs. The three-page document lacks comprehensiveness, and its effectiveness is hindered by inconsistent use, understaffing, and resource constraints.
§353H-2.5(2): Develop and implement risk/needs assessment tools to properly place offenders in programs and services.	DCR case management staff, in collaboration with the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions (ICIS), are certified to use the (LSI-R)[1] and (ASUS)[2] tools for assessing and placing individuals in appropriate programs and treatment. Regular refresher courses ensure	**Fully in compliance**

[1] The Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) is a quantitative survey assessing offender attributes and situations relevant to supervision and treatment decisions

[2] The Adult Substance Abuse Survey (ASUS) is a 64-item self-report survey designed to evaluate an individual's perceived alcohol and other drug usage.

	staff maintain proficiency and stay updated on new developments.	
§353H-2.5(3): Match offenders to programs and services that address risks and needs identified.	DCR case management staff (Certified in the use of the LSI-R/ASUS) are instructed to use these instruments to guide their recommendations for appropriate programs and services for their clients. These recommendations help ensure that individuals in custody address their identified risk areas and needs.	**Mostly not in compliance**— The matching of individuals in custody to appropriate programs and services is hindered by the limited availability of programs across facilities. Current practices primarily focusing on substance abuse treatment leaving other criminogenic needs, such as cognitive skills or emotional issues, insufficiently addressed, limiting the effectiveness of reentry efforts.
§353H-2.5(4): Monitor and record progress made by offenders while participating in prescribed programs and services;	Case management documents client progress in prescriptive program plans, which track institutional adjustment. These reports are filed, shared with offenders to keep them informed, and updated for significant events or parole hearings. They outline custody status, recommended programs, risks/needs, and completed programs.	**Fully in compliance**— It is standard practice for case managers to record program progress in the Prescriptive Program Updates, and they monitor progress to the extent that their workload and resources allow.
§353H-2.5(5): Identify and make recommendations to address needs not addressed by programs and services;	Case management staff guide clients in using the DCR Resource Guide to connect with community services and help obtain identification documents. They also assist with transportation by issuing bus passes and coordinate with DHS/Med-QUEST for medical coverage before release. Housing remains the biggest reentry challenge.	**Not in compliance**— DCR's response does not address the statutory requirement to identify and recommend solutions for unmet needs in programs and services, focusing instead solely on documenting progress in existing ones.
§353H-2.5(6): Provide training opportunities for department staff and service providers in assessments and evidence-based practices;	DCR, in collaboration with ICIS, provides LSI-R/ASUS training for case management and service providers. New Case Managers must complete training in LSI-R/ASUS, Motivational Interviewing, and Cognitive Skills. The RCO and ICIS track certifications and work with Unit Managers to monitor progress. DCR indicated additional training will be provided when new evidence-based programs are introduced.	**Mostly in compliance**— Although staff are trained in offering assessments, other training in evidence-based practices is not offered.
§353H-2.5(7): Work closely and collaborate	The RCO collaborates with community providers and	**Mostly not in compliance**—

with community service and work furlough programs located in the community correctional centers and facilities;	government agencies to expand services for individuals exiting custody. They coordinate resource fairs and tailor support to each furlough facility's unique needs. Current provisions include clear backpacks, crossbody messenger bags, watches, and bus passes to assist with transportation and identification needs.	Although the RCO's coordination of resource fairs is important, additional collaboration is necessary especially to support work furlough on neighbor islands.
§353H-2.5(8): Work closely and collaborate with the Hawai'i Paroling Authority;	The Reentry Office and HPA are working together to improve reentry support. HPA now participates in resource fairs and reentry classes, providing information on parole expectations, rules, and consequences while addressing attendees' questions.	**Mostly in compliance**— The HCSOC recognizes the collaboration that exists between the RCO and HPA, and also acknowledges additional opportunities remain.
§353H-2.5(9): Work closely and collaborate with community partners such as organizations, businesses, and concerned citizens.	RCO actively works with various agencies and community providers: Waikiki Health Center, United Self-Help, Workforce Development, DHS-Med QUEST, American Job Centers, the Pua Foundation, a national Reentry Leaders group, Hawai'i Correctional Industries, First L.A.P., Parents and Children Together (P.A.C.T.), Going Home Hawai'i, Honolulu Community Action Program (HCAP), Goodwill, and various church volunteers, to assist exiting offenders. RCO assists with accessing victim services, restitution collection, and referrals. RCO also stays informed on national best practices through conference participation to enhance local reentry efforts.	**Fully in compliance**

Summary of HCSOC Analysis of 353H-2.5:
The Reentry Office is critically understaffed, with only one of four authorized positions currently filled. This leaves a single employee managing statewide reentry efforts—a task that is impossible for one individual and insurmountable even for a fully staffed office of four to execute effectively given the outlined reentry requirements in Hawaii. This severe understaffing significantly hampers operational effectiveness and the ability to address reentry needs comprehensively. Additionally, case management positions remain unfilled, and existing case managers have caseloads up to100 people in custody per case manager. This workload makes it exceedingly difficult to effectively focus on reentry, as it is only one of many responsibilities assigned to case managers. Also, case managers do not report to, nor are they under the direction of, the Reentry Coordination Office,

limiting the RCO's ability to issue directives, provide guidance, and exercise oversight for reentry-related tasks at the facility level. Without sufficient staffing and resources both centrally and at each facility, reentry efforts cannot be effectively implemented, jeopardizing their success.

The reentry plan, also known as the reentry checklist, is a three-page document that includes sections for personal information, housing, employment, identification documents, special needs or assistance, and transportation plans. This form is completed by most or all newly sentenced individuals as part of the RAD process, with updates required if a transfer packet is prepared and the form is more than six months old. However, the HCSOC has received concerns that, due to a lack of resources, staffing, and training, in some cases the primary focus appears to be on ensuring the form is completed rather than on the quality of its content or its alignment with the individual's needs. The case managers' ability to regularly review or evaluate these forms varies greatly based on facility staffing levels and resource availability.

Due to insufficient staffing and resources, many case managers face overwhelming caseloads and limited opportunities for face-to-face engagement with people in custody, which are critical for effective reentry planning. Without direct interaction, opportunities to address gaps and develop realistic strategies for reintegration are missed. This challenge is exacerbated by insufficient training for staff after the January 1, 2024 departmental transition to a corrections and rehabilitation model.

While DCR is using and training staff on risk assessment tools to guide program placements and working with HPA, more work needs to be done to increase the number of people on parole. Although the LSI-R and ASUS are widely used tools for risk assessments, they do not capture the full spectrum of needs for people in custody. Critical factors such as trauma history, homelessness, and other significant life experiences should also be collected at intake and corresponding programs offered.

Reentry support in jails remains minimal beyond the initial assessment, with limited planning, programming, and services available to facilitate successful reintegration for individuals departing jails. This is particularly concerning given the high number of jail releases each year. For example, in fiscal year 2023, 6,930 individuals were released from DCR custody, the majority of whom were from jails.

Although the Community Resource Guide provides a comprehensive list of support services, given time, resources, and access constraints, people in custody and staff are unable to efficiently contact each resource on the list, resulting in a lack of real-time support and limiting the guide's practical utility. The resource guide has become more symbolic than practical. Although the guides are available to people in custody on tablets, there are also limitations on distribution—such as restricting copies to libraries due to copying costs—further reducing its accessibility and usefulness, especially as the guide is now 218 pages at the time of this report.

Determination: Partially Implemented – Additional Actions Required.

- ❖ A copy of DCR Reentry Checklist is attached to Appendix C-1.

§353H-3 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Offender Reentry System Plan; Creation

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-3(a): The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall develop a comprehensive and effective offender reentry system plan for adult offenders exiting the prison system.	The Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (CORP), developed in 2019 and managed by the RCO, outlines the reentry process from entry into the correctional system to community reintegration. It is based on 14 guiding principles focused on planning, risk assessment, rehabilitation, and preparation for release. The plan includes strategies, action steps, and success indicators like recidivism rates, restitution collection, and program participation.	**Fully in compliance**

§353H-3(b): The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall develop comprehensive reentry plans and curricula for individuals exiting correctional facilities in order to reduce recidivism and increase a person's successful reentry into the community. The reentry plans shall include, but not be limited to:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-3(b)(1): Adopting an operational philosophy that considers that offender reentry begins on the day an offender enters the correctional system. Each offender entering the system shall be assessed to determine the offender's needs in order to assist the individual offender with developing the skills necessary to be successful in the community;	Offenders begin their treatment at the RAD Unit, where their needs are assessed using the LSI-R/ASUS, leading to a personalized treatment plan (IPP) that may include substance abuse treatment, workline, GED, parenting, cognitive skills, anger management, and vocational training. As release approaches, case managers review the plans to address any gaps through referrals or follow-ups. The RCO assists with bus passes and Med QUEST enrollment to meet transportation and healthcare needs. DCR reports having an effective assessment process.	**Mostly not in compliance**—Although individuals on the felony side are assessed for programs using the LSI-R/ASUS tool, delays in access to programs, lack of independent evaluations, and insufficient opportunities in jails highlight gaps in implementing this section's mandate for reentry to begin on day one.
§353H-3(b)(2): Providing appropriate programs, including, but not limited to, education, substance abuse treatment, cognitive skills development, vocational and employment training, and other programs that help to	Substance Abuse Treatment is available and can vary with Residential, Intensive Outpatient, and Outpatient Treatment. The Learning Centers offer an array of subjects like, GED, College courses, Cognitive Skills, Lifestyles/Cognitive Skills, Group Counseling, Yoga, Prison	**Fully in compliance**

meet the assessed needs of each individual;	Education Project (Intro to Social Problems, Brain Sciences), Toastmasters. The Correctional Industries employs landscaping and canteen positions within the facilities. WorkHawaii offers job readiness services to those who are maxing out or paroling and services continue in the community. Goodwill also offers job readiness services for those on parole and furlough. The Child Support Enforcement Agency holds meetings with offenders to discuss their individual cases with a solution for their monthly payments and back child support. Transforming Lives Reentry Class is available for those who are maxing out or paroling to learn about resources that are available in the community and how to access services. Housing is also explored for those who want to live a pro-social life, but do not have support. The Waikiki Health Center conducts Intake Services for offenders who are maxing out and paroling. They assist them in filling out their MedQuest applications and submits the paperwork on their behalf when the offender is released and reports to them. They also assist in filling out the SNAP and financial assistance applications and instructs the offender where to go to submit for processing. The Veterans Administration Outreach worker has held informational sessions and meets with veterans one on one to determine eligibility for VA benefits or housing. Community member volunteers provide backpacks with hygiene items, clothing, and bedding to offenders who are released.	
§353H-3(b)(3): Developing a comprehensive network of transitional programs to address the needs of	See response to §353H-3(b)(2) directly above.	**Fully in compliance**

individuals exiting the correctional system;		
§353H-3(b)(4): Ensuring that all reentry programs are gender-responsive;	All programs and services are offered for both the male and female offenders. When a new partnership or contractual prospect is explored, there is an emphasis on offering to both male and female offenders. Gender-responsive programs for women are available, including Pre-Transition Program and Total Life Recovery at WCCC, that address issues such as trauma, family relationships, and domestic violence. The complete list of these programs and descriptions are found on DCRs website, along with a copy of the annual Report to the Legislature in Response to §367D-008 Gender Responsive Community-Based Programs for Women.	**Mostly <u>not</u> in compliance—** Although the Commission appreciates the program offerings, most—although not all—are general programs available to both women and men. This is gender-inclusive. This statute, however, mandates gender-responsiveness, which involves tailored programming, staff training, and reentry policies designed to address the unique needs, trauma histories, and reentry challenges of women, men, and gender-diverse individuals. Gender-responsiveness emphasizes equity and extends beyond merely offering programs, ensuring that all individuals receive the appropriate and effective support they need.
§353H-3(b)(5): Issuing requests for proposals from community-based nonprofit programs with experience with offenders in the area of reentry; and	Contracts and proposals have been offered by the RCO with providers who are experienced in working with offenders. The contracts include housing, therapeutic living communities, domestic violence programming, job readiness, and repairing family relationships.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-3(b)(6): Instituting model reentry programs for adult offenders.	Together with healthcare, education, substance abuse treatment, correctional industries, and reentry there continues to be collaborative effort to work towards this.	**Not in Compliance—**no current model programs included.

<u>Summary of HCSOC Analysis of §353H-3</u>

Although the Department published the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (CORP) in 2019, it has not been substantively updated since the transition from the Department of Public Safety to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on January 1, 2024. The mission, goals, guiding principles, reentry process, strategies for success, actions, and performance measures should be different for a department focused on a rehabilitative model of corrections such as DCR than those under the previous Department of Public Safety.

It should be noted that the CORP established strong guiding principles, goals, action steps, and performance measures for effective reentry under the Department of Public Safety, however, the plan has not been translated into action or outcomes at the facility or individual levels, resulting in significant gaps in practice.

For example, the CORP outlines seven action steps for implementing the CORP, six of the seven remain unfulfilled in practices:

Action Step #1 Identify Existing Programs:
Identify all current reentry programs, services, treatments, and practices from intake to discharge.
Fulfilled

Action Step #2 Evaluate Program Effectiveness:
Evaluate existing programs to determine which are effective for successful reentry and which are ineffective.
Unfulfilled

Action Step #3 Improve and Eliminate Programs:
Based on evaluation data, decide which programs to eliminate, replace, improve, or maintain throughout all facilities, addressing any gaps in services with evidence-based practices (EBPs).
Unfulfilled

Action Step #4 Provide Staff Training:
Coordinate and implement training in EBPs for staff statewide to ensure continuous quality improvement, with a focus on mental health, trauma, and shifting the culture toward rehabilitation.
Unfulfilled

Action Step #5 Collaborative Working Group for Special Populations:
Form and co-chair a working group to address the special needs of infirmed and aging individuals being paroled or released, partnering with various organizations such as the Hawaii Paroling Authority, Department of Health, and community providers.
Unfulfilled

Action Step #6 Reentry Coalition:
Form a Reentry Coalition to raise community awareness and support, advocate for volunteerism, increase housing and job opportunities, and ensure medical and mental health services are available for individuals with special needs.
Unfulfilled

Action Step #7 Quality Improvement Plan:
Establish a continuous quality improvement plan, driven by data, to address gaps and ensure long-term sustainability of the reentry process programs and improving or replacing ineffective ones.
Unfulfilled

§353H-3(b) mandates that reentry begins on the first day of incarceration, with assessments conducted to determine individual needs and link individuals with programs to support reintegration. However, the operational philosophy that reentry begins on day one has not been consistently implemented across facilities. While individuals on the felony side are assessed upon entry and connected to skills and programs based on their identified needs, many—particularly

those with long sentences—experience delays for years before accessing the required programs identified during their assessments.

Additionally, independent evaluations of these programs have not been conducted or provided, making it unclear whether they are effective or meet the needs of the population. In jails, the HCSOC has observed and reported on significant concerns, including excessive idle time, insufficient out-of-cell opportunities, and limited access to programs, recreation, and reentry resources. These gaps indicate that the reentry practices required by statute are not being effectively implemented.

§353H-3(b)(4) requires that all reentry programs be gender-responsive, addressing the unique needs and experiences of individuals based on their gender. Gender-responsiveness requires that programs address the specific needs, challenges, and pathways to incarceration for different genders, including tailored programming or policies that account for gender-specific factors such as trauma histories and the distinct reentry challenges faced by women, men, or gender-diverse individuals. Additionally, it necessitates staff training, program evaluations, and policies to ensure programs are inclusive and equitable, particularly for transgender or non-binary individuals, along with strategies to ensure programs are truly gender-responsive by addressing safety, dignity, and access to gender-appropriate services and resources.

Determination: Partially Implemented – Significant Gaps Remain.

- A copy of DCR's *Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan* (CORP) is attached to Appendix C-2 and the Reentry Checklist is attached at Appendix C-1 of this report.

§353H-4 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Model Programs; Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Model programs; Subject to funding by the legislature, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall enhance the State's comprehensive offender reentry system by developing model programs designed to reduce recidivism and promote successful reentry into the community. Components of the model programs shall include but are not limited to:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-4(1): Highly skilled staff who are experienced in working with offender reentry programs;	DCR did not include skill level or experience in response.	**Not in Compliance**
§353H-4(2): Individualized case management and a full continuum of care to ensure successful reentry;	DCR offers several programs, including the Case Manager Quick Guide, which provides resources for housing, substance abuse treatment, and job services. The Waikiki Health Center provides intake services at various facilities, helping with MedQuest, SNAP, and financial	**Mostly <u>not</u> in compliance**—While the Waikiki Health Center Intake Services provides essential reentry support, it fails to meet the legislative components for model programs, including individualized case management and a full continuum of care to

	aid applications, as well as medical services and post-release support through Hawaii Cares. DCR employs and contracts with licensed and certified staff to administer these programs.	ensure successful reentry. Standard reentry programs and services, although important, should not be mistaken for the model programs outlined in the statute. Additionally, throughout this report, the HCSOC has identified concerns with the Case Manager Quick Guide, as such, it does not meet the model program standards set forth in the legislation.
§353H-4(3): Life skills development workshops, including budgeting, money management, nutrition, and exercise; development of self-determination through education; employment training; special education for the learning disabled; social, cognitive, communication, and life skills training; and appropriate treatment programs, including substance abuse and mental health treatment;	DCR a complete list of programs can be found on their website, and programs include multiple education opportunities; employment training such as Culinary Arts, Forklift Certification, Carpentry Apprenticeship, and services through the American Job Center Program; Yoga, Cognitive Skills; Aztec Life Skills; Toastmasters; substance abuse treatment (Kashbox, Ke Alaula, Intensive Outpatient, Outpatient Treatment), and substance abuse supportive networks such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous). Total Life Recovery includes courses in finances, time management, and Essential Education Web-based Software includes a course on money, computers, and work skills. DCR also continues to seek additional programs.	**Mostly <u>not</u> in compliance—** While the programs DCR provided are important for reentry efforts, most fail to meet the legislative components for <u>model programs</u>, which require skilled staff, individualized case management, life skills development, parenting and relationship building, and robust community support. Standard reentry programs and services, although important, should not be confused with the model programs outlined here. For example, tablet access is limited in housing units due to shared use. Therefore, this does not meet the model program standard set here. The HCSOC has highlighted and acknowledges the Community Resource Fairs listed in this section as a best practice throughout the report and continues to recommend their expansion and enhancement to support reentry efforts.
§353H-4(4): Parenting and relationship building classes. The department shall institute policies that support family cohesion and family participation in offenders' transition to the community, and, where possible, provide	DCR indicated available programs include Parenting After Violence, Family Education and Therapy, Kamalama Parenting, and Read-To-Me International. DCR also collaborates with nonprofit	**Mostly in compliance—** The HCSOC acknowledges Kids Day as a promising practice and recognizes the listed programs and collaborations supporting family relationships. However, the Commission also received reports that access to some of

geographical proximity of offenders to their children and families; and	organizations to host events like Kids Day.	these programs is limited, and participation data remains unclear.
§353H-4(5): Ongoing attention to building support for offenders from communities, community agencies, and organizations.	*Community Resource Fairs:* Fairs with over 50 service providers offering support in housing, job readiness, and substance abuse treatment. *Miscellaneous Initiatives*: Includes meetings with community service agencies and housing providers to establish support for individuals maxing out their sentences.	**Mostly in compliance—** The HCSOC has highlighted the Community Resource Fairs listed in this section as a Departmental highlight throughout this report and continues to recommend their expansion and enhancement to support reentry efforts. Additionally, the other initiatives listed require further context and structure to be model programs.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis of §353H-4:
The model programs referenced in this section of the legislation are designed to reduce recidivism by providing highly skilled staff, individualized case management, life skills and treatment programs, family support initiatives, and community engagement to facilitate successful reintegration.

While the programs DCR provided are important for reentry efforts, the programs listed do not align with the model program the components outlined in this section. This underscores the need for comprehensive and robust model programs as ongoing essential or basic programs should not be confused with the intended depth and structure of these *model* programs. Although it is important for DCR to have deep partnerships, the intention from the legislature through this statutory section is for DCR to develop and implement model programs with the components listed ensuring they meet the outlined standards for effectiveness and best practices.

***Determination**: Not Implemented - Actions Required*

§353H-5 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Children of Incarcerated Parents; Families

The director of corrections and rehabilitation shall:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-5(1): Establish policies or rules that parent inmates be placed in correctional facilities, consistent with public safety and inmate security, in the best interest of the family, rather than on economic or administrative factors;	DCR confirmed there are no specific policies or rules addressing the interests of family or children, and placement of parents is based on classification. People in custody are not required to disclose if they have children.	**Not in compliance—** No policies or rules that parents be placed in facilities in the best interest of their children.

§353H-5(2): Consider as a factor an offender's capacity to maintain parent-child contact when making prison placements of offenders;	DCR confirmed placement of parents is based on classification.	**Not in compliance**—No consideration given to parent-child relationship in placement.
§353H-5(3): Conduct, coordinate, or promote research that examines the impact of a parent's incarceration on the well-being of the offender's child that shall include both direct contact with an offender's child, as well as reports of caregivers; and	DCR is not conducting or promoting research on the impact of parental incarceration due to lack of funding for such research.	**Not in compliance**—No research on the impact of parental incarceration.
§353H-5(4): Conduct, coordinate, or promote research that focuses on the relationship of incarcerated fathers with their children and the long-term impact of incarceration on fathers and their children.	DCR is not conducting or promoting research on the impact of parental incarceration due to lack of funding for such research.	**Not in compliance**—No research on long-term impact of incarceration on fathers and their children.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:

§353H-5 underscores the critical importance of preserving relationships between incarcerated parents and their children, acknowledging the profound impact incarceration has on families. Research demonstrates that maintaining family connections leads to better outcomes for both parents and children. Parental incarceration significantly harms children by disrupting their emotional well-being, educational progress, and social stability, often leaving them vulnerable to intergenerational cycles of involvement with the justice system. Meaningful contact with a parent can mitigate these negative effects and foster resilience.[3] For incarcerated individuals, strong family ties are associated with reduced recidivism rates and improved reintegration outcomes.[4]

The Department and Director of DCR have emphasized the importance of addressing generational incarceration in Hawaii. However, this section above raises concerns about whether sufficient efforts and resources are being dedicated to effectively fulfilling this commitment. Children must be given access to their incarcerated parents beyond limited family days at designated facilities.

Furthermore, in-person contact visitation has been shown to significantly lower recidivism rates and encourage positive behavior within correctional facilities.[5] While video visits can help maintain connections, research indicates they should complement, not replace, in-person visitation, as physical visits provide deeper emotional benefits and foster stronger bonds than virtual alternatives.[6] By prioritizing parent-child contact and conducting research on the effects of incarceration on families—particularly the dynamics of fathers and children—Hawaii can create policies and programs that address intergenerational impacts, promote family stability, and

[3] Vera Inst. of Just., *Children Suffer When Parents Are Imprisoned*, https://www.vera.org/news/children-suffer-when-parents-are-imprisoned (last visited Nov. 25, 2024).
[4] Minn. Dep't of Corr., *The Effects of Prison Visitation on Offender Recidivism* (2011), https://mn.gov/doc/assets/11-11MNPrisonVisitationStudy_tcm1089-272781.pdf.
[5] Prison Pol'y Initiative, *DOJ Study: Video Visitation in Prison Has Its Place but Shouldn't Replace In-Person Visits*, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2015/01/28/doj-study-video-visitation/ (last visited Nov. 25, 2024).
[6] *Id.*

enhance public safety by reducing the collateral consequences of incarceration on future generations.

This provision of the legislation remains unfulfilled.

***Determination**: Not Implemented - Actions Required*

§353H-6 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Employment of Ex-Offenders

Statutory Section	DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-6(a): The director of labor and industrial relations shall take the necessary steps to ensure offenders and ex-offenders are included and involved in utilizing state and private resources for employment and training opportunities as well as life skills and educational opportunities.	DCR and DLIR are not currently collaborating on developing tax incentives.	**Not in compliance**—DCR and DLIR are not currently collaborating to ensure access to state and private resources for employment, training, life skills, and education opportunities for current and former people in custody, as required.
§353H-6(b): The department of corrections and rehabilitation, with the assistance of the department of taxation and the department of labor and industrial relations, shall develop and propose for legislative consideration, tax incentives for employers who hire individuals who were formerly incarcerated.	DCR has not collaborated with the Departments of Taxation or DLIR to propose tax incentives for employers who hire individuals who were formerly incarcerated.	**Not in compliance**—DCR, Department of Taxation, and DLIR are not currently developing tax incentives for employers to hire formerly incarcerated individuals as required.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
§353H-6 underscores the critical role of employment in successful reentry and reducing recidivism by addressing the economic and social challenges faced by formerly incarcerated individuals. Employment provides financial stability, fosters a sense of purpose, and reduces the likelihood of recidivism, thereby contributing to public safety. By ensuring that people in custody and people reintegrating after a period of incarceration have access to state resources for training, education, and life skills development, this statute promotes workforce readiness and supports long-term reintegration.

Additionally, the provision to develop tax incentives for employers who hire formerly incarcerated individuals recognizes the importance of reducing stigma and creating pathways to employment. These measures also offer significant benefit to the broader community by addressing critical workforce shortages in Hawaii. With many vacancies government and private sector work, creating opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals to fill these roles can provide a prepared workforce, bolster economic growth, promote financial stability, and the opportunity to create a different future. Research indicates that gainful employment not only lowers recidivism

rates but also strengthens community stability and public safety.[7] It should be noted that the criteria to hire created by other agencies is not DCR's responsibility, however, tax incentives and working collaboratively can still make a difference for employer's to consider hiring those who have been previously incarcerated.

This provision of the legislation (**§353H-6**) remains unfulfilled.

Determination: *Not Implemented - Actions Required*

§353H-7 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Return of Out-of-State Inmates

Statutory Section	DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-7(a): The director of corrections and rehabilitation shall return Hawaii inmates held in out-of-state prisons at least one year prior to the inmate's parole or release date in order for these inmates to participate in programs preparing them for reentry on the island where they have the most support; provided that inmates participating in reentry programs at the mainland facility in which they are incarcerated consent to the return. (b) The provisions of subsection (a) shall not prevent the return of other Hawaii inmates held in out-of-state prisons with less than one year left of their sentence from being returned in preparation for reentry to the island where they have the most support.	From November 2022 to October 2023, 294 individuals (47%) were returned to Hawaii for parole, sex offender treatment, or work furlough participation within the required timeframe. While 331 individuals (53%) who are within one year of their parole hearing date were not returned in that same timeframe. DCR noted that transfers are based on classification, individual needs, resources, and public safety and are outlined in DCR's *Transfer of Adult Inmates* policy. The policy does not specify that individuals be returned to Hawaii one year prior to release.	**Mostly not in compliance**— More than 50% of individuals within one year of their parole hearing date were not returned to Hawaii to engage in reentry programs on the island where they have the most support. Further, DCR's own policy on transfers does not specify that individuals be returned to Hawaii one year prior to release.
(c) The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall provide a report to the legislature at the end of each calendar year on any inmates not returned pursuant to this section with an explanation of the reasoning and circumstances for noncompliance.	See chart below detailing reasons for the 331 individuals not returned to Hawaii one year prior to their parole or release date, as required in subsection (a) of this statute.	**Fully in compliance**

[7] Urban Inst., *From Prison to Work: The Employment Dimensions of Prisoner Reentry* (2008), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/58126/411097-From-Prison-to-Work.PDF; Nat'l Inst. of Just., *A New Look at the Employment and Recidivism Relationship Through the Lens of a Criminal Background Check* (2016), https://nij.ojp.gov/library/publications/new-look-employment-and-recidivism-relationship-through-lens-criminal.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis: Partially Implemented

§353H-7 requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to bring people in custody back from out-of-state facilities (AZSC) at least one year before their parole or release date to facilitate reentry preparation in Hawaii. From November 2022 to October 2023, 294 *qualified*[8] people in custody were returned to Hawaii within one year of their parole or release date, while 331 of this same group—those within one year of their parole or release hearing date—were not returned. Resulting in a **47% return rate** and a **53% non-return rate**.

Reason Individual in Custody has not been Returned to Hawaii	Number
Non-compliance in programs (i.e. Refuse programs, termination of programs) resulting in Medium Custody	97
High/Greatest category misconducts within last 18 months resulting in Medium Custody	135
Escape history within past 7 years from community/minimum custody facility, resulting in higher custody level	19
Detainers (i.e. Immigration, Federal, State) that precludes minimum custody housing	24
Refuse to work furlough programs & parole; wants to max out resulting in Medium Custody	51
Pending parole release to another state other than Hawaii (Interstate)	5
Pending available bed space at furlough program	0
TOTAL	331

The primary reasons cited for not returning the 331 people in custody include program non-compliance, severe misconduct within the past 18 months, detainers that restrict minimum custody housing, and refusal to participate in work furlough programs or parole, with some individuals opting to max out their sentences. However, the HCSOC notes, even individuals in medium custody could be returned to HCF in Hawaii, bringing them closer to family and reentry resources.

This elevated non-return rate underscores the statute's intent to ensure the return of people in custody to Hawaii in alignment with statutory reentry preparation requirements. Additionally, the HCSOC frequently observes a culture that assumes people in custody are inherently unmotivated or resistant to programs. To facilitate a transition toward a corrections and rehabilitation model, a corresponding cultural shift is essential—one that acknowledges the potential for growth, healing, and successful reintegration.

DCR is fulfilling the report requirements outlined in **§353H-7(c)**.

Determination: *Partially Implemented – Significant Gaps Remain*

[8] "Qualified" status was determined by DCR based on completion of all recommended programs, absence of misconduct, and assignment to minimum custody levels.

- ❖ DCR *Annual Report on the Return of Out-of-State Inmates*, in response to Act 8, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007, Special Session, Part 1, Section 7(c) is attached at Appendix C-3(i) and DCR Policy Statement, *Transfer of Adult Inmates*, Policy No. Cor.18.08, dated June 14, 2021 is attached at Appendix C-3(ii) of this report

§353H-8 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Performance Indicator Reporting

(a) The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall develop performance measures that accurately reflect progress toward specific goals, including:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response[9]	Commission Determination
§353H-8(a)(1): Improving recidivism rates;	The 2019 Hawaii Recidivism Update reported a 53.8% recidivism rate for the 2016 cohort. The DCR did not specify whether recidivism has improved or provide performance measures. Although, DCR did indicate that ICIS has a current recidivism study and the results are expected to be posted in 2025.	**Not in compliance**— It is not clear if recidivism has improved. Additionally, in DCR's full response, the listed programs are not performance measures.
§353H-8(a)(2): Decreasing prisoner assaults on correctional staff;	From November 1, 2022, through October 31, 2023, statewide correctional facilities reported an increase in assaults on staff, with 39 assaults on staff by people in custody reported during this period. The HCSOC reviewed the Department's 2023 Annual Report which indicates, from November 1, 2021, through October 31, 2022, statewide correctional facilities reported 12 assaults on staff by people in custody.	**Not in compliance**— Based on the Fiscal Year 2023 annual reporting requirements, it is not clear if assaults on correctional staff have decreased. However, the HCSOC reviewed the Fiscal Year 2022 annual report, which indicated that assaults on correctional staff increased more than three-fold from Fiscal Year 2022 to Fiscal Year 2023.
§353H-8(a)(3): Reducing correctional staff turnover;	DCR is dealing with high turnover rates and has implemented expedited hiring and recruitment strategies.	**Not in compliance**— It is not clear if the DCR has reduced correctional staff turnover. The response

[9] The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report as a response to this question. The Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report is attached at Appendix D-1 in this report

		does not include performance measures/metrics.
§353H-8(a)(4): Improving departmental efficiencies in staffing, budgeting, and data management and analysis.	DCR noted that they have relied on emergency hiring and excessive overtime to manage staff shortages.	**Not in compliance**— It is unclear if DCR has improved deficiencies in staffing, budgeting, and data management and analysis. This response doesn't include performance measures/metrics.

§353H-8(b) *The department shall develop key performance indicators, which shall include:*

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response[10]	Commission Determination
§353H-8(b)(1): The number of individuals enrolled in and who have completed a general education diploma or competency-based diploma;	During Fiscal Year 2023, there were 35 High School Equivalency diploma recipients: 33 GED graduates and 2 High School Equivalency Test graduates.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(2): The number of individuals for whom a reentry plan is filed and the number of individuals who exit jail or prison with a reentry plan;	During Fiscal Year 2023, 3,101 individuals had reentry plans filed—1,608 in jails and 1,493 in prisons—and 608 individuals were released with a reentry plan—134 from jails and 474 from prisons.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(3): Drug test failure rates of inmates while incarcerated and while on parole;	During Fiscal Year 2023, 10.4% of people in custody failed/tested positive for targeted substances, 393 urine specimens tested positive out of a total of 7,737 collected. Between November 1, 2022, and October 31, 2023, 6% (458 out of 7,522) of urine specimens collected by PSD state-wide tested positive for targeted substances. For individuals on parole during this same timeframe, 2.4% positive tests, 436 positive urinalysis tests based on an average monthly parole population of 1,086.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(4): The number of inmates currently enrolled in and	During Fiscal Year 2023, PSD enrolled approximately 627 individuals in custody (363 in	**Fully in compliance**

[10] All of these responses are for fiscal year 2023, this information was pulled directly from DCRs reporting requirements to the legislature.

who have completed drug treatment programs provided by the department of corrections and rehabilitation;	Hawaii and 264 in Saguaro) into substance abuse treatment programs, with about 347, or 55%, completing the program requirements.	
§353H-8(b)(5): The number of inmates currently enrolled in and who have completed restorative circles;	During Fiscal Year 2023, Six women at WCCC who completed the Restorative Justice Huikahi Circle.	**Mostly in compliance**—Although the number of women who completed restorative justice circles is included, the number enrolled is not.
§353H-8(b)(6): The number of parolees who have applied for a reduction of their minimum sentence, the number of applications approved and denied, and, when applicable, the reasons for the denial of a parolee's application;	During Fiscal Year 2023, in terms of reduction of minimums, 142 individuals in custody applied for a reduction of their minimum sentence; 19 were approved, and 123 were denied, resulting in a 13% approval rate. The primary reason for denial was that the minimum sentences were deemed appropriate.	**Mostly in compliance**—All reasons for denial, not just the primary reason, must be tracked and reported.
§353H-8(b)(7): The number of parole revocation hearings and the results of parole revocation hearings that, when applicable, explain why the parolees' revocation was denied;	During Fiscal Year 2023, Out of 348 parole revocation hearings, 203 were approved—resulting in parole being revoked—while 44 were denied. The primary reason for denial was that the parolee was deemed appropriate to return to the community on parole.	**Mostly in compliance**—All reasons for denial, not just the primary reason, must be tracked and reported.
§353H-8(b)(8): The cost of incarceration per inmate, per day, per facility;	During Fiscal Year 2023, The average daily cost per person in custody is $253.00.	**Mostly not in compliance**—The legislation requests a breakdown per facility, not just system-wide.
§353H-8(b)(9): Offender demographics, including gender, race, age, and type of offense;	For calendar year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment A, p. 163 –164, which is attached at Appendix D-2 of this report. The HCSOC created two charts to fulfill the annual reporting requirement: one showing the total population and the other breaking down the population by ethnicity. These charts are located in Appendix F-1 Population Data and Appendix F-2 Ethnicity Breakdown.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(10): The number of individuals	During Fiscal Year 2023, a total of 727 Career and Technical Education	**Mostly not in compliance**—

who received vocational training or rehabilitation services and type of vocational training or rehabilitation services received;	(CTE) program participants, with 419 participants (57%) completing the programs. These programs included Sustainable Crop Production - Agricultural Technician, Construction Trades - Carpentry, Forklift Operator Training, Forklift Simulation Training, ServSafe, Culinary Arts Program, Digital Literacy, Keyboarding, Blender 3-D Animation, Altino Coding, TEAM WorkHawaii, and Goodwill Job Readiness Services.	The information provided requires further breakdown. It must specify who received what, along with the number of individuals who passed. The current format combines distinct data points that need to be separated for clarity and accuracy.
§353H-8(b)(11): The total number of inmate intakes, by month, including the number of intakes each month within the past year and past five years;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the total number of intakes was 6,760 people, including 5,426 male releases and 1,334 female releases. The response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year Annual Report, Attachment B, p. 165, which is attached at Appendix D-3 of this report. The HCSOC compiled a chart illustrating the data included in the annual reporting requirement, this chart can be found at Appendix F-3.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(12) The total number of inmates released, by month;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the total number of releases was 7,530 people, including 5,608 males released, and 1,922 female releases. The response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment C, p. 165, which is attached at Appendix D-4 of this report. The HCSOC compiled a chart illustrating the data included in the annual reporting requirement, this chart can be found at Appendix F-4.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(13): The number of inmates with substance abuse problems, including the type of dependence or addiction, and the number of inmates	Between November 1, 2022, and October 31, 2023, approximately 627 individuals—363 in Hawaii and 264 at Saguaro Correctional Facility—participated in substance abuse treatment programs, with 347	**Not in compliance**— The statute requires the number of people in custody with substance use problems, not for treatment and programming numbers.

with no reported substance abuse problems;	participants (55%) completing the program requirements.	
§353H-8(b)(14): The median length of incarceration, excluding inmates who have received life sentences or been paroled;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment D, p. 166 – 169, which is attached at Appendix D-5 of this report.	**Mostly in compliance**— While the required information is included, the large amount of information is not clearly presented, and the acronyms used are undefined, making it difficult for readers to understand.
§353H-8(b)(15): The prison population forecast for the next decade;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the Hawaii Department of Public Safety 2023 annual report did not include a population projection due to COVID-19-related population reductions. Previous years' projections indicate that the DCR population is expected to consistently decrease, with a projected population of 4,477 by 2030.	**Not in compliance—** No current population projection included.
§353H-8(b)(16): The total number of pretrial detainees and the number of pretrial detainees admitted each month by type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment E, p. 171 – 176, which is attached at Appendix D-6 of this report. The HCSOC compiled a chart illustrating the data included in the annual reporting requirement—*Pretrial Detainees by Race and Ethnicity*—this chart can be found at Appendix F-5.	**Mostly not in compliance**— Attachment E includes the total number of monthly intakes broken down by ethnicity and custody status—pretrial felon, pretrial misdemeanant, pretrial petty misdemeanant, and missing. Attachment E does not include the total number of pretrial detainees or the number of pretrial detainees admitted each month by bail amount, risk assessed, gender, or age. Also a further breakdown of crimes, beyond pretrial felon, pretrial misdemeanant, and pretrial petty misdemeanant is missing.
§353H-8(b)(17): The number of pretrial detainees released or discharged each month and the reason for the release or discharge by type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment F, p. 177 – 182, which is attached at Appendix D-7 of this report.	**Mostly not in compliance**— Attachment F includes ORAS, a commonly used risk assessment, scores broken down by month and ethnic group numbers—assumedly, pretrial detainees. This does not include the number of pretrial detainees released or discharged each month and the reason for the release or discharge

		by type of crime, bail amount, gender, race, and age. Also, looking specifically at the July 2022 numbers, of the total 518 risk assessments provided, 174 (33.6%) fall under "0," indicating no assessed risk level due to incomplete assessments. This high proportion of unassessed risk highlights a critical gap.
§353H-8(b)(18): The average length of stay for pretrial detainees by reason for release or discharge, type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment G, p. 183 –200, which is attached at Appendix D-8 of this report.	**Mostly <u>not</u> in compliance**—The section requests data on the average length of stay for pretrial detainees across specified categories. While Attachment G includes crime severity, bail amount, and age categorized by ethnicity, the average length of stay is not included or clearly identified. Additionally, required categories such as reasons for release or discharge, risk assessed, and gender are fully absent.
§353H-8(b)(19): The number of pretrial detainees held on cash bail by type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, p. 29 – 30, which is attached at Appendix D-9 of this report.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-8(b)(20): The average amount of time for completing and verifying pretrial risk assessment by type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age; and	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Appendix C-7, p. 31 – 32, which is attached at Appendix D-10 of this report.	**Mostly in compliance**— The average time for completing and verifying pretrial risk assessments is included and broken down by type of crime, bail amount, gender, and race. The risk assessed category is missing, and the age categories are incorrect and unclear. For example, the age groups are listed as 0, 1 to 99, 100 to 499, 500 to 999, 1,000 to 4,999, 5,000 to 9,999, etc.
§353H-8(b)(21): The number of pretrial detainees readmitted by reason for release, reason for readmission, type of crime, bail amount, risk assessed, gender, race, and age	For Fiscal Year 2023, the Hawaii Department of Public Safety's Annual Report noted that the Department/DCR did not receive data from the Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center (HCJDC) by the report's release date.	**Not in compliance**—the requested data was not reported on.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:

For *(a) performance measures that accurately reflect progress toward specific goals*, while DCR's response includes valuable strategies, programs, and partnerships, these differ from *performance measures* as included by the legislature in this section. Listing programs or initiatives alone does not constitute a performance measure, as it does not evaluate or measure the effectiveness, efficiency, or outcomes of those programs. To qualify as a performance measure, the information must include associated metrics or outcomes that provide measurable insight. For example, performance measures could include the number of participants enrolled in each program, the completion rates, the percentage of participants securing employment after completing vocational training, or the reduction in recidivism rates among program participants. By incorporating these metrics, the data moves beyond a simple list to provide meaningful evaluations of program success. Defining performance measures involve establishing specific, quantifiable indicators to assess a program's effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. This distinction is crucial, as performance measures allow for a structured evaluation of success and highlight areas for improvement over time.

Reporting requirements under §353H-8(b) reveals areas where program completion rates and access to reentry opportunities could be strengthened.

- Subsections (4) and (10) highlight that drug treatment and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs report completion rates of 55% and 57%, respectively, indicating opportunity to investigate barriers to and how to increase completion rates.

- Subsection (5) indicates only six people, all women at WCCC, participated in the Restorative Justice Huikahi Circle, offering the opportunity to expand restorative justice practices at WCCC and other facilitates.

- For sentence reduction applications under subsection (6), 142 individuals in custody applied for a reduction in their minimum sentence, with only 19 approvals, reflecting a 13% approval rate. This low rate, largely due to determinations that existing minimums are appropriate, is particularly concerning because Hawaii doesn't offer good time credit for programs, making this sentence reduction application process the sole avenue for parolees to seek early release based on their participation in rehabilitative progress.

Overall, these indicators emphasize the need for targeted improvements in program accessibility and completion, as well as more pathways for sentence reduction, to foster stronger reentry outcomes.

Determination: *Partially Implemented – Additional Actions Required*

§353H-9 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Annual Reporting Requirements

(a) For each program established pursuant to this chapter, the department shall submit a report to the legislature no later than the first day of December each year, beginning with the period ending on November 30, 2018. Each report shall reference key performance indicators that track rehabilitation and reentry efforts for individuals being prepared to exit the correctional system. The report shall also include:

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response[11]	Commission Determination
§353H-9(a)(1): A complete list of programs offered;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, p. 27 and Attachment H, p. 201, which provides a link to In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory, which are attached at Appendix D-11 of this report.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-9(a)(2): The length of each program;	For Fiscal Year 2023, the number of hours or length of time for programs is included in the In Facility-Programs and Services Inventory.	**Mostly in compliance**— The lengths of most programs are provided; however, the durations for several programs, including all those at the Federal Detention Center are marked as "TBD."
§353H-9(a)(3): Each program's success rate, including the percentage of participant completion in the previous two years;	There was a total of seven hundred twenty-seven (727) Career and Technical Education training (CTE) program participants, four hundred nineteen (419) of them, or 57% completed the programs. These account for participants in programs such as: Sustainable Crop Production- Ag. Technician, Construction Trades-Carpentry, Fork-lift Operator Training, Forklift Simulation Training, ServSafe (Safety and Sanitation), Culinary Arts Program, Digital Literacy, Keyboarding, Blender 3-D Animation, Altino Coding, TEAM WorkHawaii, and Goodwill Job Readiness Services.	**Mostly not in compliance**— Although an overall completion rate is included for all CTE programs, this section requests a success rate for each program.
§353H-9(a)(4): A description of participant criteria assessed by the program for admittance;	The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report and the Hawaii Department of Corrections and	**Not in compliance**— There is no description of participant criteria included.

[11] The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report as a response to this question.

	Rehabilitation In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.	
§353H-9(a)(5): The number of available positions with each program;	The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report and the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.	**Not in compliance**— The number of available positions within each program was not included.
§353H-9(a)(6): The number of potential participants on waiting lists;	The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report and the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.	**Not in compliance**— The number of potential participants on waiting lists; was not included.
§353H-9(a)(7): The number of participants who do not complete the program;	There was a total of 727 Career and Technical Education training program participants, 419 of them, or 57% completed the programs.	**Mostly not in compliance**— The specific number of individuals who do not complete each program was requested, but only a general number for all CTE programs was provided.
§353H-9(a)(8): A summary of reasons why participants do not complete a program;	The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report and the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.	**Not in compliance**— A summary of reasons why participants do not complete each program is not included.
§353H-9(a)(9): A complete list of programs that are no longer offered and explanations for termination of the programs.	The HCSOC was directed to the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report and the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.	**Not in compliance**— Programs no longer offered and accompanying explanations are not included in the reporting.
§353H-9(b): The department shall also submit a report, including all of the key performance indicators provided under this chapter, to the legislature no later than the first day of December each year, beginning with the period ending on November 30, 2018.	For Fiscal Year 2023, the response for this subsection is included in the Hawaii Department of Public Safety Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, Attachment H, p. 201, which is attached at Appendix D-12 of this report.	**Not in compliance**— A report to the Legislature including all key performance indicators couldn't be located in the annual report.
§353H-9(c): The department shall also post the reports electronically on the department's website in a timely manner.	The Department posts its annual report with these reporting requirements on the department's website.	**Mostly in compliance**— Although DCR posts the annual report on its website, some reporting requirements are not included.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
The Commission was directed to the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, including page 27 and Attachment G. DCR also provided the In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory.

The In-Facility Programs & Services Inventory for fiscal year 2023 includes a complete list of programs offered and most program lengths. However, the report does not comply with the other reporting requirements put forward by the Legislature—program success rates, participant completion percentages, participant criteria for admittance, available positions, the number and reason for participants non-completions, and discontinued programs.

The section specifically requests the annual reporting measures for each program established pursuant to **Chapter 353H**, the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System, along with a report to the legislature. This requirement is designed to reference key performance indicators that track reentry efforts for individuals being prepared to exit the correctional system. However, these omissions prevent a thorough evaluation of program performance and departmental success, as such data is critical for assessing outcomes, identifying areas for improvement, and ensuring alignment with the Department's reentry and rehabilitation goals.

Determination: *Partially Implemented – Additional Actions Required*

§353H-31 of Hawaii Revised Statutes: Adult Offender Reentry Programs and Services

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-31(a): The director of corrections and rehabilitation may authorize purchase of service contracts, in accordance with chapter 103F, subject to legislative or other appropriate funding, for adult offender reentry programs and services that establish or improve the offender reentry system and in which each adult offender in state correctional custody is provided an individualized reentry plan.	See chart in the section *Contracts with Community Service Providers* on page 58 of this document.	**Fully in compliance**

§353H-31(b) *Subject to funding by the legislature or other appropriate sources, the department of corrections and rehabilitation shall authorize the purchase of service contracts for activities that:*

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-31(b)(1): Coordinate the supervision and services provided to adult offenders in state custody with the supervision and services provided to offenders who have reentered the community;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.

§353H-31(b)(2): Coordinate efforts of various public and private entities to provide supervision and services to ex-offenders after reentry into the community with the offenders' family members;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(3): Provide offenders awaiting reentry into the community with documents, such as identification papers, referrals to services, medical prescriptions, job training certificates, apprenticeship papers, information on obtaining public assistance, and other documents useful in achieving a successful transition from prison;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(4): Involve county agencies whose programs and initiatives strengthen offender reentry services for individuals who have been returned to the county of their jurisdiction;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(5): Allow ex-offenders who have reentered the community to continue to contact mentors who remain incarcerated through the use of technology, such as videoconferencing, or encourage mentors in prison to support the ex-offenders' reentry process;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(6): Provide structured programs, post-release housing, and transitional housing, including group homes for recovering substance abusers, through which offenders are provided supervision and services immediately following reentry into the community;	Makana O Ke Akua (Moka), Clean & sober housing for males (Oahu), Women In Need (Win), Clean & sober housing for females (Oahu), The Salvation Army - Intensive Outpatient & Continuing Care Substance Abuse Treatment Program for Moderate Risk people in custody (Oahu), Therapeutic Living Program- Hina Mauka: Transitional housing for female furloughees and females paroling from furlough. Contract from 8/1/24 to 7/31/27, Therapeutic Living Program- BISAC: Transitional housing for	**Fully in compliance**

	female furloughees and females paroling from furlough. Contract from 8/1/24 to 7/31/27 (Big Island), Therapeutic Living Program- Aloha House: Transitional housing for female furloughees and females paroling from furlough. Contract from 8/1/24 to 7/31/27 (Maui), The Salvation Army - Outpatient & Continuing Care Substance Abuse Treatment for Male & Female people in custody (Statewide). See chart on page 58 of this report for additional information.	
§353H-31(b)(7): Assist offenders in securing permanent housing upon release or following a stay in transitional housing;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(8): Continue to link offenders with health resources for health services that were provided to them when they were in state custody, including mental health, substance abuse treatment, aftercare, and treatment services for contagious diseases;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(9): Provide education, job training, English as a second language programs, work experience programs, self-respect and life-skills training, and other skills needed to achieve self-sufficiency for a successful transition from prison;	Goodwill - Job placement, support services assistance (Statewide). See the chart on page 58 for additional information.	**Fully in compliance**
§353H-31(b)(10): Facilitate collaboration among corrections administrators, technical schools, community colleges, and the workforce development and employment service sectors so that there are efforts to: (A) Promote, where appropriate, the employment of persons	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.

released from prison, through efforts such as educating employers about existing financial incentives, and facilitate the creation of job opportunities, including transitional jobs, for such persons that will also benefit communities; (B) Connect offenders to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release to the community; and (C) Address barriers to employment, including obtaining a driver's license;		
§353H-31(b)(11): Assess the literacy and educational needs of offenders in custody and provide appropriate services to meet those needs, including follow-up assessments and long-term services;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(12): Address systems under which family members of offenders are involved with facilitating the successful reentry of those offenders into the community, including removing obstacles to the maintenance of family relationships while the offender is in custody, strengthening the family's capacity to establish and maintain a stable living situation during the reentry process where appropriate, and involving family members in the planning and implementation of the reentry process;	The Salvation Army - Family Therapy and Counseling Services for Bridge Furlough Program on Oahu; for people in custody that completed residential or outpatient treatment (OCCC & WCCC).	**Mostly <u>not</u> in compliance**— the contract provided by DCR supports strengthening family capacity during the reentry process, but does not address removing obstacles to maintaining family relationships or involving family members in reentry planning and implementation. Its scope is further limited to two facilities and primarily focused on women. Although this program is thoughtful and designed to fulfill a critical need, it does not meet all the requirements of this statute.
§353H-31(b)(13): Include victims, on a voluntary basis, in the offender's reentry process;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(14): Facilitate visitation and maintenance of family relationships with respect to offenders in custody by addressing obstacles such as travel, telephone costs, mail restrictions, and restrictive visitation policies;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.

§353H-31(b)(15): Identify and address barriers to collaborating with child welfare agencies in the provision of services jointly to offenders in custody and to the children of those offenders;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(16): Collect information, to the best of the department's ability, regarding dependent children of incarcerated persons as part of intake procedures, including the number of children, age, and location or jurisdiction for the exclusive purpose of connecting identified children of incarcerated parents with appropriate services and compiling statistical information;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts exist in this category, and the Department is not currently collecting information on children as required.
§353H-31(b)(17): Address barriers to the visitation of children with an incarcerated parent, and maintenance of the parent-child relationship, such as the location of facilities in remote areas, telephone costs, mail restrictions, and visitation policies;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(18): Create, develop, or enhance prisoner and family assessments curricula, policies, procedures, or programs, including mentoring programs, to help prisoners with a history or identified risk of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking reconnect with their families and communities, as appropriate, and become mutually respectful;	Keiki O Ka Aina (KOKA) - Domestic Violence Intervention, Domestic Violence Anger Management, Parenting After Violence, and Victim Support Services for Adult Women (Oahu), Ka Wehena o Ke 'Ao-University of Hawaii: Holistic approach with an emphasis on incarcerated individuals to take responsibility for their choices and provide the means to assist in the reparation or establishment of relationships with their families or other close relationships. Contract from 4/1/24 to 3/31/25 (Oahu), Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC) - Domestic Violence Intervention, Domestic Violence Anger	**Fully in compliance**

	Management, Parenting After Violence, and Victim Support Services for Adult Women (Big Island).	
§353H-31(b)(19) Develop programs and activities that support parent-child relationships, such as: (A) Using telephone conferencing to permit incarcerated parents to participate in parent-teacher conferences; (B) Using videoconferencing to allow virtual visitation when incarcerated persons are more than one hundred miles from their families; (C) Developing books on tape programs, through which incarcerated parents read a book into a tape to be sent to their children; (D) The establishment of family days, which provide for longer visitation hours or family activities; or (E) The creation of children's areas in visitation rooms with parent-child activities;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category. It should be noted that DCR does utilize videoconferencing for virtual visitations, offer opportunities for parents to record books on tape for their children at AZSC, and host family days at some facilities, although there are no contracts in place for these services.
§353H-31(b)(20): Expand family-based treatment centers that offer family-based comprehensive treatment services for parents and their children as a complete family unit;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(21): Conduct studies to determine who is returning to prison and which of those returning prisoners represent the greatest risk to community safety;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(22): Develop or adopt procedures to ensure that dangerous felons are not released from prison prematurely;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(23): Develop and implement procedures to assist relevant authorities in determining when release is appropriate and in the use of data to inform the release decision;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.

§353H-31(b)(24): Utilize validated assessment tools to assess the risk factors of returning offenders to the community and prioritizing services based on risk;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(25): Facilitate and encourage timely and complete payment of restitution and fines by ex-offenders to victims and the community;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(26): Consider establishing the use of reentry courts to: **(A)** Monitor offenders returning to the community;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
(B) Provide returning offenders with: (i) Drug and alcohol testing and treatment; and (ii) Mental and medical health assessment services;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
(C) Facilitate restorative justice practices and convene family or community impact panels, family impact educational classes, victim impact panels, or victim impact educational classes;	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
(D) Provide and coordinate the delivery of other community services to offenders, including: (i) Housing assistance; (ii) Education; (iii) Employment training; (iv) Children and family support; (v) Conflict resolution skills training; (vi) Family violence intervention programs; and (vii) Other appropriate social services; and	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
(E) Establish and implement graduated sanctions and incentives; and	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.
§353H-31(b)(27): Provide technology and other tools necessary to advance post-release supervision	No contracts.	**Not in compliance**— No contracts in this category.

Additional contract information included in the DCR Response:

Program	Service Provided	Location	Average Number of beds utilized	Contracted Beds	Comments
Makana O Ke Akua (MOKA)	Clean & sober housing for males	Oahu	70-80% furloughees & parolees	24	Only provides housing; are referred out for services.
Women In Need (WIN)	Clean & sober housing for females	Oahu	6/per month at each site	24	2 sites: Aiea (max: 12 beds) & Halawa (max: 12 beds).
Goodwill	Job placement, support services assistance	Statewide	#6-30 (dependent on county)		Clothing, work-related expenses, career planning, etc.; DLIR representative on site to assist with state-funded financial assistance.
Young Women's Christian Association of Oahu YWCA	Housing for Female Correctional Furloughees at WCCC	Oahu	On average 6 to 7 beds	14	As of December 2024, DCR does not pay for empty beds.

- DCR has no clean and sober beds for men, via contract, on any of the outer islands.
- People in custody in housing, who are in need of community/State financial services, are referred to GOODWILL.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
This section of the legislation is partially fulfilled. Under **§353H-31**, DCR shall authorize the 27 opportunities outlined in this section; however, contracts currently exist only for five of those 27 categories. Contracts supporting families in reintegration efforts are only available to women on Oahu, and domestic violence programs are only available to women on Oahu and Big Island. Leaving additional gaps for men and also the neighbor islands in contracts that do exist.

DCR did indicate upcoming contracts for peer mentors and navigators on Oahu. An Request for Information has been posted to support men in custody, with planning underway for female furlough participants and an Request for Information to be released soon. This is encouraging and the Commission will follow the progress of these and additional contracts and requests.

It should be noted that some of the categories listed could be undertaken internally prior to contract formalization. To conclude, DCR lacks contracts for, or has not requested funding for, the majority of the categories listed. These categories were thoughtfully and intentionally included by the Legislature to support reentry, reintegration, families, and healing, yet the absence of contracts or internal departmental focus undermines their intended impact and leads to missed opportunities for meaningful progress.

Determination: *Partially Implemented – Additional Actions Required*

§353H-32 Hawaii Revised Statutes: Offender Reentry; Identification Documents.

Statutory Section	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
§353H-32(a): The department, in collaboration with the department of transportation and the examiner of drivers of each county, shall inform inmates that departmental assistance is available to obtain civil identification cards, in accordance with part XVI of chapter 286, and upon request shall assist inmates who have one year or less prior to the inmate's parole or release date remaining on their prison sentence in obtaining a civil identification card.	HCF remains the only facility with the ID machine to date. The RCO is working with the DMV-IT and DCR-IT to get WCCC's networks ready to have the capabilities so they can alternate with HCF. Originally, the staff at HCF had been instructed to assist those who were maxing out, but recently they have been asked to assist those when they first arrive in the RAD Unit at HCF if they have less than 8 years left on their maximum sentence.	**Mostly not in compliance**—Although the HCSOC acknowledges DCR's ongoing collaboration with the DMV and efforts to expand ID processing capabilities at HCF and WCCC, it appears that the DCR is not consistently informing people in custody about the availability of assistance to obtain identification or prioritizing assistance for those with one year or less remaining before parole or release.
§353H-32(b): The department, in collaboration with appropriate federal, state, and county agencies, shall also inform inmates of the availability of departmental assistance to obtain the inmate's birth certificate, social security card, and any other relevant identification documents necessary for the inmate to transition into the workforce, access social services, secure or verify applicable Medicaid eligibility, and secure housing, and upon request shall assist the inmates who have one year or less prior to the inmate's parole or release date.	The DCR facilities have been making a greater effort in obtaining birth certificates for their offenders. The DCR recently received an MOU from the Social Security Administration, but only those who have a confirmed release date within 120 days qualify for it under the MOU. Because the SSA requires 6 weeks to process, those who have a confirmed parole release date would not qualify because their release date is usually set for 2 weeks out.	**Mostly not in compliance**—HCSOC acknowledges progress through DCR's MOU with the SSA, but further collaboration with federal, state, and county agencies is needed to facilitate access to birth certificates and other identification and expand support to cover the statutory one-year period prior to parole or release, as current efforts exclude those with less than six weeks and parolees who typically have only two weeks' notice due to SSA processing timelines. Also, it appears that the DCR is not consistently informing people in custody of available assistance.
§353H-32(c): For an inmate released to work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs, the department of corrections and rehabilitation shall initiate the process of assisting the inmate pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) at least	Work Furlough is the ideal place for offenders to obtain their State ID's and Social Security Cards because they can apply in person and are guided by their Case Managers as to which location and make the necessary appointments to obtain these documents.	**Mostly not in compliance**—Although the HCSOC is aware that some people in custody on furlough or in community placement are receiving IDs with the assistance of DCR, the response does not confirm that the required forms are provided at least 90 days prior to release

ninety days prior to the inmate being released by providing the forms necessary for the inmate to obtain civil identification cards to the inmate.		for those in work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs.
§353H-32(d): Any form the department provides pursuant to this section shall be in the inmate's primary language.	The forms are primarily in English, but the Social Security Administration offers interpreter services for languages beyond English and Spanish based on need. The DMV Application Forms are also in English, but they have the Hawaii Driver's Manual in English, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Hawaiian, Chinese, Chuukese, Ilocano, Marshallese, Samoan, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Another option is the facility will utilize interpreter services over the phone or hire an interpreter for in-person assistance. DCR will continue to work with partner agencies to meet legislative mandates. Other agency forms (Federal, State, County) are not within DCR's control. We are not authorized to alter their forms, and we do so, they could be rejected.	**Not in compliance**— The statute requires forms to be available in the people in custody's primary language. Forms primarily in English with reliance on interpreter services does not meet the statutory requirement. While DCR indicated they may not have authorization to alter external agency forms, proactive steps should be taken, such as establishing formal agreements or collaborative processes with partner agencies, to ensure that required forms are accessible and available in the primary language of the people in custody. The intent of this statute is essential for identification document.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:

First and foremost, the HCSOC acknowledges DCRs ongoing collaboration with the DMV and the efforts to expand ID processing capabilities at HCF and WCCC. The Commission recognizes that DCR staff members have dedicated a significant amount of time to this initiative.

While DCR has made progress in collaborating with agencies and facilitating access to identification documents, the Department has not fully met the statutory requirements under **§353H-32**. Significant gaps remain in informing people in custody about available assistance, prioritizing support for those within one year of release, adhering to prescribed timelines, and providing forms in the people in custody's primary language.

In addressing **§353H-32(b)**, DCR has made progress through an MOU with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to assist people in custody in obtaining Social Security cards. Despite this progress, further collaboration with federal, state, and county agencies is needed to streamline access to birth certificates and other relevant identification documents. The MOU limits eligibility to those with confirmed release dates within 120 days, excluding individuals with less than six weeks remaining and parolees who typically receive only two weeks' notice. This approach does

not align with the statutory requirement to assist people in custody *within the one-year period prior to parole or release*. Again, the HCSOC does not recommend discontinuing the use of the SSA MOU, but rather finding additional ways for expansion. Additionally, DCR does not consistently inform people in custody about the availability of this assistance, leaving a statutory obligation unmet.

Determination: Partially Implemented – Significant Gaps Remain

House and Senate Concurrent Resolutions

Below are House and Senate Concurrent Resolutions that align with the transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic corrections system. Given the Legislature's intent in passing the resolutions below, the Commission reviewed the status of the Department's progress toward achieving the outlined outcomes. The Commission determined that the DCR was in compliance with one resolution, mostly in compliance with one resolution, mostly not in compliance with two resolutions and not in compliance with one resolution.

Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1 (2023) and Senate Resolution 84 (2021)

Resolution Language	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1 (2023) Requesting the Department of Public Safety to submit a report to the legislature detailing the department's process in assisting people in custody in obtaining identification cards.	In June 2022, the PSD began processing applications for ID cards at the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF). At present, the specialized equipment/software that can connect to the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Motor Vehicle Licensing and Permits (DMVLP) Division's system is only available at the HCF. Summary of ID Card Assistance Program by PSD: • Total people in custody released since 2022, includes pre-trial, bail, parole, probation, end-of-sentence releases, males, and females statewide: 10,580 • Number of people in custody released with ID cards obtained with PSD Assistance: 150 • Number of people in custody who received a free ID card: 32 • Number of people in custody charged for an ID card who were not indigent: 118 The charges for non-indigent individuals: $40 for new cards, $6 for duplicates. All fees paid directly to the City & County of Honolulu. Eligibility Criteria: Individuals with a valid birth certificate can apply for a civil ID card.	**Fully in compliance** **Mostly not in compliance**— The low number of individuals released with ID cards obtained through DCR assistance, 150 and 32 at no cost, indicates that issues and barriers remain prevalent
Senate Resolution 84 (2021) Requesting the Department of Public Safety to correct issues and dismantle barriers relating to the provision of civil identification documents to and successful community reentry of inmates exiting incarceration.		

	Funding used by PSD to provide assistance in obtaining ID cards was $61,855, which included the following: • $15,575 for specialized equipment/software compatible with DMVLP Division's system • $10,000 for equipment to validate duplicate birth certificates • $1,280 for free ID cards (for 32 individuals) • $25,000 for satellite units • $10,000 for wiring, installation, and connectivity	

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Although the DCR is meeting the reporting requirements outlined in Senate Resolution 82 Senate Draft 1 (2022), the outcomes noted in the reporting are concerning and the tenants of Senate Resolution 84 (2021) remain unfulfilled.

Senate Resolution 82 Senate Draft 1 (2022) emphasizes the importance of providing individuals exiting incarceration with a valid identification card to support successful reentry. The Resolution indicated, in 2016, the Legislature allocated $25,000 to the Department to provide identification cards for people in custody, followed by a 2022 appropriation of $100,000 for equipment at each facility to implement this program. DCR reported that, of the 10,580 individuals released since 2022, 150 received ID cards with DCR assistance, and only 32 of these were provided at no cost.

In total, about $61,800 was spent as part of this identification effort, with $1,280 directly funding ID card issuance and approximately $60,000 allocated to infrastructure. This relatively small number of ID cards issued, especially at no cost, suggests the need for a new more effective and efficient strategy, as providing identification is essential to a successful reentry process.

Determination: Partially Implemented – Significant Gaps Remain

- ❖ Senate Resolution 82, House Draft 1 (2023) is attached to Appendix A-4(i), Senate Resolution 84 (2021) is attached at Appendix A-4(ii), and the Department of Public Safety Senate Resolution 82, House Draft 1 Report is attached at Appendix A-4(vi) to this report.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1 (2021)

Resolution Language	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1 (2021) Requesting the Department of Public Safety allow faith pods based on	There is no plan to act currently. DCR continues to consider initiatives to address the needs of our inmate population, when appropriate.	**Not in compliance—**

Kapu Aloha to be established within each correctional center.	There has been no action on this Resolution

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
This resolution was intentionally created in response to the significant overrepresentation of Native Hawaiians and remains unfulfilled in accordance with DCR's response.

Determination: *Not Implemented*

- ❖ Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1 (2021) is attached at Appendix A-4(iii).

House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021)

Resolution Language	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021) Urging the Department of Public Safety to recognize the value of culture-based rehabilitation activities in the state's correctional system.	WCCC offers Hula (Beginning & Advanced), Cultural Healing and Well-Being Classes (through the Pu`a Foundation), ukulele, and Tongan dance (which will expand to include other Polynesian/Asian-Pacific Islander cultures). WCCC also offers the Culture Club, a 45-minute class with a maximum of 10 women from mixed housing units, focusing on Polynesian Island cultural arts. Lessons include activities like Lei Making, Weaving, Straw Hat Weaving, Kapa, Poi Ball, and Fan Making, with each class focusing on one Polynesian Island and beginning with a brief history. MCCC offers Kamalama Parenting, a program that introduces Hawaiian values to support positive parenting principles and emphasizes the role of a parent as the child's "first teacher." Saguaro Correctional Center recently celebrated Makahiki.	**Mostly not in compliance**— Offerings need to occur at all facilities.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
The HCSOC recognizes the cultural-based programs and activities available at WCCC and MCCC, yet none are available at other facilities. Additional opportunities are needed at WCCC and MCCC to support participation for more women. The HCSOC urges expanding and adding additional offerings at all facilities, including WCCC and MCCC, as was urged by the Legislature.

***Determination**: Partially Implemented – Significant Gaps Remain*

- ❖ House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021) is attached to the Appendix A-4(iv).

Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 (2021)

Resolution Language	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 (2021) Urging the Department of Public Safety to increase its investment in comprehensive offender reentry training programs for individuals exiting correctional facilities.	DCR collaborates with the City and County WorkHawaii Team to offer life skills, job readiness training, and one-on-one case management at various facilities. They also provide ongoing support after release. Additionally, DCR has a contract with Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, which helps individuals identify career training opportunities and offers reentry support services, particularly for those in work furlough or on parole.	**Mostly in compliance**— Although there remains opportunity to expand these efforts as outlined throughout this report.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
The HCSOC recognizes current efforts and urges the DCR to increase its investment in comprehensive offender reentry training programs for individuals exiting correctional facilities. Specific ideas are included in the recommendations section beginning on page 71 of this report.

Determination: *Partially Implemented – Additional Actions Required*

- ❖ Senate Concurrent Resolution 108 (2021) is attached at the Appendix A-4(v) of this report of this report SCR108_.pdf (hawaii.gov)

Community Services, Housing, Programs, and Treatment

The HCSOC requested information from the DCR in this category due to concerns about excessive idle and in-cell time observed during facility tours, along with a lack of programming, including education and services, as documented in HCSOC annual and facility-specific reports. Programs are essential not only for meeting parole requirements but also for ensuring productive use of time and facilitating successful reentry and long-term reintegration into the community. Community service providers, contractors, and people in custody also raised concerns about the need to increase housing opportunities, expand contracts with community service providers, and better utilize existing contracts. Therefore, the Commission submitted specific questions to DCR related to education, programming, community services, and connections. The responses are broken down by topic below.

Community Service Provider Contracts

HCSOC Request ——For the period November 1, 2022, to October 31, 2023, provide a brief description and actual copy of all contracts with community service providers for services and programs, including the facility the service or program is provided at if applicable.

DCR Response———

Vendor	RFP No	Contract No	Description	CPS Branch	Facility
Keiki O Ka Aina (KOKA)	23-CPS-31	71581	Domestic Violence Intervention, Domestic Violence Anger Management, Parenting After Violence, and Victim Support Services for Adult Women Offenders on Oahu	Education	WCCC
Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC)	23-CPS-31	71582	Domestic Violence Intervention, Domestic Violence Anger Management, Parenting After Violence, and Victim Support Services for Adult Women Offenders on Big Island	Education	HCCC
The Salvation Army	19-CPS/E-01	68234	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for General Population Moderate to High-Risk people in custody on the island of Oahu	Education	HCF, WCF, WCCC
Yoga School of Kailua; Hawaii Yoga Prison Project	20-CPS/E-16	69174	Yoga Training for Male people in custody on the island of Oahu	Education	OCCC, HCF, WCF
Yoga School of Kailua; Natalie Gooding LLC	20-CPS/E-16	69173	Yoga Training for Female people in custody on the island of Oahu	Education	WCCC
Amelia de Los Rios		69633	Spanish Language Interpreter Services for Sex Offender Treatment Program	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	OCCC, HCF, WCCC

Community Assistance Center - CAC	21-CPS/SO-24	69424	Sex Offender Treatment Services for Incarcerated, Furloughed, or Paroled Sex Offenders	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	KCF, HCCC, MCCC
Ericka Ehrhorn, Psy.D., LLC	23-CPS/SO-17	71408	Treatment Assessments of Sex Offender Statewide; Pre-release & Post-release	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	Statewide facilities
Isle Interpret, LLC	23-CPS/SO-30	71381	American Sign Language Interpreting Services for Sex Offender Treatment Program	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	OCCC, HCF, WCCC
Language Services Hawaii, LLC	22-CPS/SO-43	70433	American Sign Language Interpreting Services for Sex Offender Treatment Program	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	OCCC, HCF, WCCC
Marvin W. Acklin, Ph.D.	23-CPS/SO-17	71407	Treatment Assessments of Sex Offender Statewide; Pre-release & Post-release	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	Statewide facilities
Meliss, Villalon, Psy.D.	23-CPS/SO-17	71409	Treatment Assessments of Sex Offender Statewide; Pre-release & Post-release	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	Statewide facilities
The Journey to Pono, LLC	21-CPS/SO-24	69425	Sex Offender Treatment for Incarcerated, Furloughed, or Parole Sex Offenders	Sex Offender Treatment Program Services	OCCC, HCF, WCCC
Alcohol Rehabilitation Services of Hawaii, Inc. dba Hina Mauka	21-CPS/SA-09	69211	Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for Female people in custody on the Island of Oahu	Substance Abuse Services	WCCC
The Salvation Army	20-CPS/SA-05	68735	Outpatient & Continuing Care Substance Abuse Treatment for Male & Female people in custody Statewide	Substance Abuse Services	Statewide facilities
The Salvation Army	22-CPS/SA-25	70404	Family Therapy and Counseling Services for Bridge Furlough Program on Oahu; for people in custody that completed residential or outpatient treatment	Substance Abuse Services	OCCC, WCCC
The Salvation Army	23-CPS/SA-14	70831	Intensive Outpatient & Continuing Care Substance Abuse Treatment Program for Moderate Risk people in custody on the Island of Oahu	Substance Abuse Services	HCF, WCCC
Young Women's Christian Association of Oahu YWCA	21-CPS/SA-06	69326	Housing for Female Correctional Furloughees at WCCC	Substance Abuse Services	WCCC

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Although the HCSOC recognizes these contractors and providers are important, significant opportunities to expand remain, and are discussed throughout this report.

Housing Provider Contracts

HCSOC Request——Provide a list, brief description, and actual copy of all contracts with transitional housing providers, including the number of beds in the contract and the average number of beds utilized, from November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023.

DCR Response———

Program	Service Provided	Location	Average Number of beds utilized	Contracted Beds	Comments
Makana O Ke Akua (Moka)	Clean & sober housing for males	Oahu	70-80% furloughees & parolees	24	Only provides housing; are referred out for services.
Women In Need (Win)	Clean & sober housing for females	Oahu	6/per month at each site	24	2 sites: Aiea (max: 12 beds) & Halawa (max: 12 beds)
Goodwill	Job placement, support services assistance	Statewide	#6-30 (dependent on county)		Clothing, work-related expenses, career planning, etc.; DLIR representative on site to assist with state-funded financial assistance.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Current housing contracts are limited to Oahu, revealing substantial gaps in the scope of services. **Clean and sober housing contracts on the outer islands are non-existent**. Additionally, current housing contracts on Oahu are underutilized, with occupancy rates at **50% or less** for women and 70-80% for men. Achieving full (100%) housing support on Oahu and expanding these services to the neighboring islands is crucial, as housing consistently ranks as the highest need for reentry success.

Additional Education, Programs, and Treatment Offered

HCSOC Request——Detailed in the below chart.

DCR Response———

HCSOC Request	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
From January 1, 2023, to January 31, 2023, please provide the	In Calendar Year 2023, a total of 30 individuals achieved their GED or High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), with 26 passing the GED and four passing the	**Improvement Needed**—GED completion rates are alarmingly low, with significant potential to

following for each facility: • GED and High School Equivalency completions, • Number of college class enrollments, • Number of completed college classes, • Number of earned college degrees, and • Number of earned college certificates.	HiSET. For college enrollments, 338 people participated in courses offered at Kapi'olani Community College (KCC), Windward Community College (WCC), and Chaminade University, this number does not include any independently pursued correspondence courses. Of those enrolled, 134 earned credits. Seven individuals attained an Associate of Arts degree in Business Administration from Chaminade University, along with several other associate degrees and one bachelor's degree obtained in Arizona. Additionally, 19 individuals earned various college certificates. See chart below	increase educational attainment, including college completions and degrees—all key predictors of post-incarceration success.

Education Category	Completion Numbers
High School Equivalency	30
GED Completion	26
HiSET Completions	4
College Enrollments	338
College Courses Completed (with credit)	134
College Degrees Earned	
AA in Business Admin from CUH	7
Additional AA and Bachelor's Degrees (in AZ)	Several AAs, 1 Bachelor's
College Certificates Earned	19

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Subsection (1) highlights that, while 35 individuals earned a High School Equivalency diploma in Fiscal Year 2023, this completion rate falls significantly short of the population's needs. The Commission reviewed the program recommendations for the 691 people in custody at AZSC, 466—approximately 67%—had GED listed as a recommended program, and only 44—**about 9%**— of those individuals completed it.

466 individuals needing GED completion at AZSC indicates that the number of GED completions must increase significantly to support efficient reentry outcomes and parole eligibility. These numbers only include people in custody at AZSC and no other facilities, therefore, system-wide there will be additional individuals with a GED as a recommended program. Also, GED completion is a valuable reentry tool, equipping individuals with essential skills and qualifications that enhance their chances of successful reintegration.

Program and Treatment

HCSOC Request———Detailed in chart below.

DCR Response———

HCSOC Request	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
From January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, for Native Hawaiian cultural programs and any trauma treatment or programs offered at each facility, please provide a complete list of: • these programs or treatments offered at each facility, • frequency at which the program or treatment is offered (e.g., twice per calendar year), • number of participants each time the program or treatment is offered, and • waitlist if applicable.	The Corrections Program Services Division does not have contracts in place for Hawaiian cultural programs or trauma treatment. The Pua Foundation may provide trauma-informed care independently at WCCC through its own grants and funding, not through DCR.	**Improvement Needed**—Native Hawaiians are overrepresented in Hawaii's prisons and jails, making culturally based programming essential for providing opportunities for growth, purpose, and connection.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented in Hawaii's prisons, jails, and the broader justice system, underscoring the urgent need for culturally based programming.

In the recommendations section of this report, the HCSOC strongly emphasizes the need to implement comprehensive Native Hawaiian cultural programming across all correctional facilities statewide, discussed further in Recommendation Three: *Transform Facilities into Pu'uhonua -- Centers for Healing and Cultural Based Programming* on page 84 of this report. This recommendation aligns with House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021), as well as the findings of the HCR 85 Task Force and the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force, which have consistently emphasized the importance of culturally grounded approaches to address these systemic disparities.

Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Hawaii Paroling Authority Data and Numbers

This data was requested to assist the HCSOC in determining whether the comprehensive offender reentry system under **Chapter 353H** is working properly and providing programs and services to people in custody that result in timely release on parole after minimum terms are served, as is required in the HCSOC mandate **§353L-3(b)(4)**. The HCSOC has also noted challenges with people in custody transitioning to furlough and parole and maxing out of DCR custody, emphasizing the need to identify and address gaps to increase parole rates and support successful reintegration.

Release to the Community

HCSOC Request	Summary of DCR Response	Commission Determination
From November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023, please provide the number of people in PSD custody released straight to the community or maxed out from each of the following: • HCF • AZSC • WCCC • WCF • KCF • Furlough or community placement	From November 1, 2022, to October 31, 2023, a total of 506 individuals were released from the following DCR prisons—HCF, WCCC, WCF, KCF—or the DCR contract facility in Arizona—AZSC—either on parole or after serving their maximum sentence (time served). Of those released, 203 were released on parole, while 303 individuals maxed out their sentences and were released directly to the community. The breakdown by facility is as follows: • **HCF**: 125 paroled, 251 time served • **AZSC**: 0 paroled, 2 time served • **WCCC**: 48 paroled, 38 time served • **WCF**: 21 paroled, 9 time served • **KCF**: 9 paroled, 3 time served • **Furlough**: 164 paroled, 21 time served ○ *HCCC*: 20 paroled, 4 time served ○ *KCCC*: 9 paroled, 2 time served ○ MCCC: 29 paroled, 2 time served ○ *OCCC-Laumaka*: 55 paroled, 1 time served ○ *OCCC-Module 20*: 34 paroled, 10 time served ○ *WCCC*: 17 paroled, 2 time served **Total**: 367 paroled, 324 Time Served	**Improvement Needed**—47% of individuals released from DCR custody on felony charges maxed out, while 53% were paroled. However, in more secure settings like HCF, the disparity is even more pronounced, with only 33% paroled and 67% maxing out. The max-out population faces the highest recidivism rates and the lowest likelihood of success, primarily due to the lack of reintegration opportunities and support.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
Between November 2022 and October 2023, a total of 691 individuals were released from DCR custody on felony charges, including those released from prisons, furlough, and parole. This total includes 367 individuals released to parole and 324 individuals who served their time and maxed out, meaning they were released directly from DCR custody into the community without furlough or parole. Additionally, individuals who max out do not have funding for transitional housing support through DCR or HPA, as they are no longer under the custody of these agencies. Maxing out also limits opportunities for individuals to participate in structured step-down processes before reentry into the community. Maxing out from medium-security facilities without any transitional support, like parole or furlough, undermines the rehabilitative goals of the correctional system and significantly reduces the likelihood of successful reentry, often leading to higher recidivism.

Overall, approximately 53% of individuals were released to parole, while 47% maxed out.

This trend is more pronounced in more secure prison settings. **At HCF, 251 out of 376 individuals in custody—67%—maxed out**, while 125 out of 376—33%—were released on parole. At AZSC, two individuals maxed out with no parole releases. **At WCCC, 38 out of 86 women—44%—maxed out of DCR custody** during the 12-month period, while 48 out of 86—56%— were released on parole. This pattern is concerning, as it highlights individuals being released directly from medium-security, cell-based environments into the community without step-down processes, such as minimum-security facilities, furlough, or parole.

Research indicates that individuals who max out have higher recidivism rates and lower post-release success.

This issue is particularly troubling given that furlough beds, especially for women at Fernhurst, are significantly underutilized, with less than half of their capacity regularly being used. It also leaves individuals without funded transitional housing support, as they are no longer under DCR or HPA custody.

Parole, Beyond Minimum, and Max Out Data

The HCSOC similarly submitted a data request regarding parole to HPA and the DCR to address concerns about delays in parole release due to incomplete programs and to fulfill the HCSOC's mandate to monitor reentry system effectiveness. Additionally, communication with people in custody and observations during parole hearings revealed denials due to incomplete programs; however, the rate or prevalence of these denials is not known, and this data was intended to gain more insight into timely release at minimums—directly related to the HCSOC mandate. The responses broken down by topic are provided below.

Fiscal Year 2023 Request

HCSOC Request (FY 2023)	DCR and HPA Response	Commission Determination
How many people were denied parole in FY23, fully or in part, due to incomplete programs?	In FY 2023, 1,058 people were denied parole due to incomplete programs, program refusal, pending misconduct, lack of a viable parole plan, and unwillingness to parole. HPA does not further break down this number to identify how many were denied solely or in part due to incomplete programs.	**No Action Taken, No Data Collection**— This information is not tracked, which limits the ability to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness and hinders the HCSOC's capacity to assess the functionality of the reentry system.
How many people in DCR (PSD) custody maxed out without HPA supervision in FY23?	In FY 2023, 362 people sentenced to felonies or parole violators maxed out their sentences in FY23.	**Improvement Needed, to Decrease this Number**— The max out population faces the highest recidivism rates and lowest likelihood of success due to lack of reintegration opportunities.

Fiscal Year 2024 Request

HCSOC Request (FY 2024)	DCR and HPA Response	Commission Determination
How many people are currently, as of October 2024, in DCR custody beyond their minimum sentence?	As of October 2024, 821 individuals were currently held in DCR custody beyond their minimum parole date. With 2,308 individuals having a parole minimum date set, meaning 36% of felony-sentenced individuals are beyond their minimum release date.	**Improvement Needed**— Holding 36% of felony-sentenced people past their minimum parole date imposes an immense financial burden and limits opportunities for timely rehabilitation, reintegration, and the opportunity to begin a new life.
The total number of people in custody who had an initial parole consideration hearing at the expiration of their minimum term (or as the expiration was approaching) in the past 12 months.	As of October 2024, 1,685 individuals had their first parole consideration hearing as their minimum term expired or approached in the past 12 months.	**Meeting Data Collection Expectation**
Of that number [1,685], how many people were granted parole at their first release hearing?	This data is not currently collected or available from HPA or DCR.	**No Action Taken, No Date Collection—** Without this information, reentry system functionality cannot be determined

Of that number [1,685], how many people were denied parole at their first release hearing?	This data is not currently collected or available from HPA or DCR.	**No Action Taken, No Date Collection—** Without this information, reentry system functionality cannot be determined
As of the current date, could you please provide a list, broken down by facility, of all people in custody who have been granted parole on a chair to set basis and remain incarcerated, along with the date they were granted parole? And include a notation for anyone who is a foreign national that falls within this category.	As of November 2024, HPA had about 65 people in custody who were granted parole on a chair to set basis and remained incarcerated. From the data provided it is not clear how many were foreign nationals.	**Improvement Needed—** The HCSOC appreciates this information from HPA, and recognizes the need for a case management and centralized data tracking system for effective data analysis and review to identify systemic delays and areas for improvement and more

Summary and Calculation of data included in the HPA Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report[12]:

Fiscal Year	20-21	21-22	22-23
Number of Parole Consideration Hearings	2,431	1,861	1,685
Number of Persons Considered for Parole	1,656	1,462	1,277
a. Number of Paroles Granted	900	528	447
b. Number of Paroles Denied	1,100	1,128	1,058
c. Number of Paroles Deferred/Continued	428	205	180
d. Number of Escapes	3	0	0
e. Number of Inmates Released	704	462	345
Parole Hearing Acceptance Rate (%)[13]	**37.0%**	**28.4%**	**26.5%**
Parole Hearing Denial Rate (%)[14]	**45.2%**	**60.6%**	**62.8%**
Parole Hearing Deferral Rate (%)[15]	**17.6%**	**11.0%**	**10.7%**

[12] These rates were calculated based on the number of paroles granted and denied in relation to the total number of persons considered for parole in each fiscal year. This is based on information contained in the 2023 Annual Statistical Report by the Hawaii Paroling Authority, available at https://dcr.hawaii.gov/hpa/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/02/HPA-FY-2023-Annual-Report.pdf.

[13] This acceptance rate was calculated by the number of paroles granted divided by the number of parole consideration hearings. *Id*.

[14] This denial rate was calculated by the number of paroles denied divided by the number parole consideration hearings. *Id*.

[15] This deferral rate was calculated by the number of paroles deferred divided by the number of parole consideration hearings. *Id*.

Summary of HCSOC Analysis:
The lack of data collection and tracking by the Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA) presents a critical concern for the HCSOC and the people in their custody.

The Commission is mandated to: *Ensure that the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System, as outlined in Chapter 353H, is functioning effectively to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of individuals on parole when minimum terms have been served, instead of delaying release due to a lack of programs and services* (§353L-3(b)(4))

The absence of specific data on parole denial reasons hinders the HCSOC's ability to identify whether denials result from lack of programs and services. The HPA data indicates that in Fiscal Year 2023, 1,058 people were denied parole due to: incomplete programs, program refusal, pending misconduct, lack of a viable parole plan, and unwillingness to parole. HPA, however, does not further break down this number to identify how many individuals were denied parole solely or in part due to incomplete programs. Additionally, there is no tracking of how many people in custody are granted parole at their first consideration hearing, limiting insights into the system's efficiency and effectiveness. Without this information, the HCSOC cannot accurately assess and report on reentry system functionality, a critical element for ensuring the system's performance.

The data review indicates that as of October 2024, 821 individuals sentenced on felony charges currently remain in DCR custody beyond their minimum release dates. Of the total 2,308 individuals sentenced to felonies in DCR custody, 821, **representing 36% are past their minimum release dates**.

While it cannot be assumed—although it would be a good goal—that all individuals will be released at their minimum date, this figure highlights significant room for improvement in preparing individuals for parole eligibility. The financial implications are substantial. At a cost of $259 per person per day, the annual cost to hold one individual in DCR custody amounts to $94,535. For the 821 individuals remaining in custody beyond their minimum, this equates to a staggering **$77.6 million per year**. These calculations underscore the immense financial burden of maintaining custody for those who might otherwise be eligible for parole.

Beyond the financial costs, the reasons for parole denials—including incomplete programs, program refusals, pending misconduct, lack of a viable parole plan, and unwillingness to parole—point to critical opportunities for improvement. Addressing these barriers is essential to enhancing system efficiency, reducing costs, and supporting successful reintegration. Additionally, if system-wide stakeholders can reduce the number of individuals remaining beyond their minimum—currently 821—Hawaii could potentially decrease or eliminate reliance on the Arizona state contracted facility AZSC. This reduction could be achieved by filling furlough and minimum-security beds within Hawaii and increasing parole release rates at minimum terms. Currently, there are approximately 800 individuals from Hawaii held at AZSC.

The data highlights a troubling pattern: many individuals granted parole remained in custody. The HPA annual report indicates that although 900 individuals were granted parole in FY 20-21, only

704 were released, meaning **196 remained in custody—representing 21.8% of those granted parole**. Similarly, in FY 21-22, 528 individuals were granted parole, but only 462 were released, leaving 66 individuals still in custody—or 12.5%. In FY 22-23, 447 individuals were granted parole, yet only 345 were released, with 102 remaining in custody, accounting for 22.8%. While it could be argued that there is a lag between parole being granted and release, these figures span a full year, which would include individuals with lagged release dates from the previous year. These numbers underscore delays or barriers preventing timely transitions to the community.

Furthermore, the parole hearing acceptance rate has steadily declined over the past three years, dropping from 37.0% in FY 20-21 to 28.4% in FY 21-22 and further to 26.5% in FY 22-23. Conversely, the denial rate has increased, rising from 45.2% in FY 20-21 to 60.6% in FY 21-22 and reaching 62.8% in FY 22-23.

Positive Reentry System Highlights

This section highlights the progress that has moved Hawaii's correctional system in a rehabilitative direction, focusing on initiatives, programs, and partnerships that demonstrate meaningful change. These efforts represent important steps toward a system that prioritizes human dignity, community safety, and successful reintegration. While significant challenges remain, these highlights underscore the potential for continued innovation and collaboration to drive positive outcomes.

Staff Contributions to Rehabilitative Progress

The HCSOC recognizes the dedication of staff who are committed to the ongoing shift toward a rehabilitative model of corrections across Hawaii's correctional facilities. From the chaplain at OCCC—who is unpaid—to the Acting Education Supervisor at HCF, the Offender Services team at WCCC, the Farm Manager at KCF, the Acting Corrections Program Services Development Officer of the DCR Reentry Coordination Office, specific ACOs, case and unit managers, and medical and mental health providers the Commission has met, and many more, these individuals exemplify commitment, compassion, and innovation. Despite operating with limited resources, these staff members work tirelessly to provide care, deliver programming, and connect people in custody with the services needed for successful transition back into the community. This list is not exhaustive but highlights the significant contributions of those who, even under challenging circumstances, are striving to make meaningful change.

Fostering Connections Through Resource Fairs

Resource fairs are designed to connect people in custody with a diverse array of community service providers, offering direct access to critical resources needed for successful reintegration. These fairs bring together organizations that provide support in areas such as job readiness, housing, substance abuse treatment, behavioral health care, and education. By creating an environment where individuals can engage with service providers face-to-face prior to release, resource fairs serve as a bridge to the outside community, equipping participants with tools and connections to prepare for life after release.

The HCSOC attended resource fairs at HCF and WCCC in 2024, with other fairs occurring at prisons in Oahu. This past year marked the first-ever resource fair at HCF, made possible by the collaborative efforts of Transforming Lives Prison, HCF's Education Supervisor, HCF Warden, and Hawaii community service providers. These fairs not only assist individuals in custody with establishing relationships with potential employers and community organizations but also foster hope and a sense of support. They exemplify the importance of prioritizing reentry preparation, highlighting the collaborative efforts of facility and reentry leadership, community organizations, and service providers. The success of these events reflects the transformative power of partnerships and innovation in building a pathway to successful reintegration.

Rehabilitative Practices at Waiawa and Kulani Correctional Facilities

The HCSOC has recognized WCF and KCF as the most rehabilitative facilities in Hawaii for their commitment to rehabilitation, emphasizing work opportunities, programming, and reentry preparation. Both facilities offer structured environments where individuals can engage in meaningful activities that promote personal growth and skill-building. Kulani's farm, for example, provides hands-on experience that allows participants to cultivate practical skills and transform their lives. These efforts reflect a strong commitment to fostering the conditions necessary for

successful reintegration into society and serve as models of how rehabilitative programming can create lasting change.

Advancing Rehabilitation at the Women's Community Correctional Center

WCCC has made significant strides in transitioning to a rehabilitative model, implementing innovative practices and programs that prioritize human dignity. Initiatives such as the mural project and the incorporation of select Native Hawaiian cultural programming highlight the facility's commitment to fostering connection and growth. WCCC is also one of the few facilities in Hawaii offering in-person visitation, a vital component of maintaining family bonds. The Commission recognizes the efforts of Warden Guillonta, the Women's Prison Project, the WCCC Offender Services Administrator and team, and several correctional staff members who are in the early stages of transforming the facility into a rehabilitative model of corrections. Their commitment to humanizing practices, programs, and mindsets reflects a foundational shift within the facility.

Community Partnerships Driving Rehabilitation and Support

Hawaii's extensive network of community organizations and advocates demonstrates the state's capacity to support meaningful rehabilitation. Groups such as Going Home Hawaii, Pu'a Foundation, Women in Need (WIN), First Life After Prison (First LAP), Worknet, Maui Economic Opportunity, Goodwill, Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice, E Kolu Mea Nui, and so many more play a vital role in providing essential resources, including housing support, trauma-informed care, and other services aimed at supporting justice-involved individuals. The YWCA's Fernhurst Residence offers a unique and successful furlough transition for women, while organizations like the Community Alliance on Prisons and Correctional Reform Working Group focus on educating the public about best practices and effective strategies for improving the justice system, as well as fostering greater community involvement in these issues. And 'Ohana Ho'opakele works to address the disproportionate incarceration of Native Hawaiians in prisons and jails, advocating for culturally rooted solutions.

The range of service providers the HCSOC met during Community Resource Day further highlights the commitment within the community to assist people in custody. These providers and advocates demonstrate a shared dedication to offering support, care, and pathways to rehabilitation. This collective effort underscores the potential for positive outcomes when resources and expertise are effectively mobilized to meet the needs of people in custody and those reentering.

Recommendations: Moving Toward a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Correctional System

This final section outlines actionable steps to bring Hawaii's vision for corrections to life, with objectives and recommendations distilled from the analysis of both the current state of the system and vision for the future. While this is a monumental task given today's starting point, progress will be tracked to ensure alignment with the new therapeutic and rehabilitative model. Moving forward with determination and direction will allow meaningful strides toward this vision.

The following recommendations are organized into four key focus areas to promote clarity and alignment with the HCSOC mandate:

Part I: Statutory Compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes
The first focus area ensures the proper functioning of the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System under Chapter 353H.

Part II: Statewide Reentry: Programs, Education, Treatment, and Transitional Services; §353L-3(b)(3)
The second focus area prioritizes collaborating with the DCR to monitor and review reentry in addition to the oversight of facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the HPA.

Part III: Facilitating a Correctional System Transition to a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Model; §353L-3(b)(1)
The third focus area emphasizes transitioning Hawaii's correctional system to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model.

Part IV: Preventing Overcrowding and Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4)
The fourth focus area is aimed at preventing the correctional population from exceeding the capacity of each facility as mandated by §353L-3(b)(2). Additionally, it ensures the timely release of individuals on parole upon serving minimum terms, in accordance with §353L-3(b)(4), by addressing systemic delays caused by program and service availability.

Although the list of recommendations is not exhaustive, each focuses on critical areas requiring immediate attention. The areas of focus in this section set clear objectives to bridge the gap between the current system and a rehabilitative and therapeutic-centered future.

Part I: Statutory Compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes

The Commission is mandated to ensure the Proper Functioning of the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System under Chapter 353H.

***Recommendations for Statutory Compliance with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes*:**

Chapter 353H-2.5

1.1 Expand Reentry Staffing at Facilities and Department-wide as the Reentry Coordination Office (RCO) is critically understaffed and many essential reentry functions and positions are unpaid. DCR should work with DHRD to ensure that current and future RCO vacancies should be filled with dedicated staff focused on reentry functions, prioritizing individuals with the passion and skills necessary for the work rather than solely concentrating on background or educational requirements. Additional RCO positions should also be created and funded both Downtown and at facilities to increase capacity for statewide reentry coordination. There must be dedicated reentry staff at every facility who report to and work under the direction of RCO leadership and the Rehabilitation side of DCR. This structure will ensure a direct link between centralized reentry coordination and facilities, enabling effective reentry planning while meeting statutory and statewide mandates and allowing for the recommendations in this report to move forward.

1.2 Increase Case Management Staffing as current case managers have unmanageable caseloads of up to 100 people in custody per case manager.

1.3 Enhance Reentry Checklist as the current three-page form lacks the necessary detail and depth to support comprehensive reintegration. The form should be redesigned to facilitate in-depth assessments of individual needs, goals, and barriers, guiding reentry planning and supporting continuous improvement throughout the individual's journey from incarceration to reintegration. Overall, the plan should set clear goals for the future and create actionable steps to meet them, utilizing services, programs, and connections, with defined timelines for accountability. These goals can encompass, but are not limited to, the following categories:

a. **Career and Employment Goals**: Identify career aspirations and outline educational programs, vocational training, and work opportunities needed to achieve them. Include a roadmap with actionable steps, connections, and mentorship to ensure long-term success.
b. **Well-Being, Mental Health, and Sobriety**: Address well-being, mental health, and sobriety through tailored treatment programs and clear goals. Incorporate pathways to access services and include ongoing evaluations to adapt plans as needs evolve.
c. **Community Support**: Build and strengthen community support networks by connecting individuals to mentors, service providers, peer support groups, and family members. Plans should facilitate in-reach during incarceration and emphasize family unification as a motivator for reintegration success.

d. **Basic Needs and Housing:** Plan for essential needs like food, clothing, transportation, and healthcare upon release. Expand housing plans to include discussions on the best living placement and conduct regular updates to align with individual progress.

   This redesigned plan must reframe reentry as a holistic process that begins at incarceration and continues through full reintegration, rather than focusing on the moment of release. As a living document, it should evolve with the individual's needs through regular in-person updates with case managers, fostering accountability and a smooth transition into the community.

1.4 Identify and Address Unmet Needs by conducting needs assessments to identify gaps in reentry programs and develop targeted recommendations to address unmet needs in alignment with statutory requirements.

1.5 Expand partnerships with organizations providing reentry services and establish contracts for new services to meet growing needs. These partnerships should be formalized to prioritize alignment with **Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes**, essential reentry support, ensuring individuals in custody have access to consistent, high-quality programming designed to reduce recidivism and support successful reintegration.

1.6 Enhance training in evidence-based reentry practices to provide regular training for the department on evidence-based practices for successful reentry. This should include updated training programs as part of the shift to a rehabilitative correctional model.

1.7 Address standardize and strengthen jail reentry planning. The depth of reentry planning at jails is unclear and seems to vary by facility. Adequate staffing and resources must be prioritized to support reentry efforts at the jail level. The current overreliance on the resource guide, which has become more symbolic than practical due to its length and distribution limitations, further underscores the need for a new, functional tool, such as the Unite Us platform, to connect individuals with reentry services effectively. The recommendation relating to Unite Us is further outlined in *Part II: Monitor and Review the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Program, §353L-3(b)(3), Section Four: Enhance Preparation for Successful Release and Transition to the Community, Recommendation 3: Partner with Unite Us*.

Chapter 353H-3

1.8 Revise the Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (CORP). Updates should align with the DCR's transition to a rehabilitative model, reflecting its mission, goals, and guiding principles. Revise the reentry process, strategies for success, actions, and performance measures to support the department's focus on rehabilitation and reintegration, ensuring the plan reflects current practices, priorities, and the structural changes since the transition from the Department of Public Safety.

1.9 Develop and implement a standardized operational philosophy across all facilities to ensure reentry begins on the first day of incarceration. This can be achieved by collectively implementing the recommendations outlined in this report.

1.10 Establish and enforce a comprehensive strategy to ensure all reentry programs are gender-responsive as required by **§353H-3(b)(4)**. This includes conducting regular evaluations of programs to ensure they address gender-specific needs and challenges, providing staff training on gender responsiveness, and creating tailored services for different genders, including trauma-informed care for women and equitable opportunities for transgender and non-binary individuals. Policies should also prioritize safety, dignity, and access to gender-appropriate resources and services.

1.11 Identify and implement model reentry programs aligned with the statutory requirements under **§353H-3(b)(6)**. Conduct independent evaluations of these programs to assess their effectiveness in meeting the needs of the population, and use findings to expand access, improve existing programs, and replicate successful models across facilities. People in custody have submitted thoughtful program recommendations for potential model programs; soliciting program proposals directly from people in custody would be a valuable starting point.

Chapter 353H-4

1.12 Implement model programs, as outlined in the statute—including highly skilled staff, individualized case management and a full continuum of care to ensure successful reentry, life skills development workshops, and parenting and relationship building classes, and ongoing attention to building support from communities, community agencies, and organizations—aimed at reducing recidivism through skilled case management, life skills development, family support, and community engagement. These programs should reflect the depth intended by statute rather than only basic service offerings.

Chapter 353H-5

1.13 Develop policies and procedures to address family needs, including placement considerations that support family connections and conduct research on the impact of incarceration on children and familial relationships.

Chapter 353H-6

1.14 Strengthen Partnerships with DLIR and Taxation Departments to ensure people in custody and those released from DCR custody are included in utilizing state and private resources for employment, training, life skills, and educational opportunities. Additionally, align training and educational programs offered to people in custody and those released from DCR custody with Hawaii's employment needs, ensuring relevant job opportunities for release.

1.15 Collaborate with the Departments of Taxation and Labor and Industrial Relations to develop and propose tax incentives for employers who hire individuals formerly incarcerated.

Chapter 353H-7

1.16 Return People in Custody from Out-of-State Facilities at Least One Year Prior to Parole or Release Date. Statutory requirements mandate the return of Hawaii individuals in custody held in out-of-state prisons at least one year before parole or release dates. With current return rates below 50%, this area requires urgent attention. The reasons indicated for non-return should serve as starting points for further exploration rather than a conclusion. Data reveals multiple barriers preventing people in custody from being returned from out-of-state facilities within statutory timeframes, including program non-compliance, refusals to participate in work furlough and parole (with some opting to max out), and high-level misconduct.

1.17 Conduct an Independent Investigation to Identify Barrier to Return One Year Prior To Parole or Release Date. The areas reported by DCR for non-return—including non-compliance in programs, high/greatest category misconducts within last 18 months, escape history within past 7 years from community/minimum custody facility, detainers, refuse to work furlough programs & parole, pending parole release to another state—should serve as starting points for further exploration rather than a conclusion.

Key areas for inquiry include how to enhance program compliance, address the high rate of severe misconduct, and evaluate policies around detainers, which are frequently cited as barriers. Additionally, understanding the underlying reasons for refusal to participate in work furlough or parole would offer insights to encourage greater engagement. Discovering why people in custody are not being transferred to HCF, where they can reconnect with their families and be closer to reentry resources, is also imperative. Viewing these factors as a foundation for continued investigation can support efforts to improve reentry outcomes and reduce recidivism.

The inquiry should not focus on whether these areas can be improved—it is clear they can; rather, the question must delve deeper into *how* meaningful changes can be achieved and sustained. These independent analyses should incorporate input from individuals in custody and staff, ensuring that solutions are practical and aligned with Hawaii's rehabilitative goals. Tailored programs such as peer support, mentorship, and mindset-shift initiatives should be developed to address these challenges and foster successful reintegration.

1.18 Update DCR's *Transfer of Adult Inmates* policy to include the requirements of **§353H-7**, including the return people in custody from out-of-state facilities at least one year prior to parole or release date

Chapter 353H-8

1.19 Define and Track Performance Indicators to set clear, quantifiable performance indicators to evaluate program efficiency, effectiveness, and impact to enable ongoing assessment and improvement. DCR's performance data suggests that program completion rates and reentry access need strengthening. Review HCSOC analysis column in the **§353H-8** chart and address reporting deficiencies.

Chapter 353H-9

1.20 Revise the reporting process to fully comply with statutory requirements by ensuring reporting includes the following for each program:

- program length,
- success rate,
- participant criteria,
- number of available positions,
- number of participants on the waiting list,
- number of participants who do not complete the program,
- detailed reasons for non-completion,
- a list of programs no longer offered, and
- compliance with annual reporting requirements to the Legislature outlined in the statute.

Compliance with these elements, along with the inclusion of key performance indicators to track rehabilitation and reentry efforts for individuals preparing to exit the correctional system, will ensure alignment with the Legislature's intended goals for this section.

Chapter 353H-31

1.21 Expand and Fully Utilize Service Contracts to increase the scope of service contracts beyond housing and job placement and encompass all 27 reentry support areas authorized under **§353H-31**. Emphasize housing contract utilization on neighbor islands, where service gaps are most significant.

Chapter 353H-32

1.22 Provide identification upon release. Current rates of identification issuance are insufficient, leaving many individuals without necessary ID upon release. Even though legislative funds have been allocated for this purpose, DCR reported that, of the 10,580 individuals released since 2022, only 150 received ID cards with DCR assistance, and just 32 of these were provided at no cost. A total of approximately **$61,800** was spent on this identification effort, with **$1,280** directly funding ID card issuance and the remaining **$60,000** allocated to infrastructure. This low number of ID cards issued, especially those provided at no cost, suggests the need for a more effective and efficient strategy, as providing identification is essential for successful reentry. It should be noted that the recommendations came from DCR staff and are based on successful and proven model. Therefore, the Department should consider ensuring:

a) **Dedicated Staff for ID Assistance**: Assign dedicated personnel to manage the ID issuance process, freeing case managers from additional duties and improving the efficiency of the overall process.
b) **Funding for State IDs or Driver's Licenses**: Utilize funding to cover the cost of providing IDs for all individuals in custody, not just those who are deemed indigent, removing financial barriers that limit access to this essential document.

c) **Initiating the ID Process at Admission**: Start the ID application process upon admission to custody, allowing sufficient time to gather required documents and ensure successful ID issuance before release.

1.23 Ensure and document that all people in custody are informed about available assistance in obtaining birth certificates, Social Security cards, civil identification card, and other relevant identification documents. Expand collaboration with federal, state, and county agencies to streamline access to these documents and expand agreements, such as the MOU with SSA, to cover people in custody within the statutory one-year period prior to parole or release, including those with shorter notice.

1.24 Develop a system to initiate identification assistance and related forms at least 90 days prior to release for people in custody in work furlough, extended furlough, or community placement programs. Implement tracking mechanisms to confirm compliance with the statutory timeline.

1.25 Translate all forms provided under **§353H-32** into the primary languages of all people in custody to ensure compliance. Supplement this effort with interpreter services as needed to complete forms.

1.26 Improve data collection and reporting to fully comply with the requirements outlined in Chapter 353H. These specific measures were thoughtfully designed to improve the reentry system and provide meaningful performance tracking, without them evaluating progress is not possible. To address gaps in compliance, the HCSOC recommends that the DCR carefully review the compliance charts included in this report, which outline the department's adherence to Chapter 353H reporting requirements, and take corresponding action. This update should address and correct all of the omissions outlined in this report—anything indicated *as mostly in compliance*, *monthly not in compliance*, or *not in compliance at all*—and be submitted to the Legislature, HCSOC, and made publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability.

Part II: Statewide Reentry: Programs, Education, Treatment, and Transitional Services; §353L-3(b)(3)

The Commission is mandated to collaborate with DCR to monitor and review reentry and the oversight of facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs and HPA's oversight of parolees—areas significantly impacted by systemic challenges within Hawaii's correctional facilities. These challenges include excessive idle time, limited out-of-cell time for people in custody, and inadequate access to educational, vocational, and rehabilitative programs. These issues are particularly severe in jails, where programming is nearly nonexistent, and remain problematic in prisons, where long waitlists for RAD-recommended programs hinder access. Limited availability and low completion rates for critical programs negatively impact reentry efforts, including the return of individuals from AZSC, progression to minimum-security facilities and furlough, and parole opportunities. For example, while 67% of people in custody at AZSC had GED listed as a recommended program, only 9% completed it in 2024, and completion

rates for other programs such as drug treatment and Career and Technical Education (CTE) remain around 50%. Additionally, the effectiveness of these programs is unclear due to the lack of regular evaluations and publicly available data, preventing necessary refinements and undermining efforts to support successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

A successful transition from incarceration to the community requires essential elements such as housing, employment, healthcare, peer support, and access to vital services. However, the current system lacks an efficient way to link people in custody with available community resources, as the Community Resource Guide is limited by time and access constraints, leaving many service providers with underutilized beds and services. Transitional housing contracts on Oahu are underutilized—occupancy rates hover at 50% for women and 70-80% for men—while neighboring islands have insufficient or non-existent contracts, creating critical gaps in reentry support despite housing being a top reentry priority. Community organizations play a vital role in providing essential services, yet many operate without contracts or funding, and key roles like the OCCC chaplain, who coordinates much of the state's reentry efforts, remain uncompensated. This lack of funding, coordination, and efficient linkages undermines the immediate and long-term success of reentry efforts.

Recommendations for Statewide Reentry: Programs, Education, Treatment, and Transitional Services; §353L-3(b)(3):

Educational and Programs

2.1 Prioritize GED completion by making GED programs a core focus across facilities to build foundational educational attainment with pre-college and mentorship programs supporting GED completion.

2.2 Expand education staff capacity by filling current vacancies and then creating new positions to coordinate programs and accelerate implementation.

2.3 Empower staff to advance programs by providing decision-making authority and support to move educational initiatives forward efficiently.

2.4 Fix technology issues to prevent disruptions during lockdowns and staff shortages. Consider partnering with Unlocked Labs[16] to streamline and improve systems, reducing frustrations for students and postsecondary partners.

2.5 Partner with local technical colleges and give them spaces to utilize in the facilities, such as Halawa. Provide initial financial support to establish vocational programs until the local technical colleges qualify for Prison Education Program (PEP) approval and federal funding. The programs must be established, requiring DCR leadership to initiate this recommendation, before being eligible for Pell Grant and federal funding.

[16] Unlocked Labs is a team of justice-impacted technologists designing and building solutions that make corrections evidence-based and data-drive, available at https://unlockedlabs.org/

2.6 Develop a statewide College Education Network through partnerships with institutions to provide statewide college programs, including at AZSC, leveraging Pell Grant eligibility. Research shows that educational attainment is one of the strongest indicators of successful reentry and post-release stability.

Treatment

2.7 Establish ongoing, independent publicly available reviews of parole-recommended programs to determine effectiveness, areas for improvement, and alignment with therapeutic and rehabilitative goals. These reviews should be conducted by independent evaluators, and if evaluating Native Hawaiian Cultural Programs, evaluators with expertise in reviewing cultural-based programming should be used. In the past, the Department has partnered with the Research and Evaluation in Public Safety (REPS) Project at the University of Hawaii, Patrick Uchigakiuchi, PhD, and Sophie Gralapp, PhD. The HCSOC continues to be impressed with the quality and impact of their contributions.

2.8 Conduct comprehensive program assessment and capacity planning through a data-driven assessment to determine the current and projected annual demand for parole-recommended programs over the next five years, identifying the number of program slots required for individuals to complete their programs by their minimum parole dates. Based on this assessment, compile a detailed list of service providers and staffing needs to ensure program delivery capacity aligns with demand within the required timeframe, ensuring capacity meets demand.

2.9 Pay providers offering RAD, parole, and committee recommended programs to invest in providers who conduct these imperative services. Having unpaid providers downplays the importance of the recommended programs. Request Funding if additional funding is needed to guarantee timely program availability.

2.10 Broaden program offerings beyond RAD-recommended options to provide meaningful opportunities for individuals while they wait for recommended programs, reducing idle time and offering purposeful activities to engage in, goals to work toward, and opportunities to look forward to. Providing a range of non-RAD programs will ensure that individuals have access to supportive activities, even while awaiting RAD program placements.

2.11 Establish and further community partnerships to uplift programming by partnering with local organizations and contract with community providers to deliver diverse programming options, mentorship, and peer navigator services. These partnerships will enhance reentry preparation, provide additional support networks, and create meaningful engagement opportunities to support individuals throughout their time in custody.

2.12 Gather input from people in custody to inform programs and support by engaging with individuals in custody to understand what programs and resources they feel are essential to their success. Establish a defined system that empowers people in custody to create and submit programming ideas to DCR leadership, ensuring their ideas are considered. These submissions should be reviewed, considered, and implemented or responded to on a quarterly

basis, fostering collaboration and innovation in developing programs that address the population's needs. Incorporating the insights of people in custody is vital because they have firsthand experience and a unique understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the correctional environment. Their perspectives provide valuable guidance for creating effective, impactful, and sustainable solutions. Additional program proposals the Commission has received are attached at Appendix E-1, E-2 and E-3.

2.13 Implement a Lifers and Longtimers Pod at AZSC, as detailed in the proposal submitted by people in custody at AZSC, attached at Appendix E-4, to address the needs of long-term incarcerated individuals and support their unique rehabilitative goals. The Commission is aware that this initiative was previously considered by DCR and strongly recommends that the Pod and related programs be reconsidered. While concerns were raised regarding the availability of sufficient number of people in custody for the program and the issue of separatees, the Commission has confirmed interest from over 110 people in custody from Hawaii at AZSC. It is essential to listen to people in custody and find a way to support this lifer and longtimer population, ensuring their unique rehabilitative needs are met and this population is also safe.

2.14 Equip all people in custody with tablets to increase access to programming, educational opportunities, and communication tools essential for maintaining community ties. Across the United States, correctional systems are leveraging technology to expand access to programming and rehabilitative services for people in custody. Many states, including New York, Michigan, California, and Colorado, provide individual not communal tablets to ensure uninterrupted access to educational content, therapeutic programs, and communication tools. Maine takes a further step by offering laptops with monitored internet access to individuals enrolled in educational programs, enabling participation in remote learning and degree completion. This initiative will particularly benefit those in protective custody who may face additional limitations on program access.

2.15 Expand programming access for people in protective custody by providing individual tablets or laptops to people in protective custody in Hawaii and Saguaro to enable access to parole- or RAD-recommended programming, educational courses, therapeutic programs, communication tools, reentry support, and books. Additionally, explore the feasibility of group programming for individuals on the same tier who are not designated as separatees, ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place.

Rehabilitative and Transitional Services

2.16 Expand housing support to address the ongoing housing challenges for individuals reentering the community. Affordable, safe, and appropriate housing is continually listed as the most significant impediment to successful transition post-incarceration. A comprehensive approach is needed to fully utilize existing resources and expand housing options, ensuring that most, if not all, people have access to stable, supportive housing during their transition, filling critical gaps in reentry. This can be fulfilled by:

a) **Compile a list of housing providers throughout Hawaii.**

b) **Fully utilize, <u>100% capacity</u>, existing housing contracts** and expand transitional housing contracts on Oahu.
c) **Expand Transitional Housing Options on Neighbor Islands** by establishing necessary housing contracts to support successful reentry.
d) **Begin Collecting Data on additional housing resources needed** to determine where gaps in housing beds exist both for people in DCR and HPA custody.

2.17 Partner with Unite Us to create an efficient, real-time connection between people in custody and community services across the state to address the social care needs of individuals leaving state custody**.** Using Unite Us will provide case managers and other staff a more efficient, effective, and accountable way to address the needs of individuals and support better reentry outcomes.

Unite Us offers a flexible, scalable, and proven infrastructure that connects public agencies, community-based organizations, and health providers in real-time. Unite Us has been active in Hawaii since 2021, with over 250 organizations currently in the Unite Hawaii network. With their secure (HIPAA-compliant) closed-loop referral system, Unite Us ensures that justice-impacted individuals leaving incarceration and on Parole Supervision are immediately connected to the right services. Their system also allows case managers to track individual outcomes while leveraging aggregated data to identify gaps, needs, and trends to optimize resource allocation.

This model has proven successful in Sacramento County's Adult Correctional Health program since 2019, where individuals leaving incarceration have been seamlessly connected to health care, financial assistance, and job support, reducing the likelihood of recidivism. Unite Us is also currently being utilized across the State of Arizona, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Miami-Dade County to support their reentry efforts. Unite Us recently began supporting the Kaua'i Office of the Prosecuting Attorney and Kaua'i County's E Ho'i I Ka Piko reentry program

2.18 Strengthen, fund, and formalize community partnerships and necessary reentry services. Reentry services and programs, which are vital for success, are limited. Where these services do exist, they often go unpaid, hindering their sustainability, and highlighting the need to formalize and fund services and positions. Ensuring continuity and stability in reentry services through adequate funding will reflect the Department's transition to the new rehabilitative model and commitment to reintegration. The following recommendations are designed to strengthen reentry services:
a) **Fund and Formalize Key Contracts** with local organizations such as Going Home Hawaii, Worknet, Pu'a Foundation, and First Life After Prison (First LAP), Maui Economic Opportunity to provide in-reach services, peer mentorship programs, employment preparation, and other transitional support. This investment will ensure individuals in custody can connect with community resources, establish support networks, and prepare for workforce entry and sustainable reintegration.
b) **Expand Partnerships** with organizations providing reentry services and establish contracts for new services to meet growing needs. These partnerships should be formalized to prioritize alignment with Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes,

essential reentry support, ensuring individuals in custody have access to consistent, high-quality programming designed to reduce recidivism and support successful reintegration.

c) **Fund Chaplain Position** to compensate and establish longevity for the critical role in reentry.

❖ Work Furlough & Parole are covered in Part IV: Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4)

Part III: Facilitating a Correctional System Transition to a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Model; §353L-3(b)(1)

Hawaii currently has a comprehensive, forward-thinking foundation for a new correctional model, emphasizing rehabilitation, human dignity, safety, and trauma-informed practices. Rather than crafting new frameworks, the path forward involves implementing, integrating, and harmonizing these existing principles across the correctional system. This established vision is grounded in a blend of statutory guidelines, legislative resolutions, task force recommendations, and executive mandates, including:

- *Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities: HCR 85 Task Force Report*,
- Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report
- Governor's Executive Order No. 24-01 designating Hawaii a trauma-informed state,
- Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes,
- Hawaii Act 278, Shift to Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Senate and House Concurrent Resolution, the Hawaii House and Senate have reiterated the importance of successful reentry and opportunities for rehabilitation through resolutions. These include improving the process for, and reporting on, providing IDs to people in custody (*Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1* (2023) and *Senate Resolution 84* (2021)), creating faith pods (*Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, Senate Draft 1* (2021)), expanding culture-based programming (*House Concurrent Resolution 171* (2021)), and increasing investment in reentry support (*Senate Concurrent Resolution 108* (2021)).

Recommendations for Facilitating a Correctional System Transition to a Rehabilitative and Therapeutic Model:

Rehabilitative Model

3.1 Create an action plan with defined steps, timelines, strategies, goals, and milestones for actualizing the new model of corrections.

3.2 Develop new DCR policies and procedures aligned with a rehabilitative model outlined in key foundational documents, including: HCR 85 Task Force Report, Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report, Governor's Executive Order No. 24-01, designating Hawaii as a trauma-informed state, Chapter 353H of Hawaii Revised Statutes, Hawaii Act 278, and Applicable Senate and House Concurrent Resolutions. This effort requires the creation of entirely new written processes, rather than superficial updates to existing documents. Particular focus should be placed on revising punitive policies and practices, such as the Special Housing

Incentive Program (SHIP), restrictive housing practices, and visitation policies, ensuring they are rehabilitative and not excessively punitive. The goal is to create policies that reflect a trauma-informed, rehabilitative approach, fostering positive outcomes for individuals in custody and supporting a system-wide cultural shift toward corrections and rehabilitation.

3.3 Provide training for new and current staff to align with the new therapeutic and rehabilitative correctional philosophy and updated DCR documents outlined above.

3.4 Establish consistent in-person contact visitation policies and practices across all facilities to maintain family and community ties essential for successful reentry.

3.5 Shift Approach to a Public Health Approach with a Comprehensive Needs Assessment. This requires a thorough assessment of jail and prison populations to identify key demographic trends, mental health and substance abuse needs, educational levels, trauma, homelessness, and other factors crucial for effective reentry planning. The Department must view rehabilitation through a public health lens, looking at the needs of people in custody.

3.6 Create a vision and strategic planning for returning all people in custody to Hawaii and ending out-of-state contracts for housing as housing individuals out of state almost 3,000 miles from their home, community, and ʻaina is neither rehabilitative nor conducive to therapeutic reentry practices.

Trauma-Informed Care

3.7 Implement statewide trauma-informed care in corrections by collaborating with specialists to provide mandatory trauma-informed care training for all staff. This is in accordance with Governor Green's Executive Order designating Hawaii a trauma informed state and incorporates healing-centered principles as strategies, one of the goals of the State of Hawaii, Governor's Office of Wellness and Resilience. This approach will enable staff to engage with greater understanding and compassionately toward individuals in custody, promoting a rehabilitative atmosphere and minimizing potential traumatization and re-traumatization for people in custody and staff.

3.8 Offer trauma treatment programs in every facility through contracts with mental health professionals in the community. In addition to culturally based healing programs, establish trauma-specific healing programs led by trained professionals across all correctional facilities in Hawaii. Well-researched therapeutic options for healing include Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and tapping/Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), delivered through contracts with community providers offering both group and individual sessions.

3.9 Collaborate with the Veterans Administration (VA) to provide specialized PTSD support for justice-involved veterans. Offering diverse therapeutic modalities is essential, as individuals respond differently to various approaches. To foster a trauma-informed environment, incorporate resources like a dedicated library on healing and wellness, and promote a community culture centered on resilience and growth. Establishing a comprehensive

network of trained professionals and trauma treatments tailored to the specific needs of each person will support a more effective rehabilitation within the correctional system.

3.10 Address the needs of specific populations in custody by collecting data and designating focused resources for specific populations within Hawaii's correctional system, including Native Hawaiians, kupuna, women, and those with mental health needs. Understanding the unique characteristics and needs of these groups enables the Department to design tailored, humane policies and programs that support effective rehabilitation and reentry. Focused attention on these populations aligns with Hawaii's rehabilitative model, promoting a correctional system that values individualized care, public safety, and community well-being.

3.11 Standardize Human-Centered Language that reflects dignity, humanity, and the possibility of a different future, including replacing terms like "offender," "body," "inmate," and "felon" with "person in custody" or other wording to foster human-centric language and sentiment. Language can support rehabilitation by focusing on the potential for transformation and growth rather than reinforcing labels tied to past behaviors. Words matter—they shape perceptions, influence self-identity, and can either uplift or limit future possibility.

3.12 Partner with Amend and their Prison Culture Change initiative focusing on transforming facility culture through health-centered, trauma-informed practices. This collaboration would provide targeted training and support for DCR staff to foster a rehabilitative environment that promotes well-being of staff and people in custody and successful reentry.

Cultural Practices: Transform Facilities into Pu'uhonua

The Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Report highlighted: *Native Hawaiians have suffered from severe intergenerational, historical, and political trauma from the loss of land, language, and culture. This collective trauma has negative economic, health, cultural, and educational impacts on individuals, and often manifests itself in criminal activity. Any effort to reduce the number of Native Hawaiians who come in contact with the criminal justice system must include a multi-pronged approach to addressing this trauma*.[17]

If the correctional system fails to provide opportunities for healing—including culturally based opportunities—it neglects the core of what is essential for true rehabilitation, recovery, and the prevention of future crimes, creating a critical and fatal gap that undermines the entire rehabilitative process.

3.13 Create a comprehensive inventory of Native Hawaiian cultural programs and service providers to be in alignment with the recommendations from the 2012 Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force. The Department must ensure the directory is consistently, no less than annually, updated to include culturally based programs, indigenous models, and service providers for Native Hawaiians. This directory should support areas such as mental health, substance abuse, workforce development, and housing. Additionally, mandatory training on

[17] Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force, *Report of the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force*, p.18 (2012), available at: https://www.oha.org/wp-content/uploads/2012NHJTF_REPORT_FINAL_0.pdf

implicit and unconscious bias for all criminal justice employees is essential to foster a culturally competent and equitable environment.

3.14 Establish system-wide Native Hawaiian cultural programs and faith pods by partnering with ʻOhana Hoʻopakele and other Native Hawaiian leaders and groups. Each facility should provide both faith pods and Native Hawaiian cultural programming, fostering an environment rooted in rehabilitation and healing. This collaboration will support the gradual transformation of facilities into spaces that reflect Native Hawaiian values and serve as Puʻuhonua. This recommendation aligns with Senate Concurrent Resolution 25 (2021), which supports the establishment of faith pods in each facility and the creation of *Puʻuhonua*—a place of refuge, sanctuary, asylum, peace, and safety—based on Hawaiian cultural practices. These decentralized wellness centers would focus on healing and reintegrating individuals into the community, benefiting both the Native Hawaiian community and the broader population. It also aligns with House Concurrent Resolution 171 (2021), which recommends implementing Native Hawaiian cultural programming across all facilities, as well as the recommendations of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force and the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force. Despite these directives, significant steps remain unrealized, highlighting the urgent need for a committed effort to implement these initiatives.

Part IV: Preventing Overcrowding and Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4)

The Commission is mandated to ensure the timely release of individuals on parole when minimum terms have been served **§353L-3(b)(4)**. These recommendations aim to improve parole outcomes and sentence reductions by addressing data gaps and systemic barriers. Enhancing HPA data collection will provide a clearer understanding of why parole is denied, helping to identify areas for improvement in timely releases. Conducting an independent analysis will investigate obstacles to parole, including incomplete programs, unviable parole plans, and low sentence reduction approvals. By analyzing parole denials and exploring opportunities for sentence reduction, these efforts will lead to actionable reforms that promote rehabilitation and successful reintegration.

Recommendations for Ensuring Timely Release on Parole; §353L-3(b)(2) & §353L-3(b)(4):

Hawaii Paroling Authority

4.1 Enhance HPA data collection to implement systematic data collection processes to track parole denials including a case management and tracking system and numerical breakdown of denials due to each of the following incomplete programs, program refusals, pending misconduct, lack of a viable parole plan, and unwillingness to parole. This will help identify key areas for improvement in timely parole release.

4.2 Conduct an independent analysis to investigate barriers to parole release and opportunities for meaningful sentence reduction. Parole release is frequently denied due to incomplete programs, program refusals, pending misconduct, lack of viable parole plans, or unwillingness to participate in parole. However, existing data from the HPA lacks the detail

needed to determine the specific impact of these issues on parole denials. Furthermore, only 19 applications for minimum sentence reductions were granted, with the appropriateness of existing minimums cited as the primary reason. This low approval rate raises concerns, particularly given Hawaii's reliance on minimum sentence reductions in the absence of good time credits. To address these issues, the HCSOC recommends:

a) **Analyzing Parole Denials** by performing a detailed review of parole denials to determine why programs remain incomplete, why parole plans are often unviable, and why some people in custody refuse to participate in parole. This analysis should address the gaps in HPA data and provide actionable insights to improve parole outcomes.
b) **Exploring Opportunities for Sentence Reduction** through examining why more individuals are not applying for reductions in minimum sentences and the factors contributing to the low approval rate. Develop recommendations to make the reduction process more accessible and effective as a rehabilitative tool in the absence of good time credits. These inquiries should not focus on whether these areas can be improved—it is clear they can; rather, the question must delve deeper into *how* meaningful changes can be achieved and sustained. These independent analyses should incorporate input from individuals in custody and staff, ensuring that solutions are practical and aligned with Hawaii's rehabilitative goals. Tailored programs such as peer support, mentorship, and mindset-shift initiatives should be developed to address these challenges and foster successful reintegration.

Conclusion

Hawaii's correctional and reentry system stands at a pivotal moment, with a clear path forward toward a rehabilitative and therapeutic model. While significant challenges remain—including staffing shortages, gaps in reentry services, and delays in parole releases—this report highlights both the barriers and the opportunities for meaningful reform. Addressing systemic issues such as inadequate reentry planning, limited program availability, and inconsistent implementation of statutory mandates will be critical in improving outcomes for individuals in custody and enhancing community safety.

By prioritizing data-driven decision-making, expanding community partnerships, and fully implementing evidence-based reentry programs, Hawaii can create a system that fosters rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and ensures individuals have the necessary support for successful reintegration. The recommendations outlined in this report provide a roadmap for action, emphasizing the need for sustained collaboration between state agencies, service providers, and community organizations.

The vision for a transformed correctional system—one that values human dignity, accountability, and long-term rehabilitation—is within reach. Achieving this vision requires commitment from all stakeholders, as well as continued oversight and accountability to ensure that reforms are implemented effectively. Through collective effort and strategic policy changes, Hawaii can build a correctional system that not only meets statutory requirements but also serves as a model for effective reentry and rehabilitation nationwide.

Appendix

Due to its length (615 pages), the appendix is available as a separate downloadable document on the Commission's website at https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/systemic-reports/. The full report, including the appendix, is also accessible on the website. For any questions or comments, please email hcsoc@hawaii.gov.

Letters from the Commission

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January 3, 2025

The Honorable Josh Green, MD
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Executive Chambers
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Members of the Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Urgent Call for a System-Wide Plan Before Proceeding with New Jail Construction

Dear Governor Green and Esteemed Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, the Commission) writes to express both its conditional support for a new jail on Oahu, contingent upon adherence to the University of Hawaii Community Design Center's (UHCDC) *Breaking Cycles: An Alternative Model for Rehabilitation & Restorative Justice* report, and the Commission's profound concern about the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (DCR) narrow focus on constructing a facility without addressing critical deficiencies in the broader correctional system.

While the Commission acknowledges the pressing need to replace the outdated and inadequate Oʻahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), we believe this can only be successful if situated within a comprehensive, system-wide plan that aligns with evidence-based rehabilitative practices. The *Breaking Cycles* report offers transformative recommendations for facility design, but these must be integrated with a robust operational strategy that addresses Hawaii's long-standing systemic challenges, including statewide diversion efforts, homelessness, mental health care, medical services within the facilities, and programs promoting rehabilitation, reentry, and reintegration.

Reasons for a Strategic Pause in Jail Planning

1. **System-Wide Gaps in Rehabilitative Practices**:
   For the past two years, the Commission has continuously presented issues that have yet to be addressed by the Department. Specifically, the Commission is concerned regarding the lack of programming space in all jails, lack of adequate mental health treatment and care, lack of compassionate healthcare services, and lack of programs, services, and recreation that provide out-of-cell time. A new facility alone will not resolve systemic issues without incorporating statewide:
   - Evidence-based and culturally competent rehabilitation programs that encourage out-of-cell time.
   - Mental health and medical services tailored to Hawaii's population.
   - Reintegration programs that include correctional industries, vocational training, and life skills education.
   - Faith-based and social engagement opportunities that promote community reintegration including ample in person, contact visitation opportunities with friends and family.
   - Robust partnerships with community service providers and volunteers to enhance in-reach services, mentorship, and post-release support.

   Additionally, the Commission continuously hears from the community that many do not believe the DCR can create the rehabilitative type of facility outlined in the *Breaking Cycles* report, as there is no track record to inspire confidence in the Department's ability to deliver on these transformative goals.

2. **Inadequate Alignment with *Breaking Cycles* Recommendations**:
   The *Breaking Cycles* report emphasizes trauma-informed design, restorative justice principles, and culturally relevant programming. The Department, however, has not committed to embedding the *Breaking Cycles* recommendations into all planning processes. Instead, during community meetings, the Department has given a half-hazard commitment to going through the report and pulling pieces that *might* work with current plans. Proceeding without fully embedding these recommendations into facility planning risks replicating the failures of the current system and wasting taxpayer funds.

3. **The Need for a Holistic Approach to Corrections and Justice System Reform**:
   Constructing a jail without simultaneously reforming the corrections system perpetuates a reactive approach to incarceration. Hawaii needs a proactive plan that incorporates diversion programs, robust reentry strategies, and services and treatment addressing the underlying issues that lead to incarceration. Hawaii's juvenile system is a key example of the need for proactive reform.

System-wide initiatives, including the collection and sharing of data, are essential to support effective diversion efforts. Collecting data on key issues, such as the prevalence of homelessness and mental health challenges among the DCR population is critical for serving the population, identifying needs, forming partnerships with service providers, and addressing gaps in resources. This data is not only vital for guiding resource allocation and facility planning but also for ensuring that the new facility is appropriately sized.

Additionally, system-wide efforts should prioritize decreasing pretrial detention times, particularly for individuals held for extended periods. Data from the Commission's 2024 tour of OCCC revealed that of the 563 individuals held pretrial on felony charges, 220 had been in custody for more than six months, accounting for approximately 23% of the facility's 954-bed capacity. Reducing pretrial detention times to six months or less for these individuals could lower the number of beds needed by nearly one-fourth, significantly easing overcrowding and improving overall system efficiency.

Conditional Support for New Jail Construction

The Commission supports the construction of a new facility only if it follows the design and operational guidelines set forth in the *Breaking Cycles* report while also addressing systemic issues noted above. Therefore, the Commission advocates for a pause in planning to ensure that the DCR develops a comprehensive system-wide plan addressing the following:

Immediate Implementation of Rehabilitative Practices

Begin implementing a rehabilitative paradigm now rather than waiting for a new facility. Efforts to demonstrate commitment to these priorities must start immediately, before moving forward with plans for a new facility, even within the constraints of limited space and outdated facility designs, to show the State and community that meaningful change is possible and underway.

For example, the following recommendations from the most recent Commission report on OCCC highlight actionable changes that can be implemented immediately without requiring new construction:

- Allow natural light by removing wood coverings from all cell windows,
- Restore contact visits,
- Expand programming opportunities,
- Expand furlough utilization at OCCC,
- Install shade for recreation cages in the holding unit,
- Investigate and address concerns raised by people in custody at OCCC, including roaches in cells and difficulties accessing bail calls, and
- Ensure regular access to books, reading materials, legal calls, mail, and recreation for those in the holding unit, including individuals in disciplinary segregation.

These initiatives do not require a new facility and can significantly improve conditions and outcomes in the interim, demonstrating the DCR's commitment to meaningful reform and its ability to effect meaningful change within its current capacity. Additionally, DCR must fully integrate the recommendations outlined in the *Breaking Cycles* report into all planning processes, facility design, and outcome measures.

Recommendations from Breaking Cycles Report into Jail Planning Process
Fully integrate the recommendations outlined in the *Breaking Cycles* report into all planning processes, facility design, and outcome measures. This includes the following system-wide recommendations:

- **Mental and Physical Health Care**: Embedding accessible, high-quality care for individuals in custody, including trauma-informed approaches.
- **Programs, Education, Job Training, and Services**: Embedding evidence-based rehabilitation programs, vocational training, recreation, faith-based initiatives, and social engagement to facilitate successful reintegration that are in *all* facilities, not only low-level prisons.
- **Incorporate Hawaiian Cultural-Based Programs:** Ensuring Hawaiian cultural-based programs are integrated into all facilities to support culture, healing, and community reintegration.
- **Train All Staff in Rehabilitative Practices and Trauma-Informed Care:** Providing training to support the Department's transition to a rehabilitative model, fostering a more compassionate and effective correctional environment aligned with the goals of a therapeutic model of corrections and healing.
- **Enhance Preparation for Successful Release and Transition to the Community:** Providing individuals in custody with the skills, resources, and support necessary for successful reintegration into the community.

Data Collection and Analysis
Collect and report data on the prevalence of homelessness and mental health issues among the incarcerated population at least monthly to inform diversion efforts and service provision. This data will help determine the size and scope of the new facility and identify gaps in community-based resources necessary for successful diversion.

Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Pretrial Detention
Work collaboratively to increase participation in Oahu diversion programs to reduce reliance on incarceration and address root causes, with opportunities to expand beyond current efforts by implementing new and innovative diversion initiatives. This could be done, for example, by having DCR initiate collaboration with justice-system partners beginning on Oahu, including the Judiciary, Public Defender, Prosecuting Attorney, and defense attorneys, to decrease pretrial detention times to six months.

Community-Based Alternatives

Enhance diversion programs and community partnerships to reduce reliance on incarceration. Integrating health, housing, and social services into correctional planning will mitigate recidivism and promote public safety.

Conclusion

The Commission strongly urges the Governor and Legislature to direct the DCR to pause its current planning process until a comprehensive system plan is in place. This pause will ensure that Hawaii's corrections system transforms into one that truly rehabilitates and reintegrates individuals while upholding the values of equity, safety, and community well-being.

The Commission remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting solutions that address the needs of all stakeholders, and we believe this approach represents the most effective path forward. The *Breaking Cycles* report provides the vision, but systemic reform requires intentional planning and execution. We urge you to act decisively to ensure these critical steps are taken.

Sincerely,



Mark Patterson
Chair

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

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January 13, 2025

The Honorable Josh Green, MD
Governor, State of Hawaii
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii. 96813

RE: Director of DCR Engagement and Participation with the Commission

Dear Governor Green:

The Correctional System Oversight Commission writes to respectfully request your assistance in ensuring that Director Tommy Johnson of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) attends future meetings of the Commission. The Director's presence at the full monthly meetings is critical to fostering the collaboration and communication necessary to address the pressing challenges within Hawaii's correctional system.

The relationship between the DCR and the Commission is pivotal to addressing shared challenges. Without open dialogue and collaboration, we risk adverse impacts on our communities, including weakened public trust and diminished capacity to enact meaningful reforms. Additionally, the absence of the Director, or an appointed designee, at Commission meetings creates a barrier to progress by limiting access to accurate, up-to-date information and impeding the exchange of ideas. We cannot achieve lasting reform without the Director's active and committed involvement.

We believe that by working together, we can address common concerns and develop solutions that benefit all stakeholders. It should be noted that the Commission has worked with three DCR administrations, and the previous DCR administrations always had the Director or their designees in attendance for the entirety of the Commission meetings.

Additionally, the Commission is concerned about recent comments made by Director Johnson during legislative briefings, which characterized the Commission as lacking the qualifications or expertise to provide informed recommendations. These remarks not only misrepresent the Commission's capabilities but also undermine public and legislative confidence in our work and strain our relationship with the DCR. We believe these statements do not reflect the shared mission

of improving the correctional system and fostering a collaborative approach to reform. Therefore, we urge the Director to refrain from further divisive rhetoric and to instead join us in building trust and mutual respect as we work toward our shared goal of improving Hawaii's correctional system.

Governor Green, we respectfully seek your support in encouraging Director Johnson to actively engage with the Commission. His presence, or that of his designee, at our meetings would bridge gaps, resolve misunderstandings, and strengthen our collective efforts. The Commission remains committed to a constructive partnership with the DCR and Director Johnson, and we are confident that by working together, we can develop solutions that benefit all stakeholders and create a more effective, equitable, and humane correctional system for our state.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response and to continuing our collaboration in pursuit of these shared objectives. Commissioners are more than happy to meet with you regarding the above concerns.

Sincerely,

All Members of the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Chair Mark Patterson

Commissioner Hon. Ronald Ibarra (ret.)

Commissioner Hon. R. Mark Browning (ret.)

Commissioner Martha Torney

Commissioner Hon. Michael A. Town (ret.)

cc: Tommy Johnson, DCR Director
Brooke Wilson, Chief of Staff