JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPT. COMM. NO. 289

RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

December 31, 2025

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 State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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

Enclosed are the following reports from the State Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, submitted in accordance with the provisions of

- Section 346-386, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), on the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions;
- Act 309, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, Relating to Housing; and
- Section 346-381(9), HRS, on the Hawai`i Interagency Council on Homelessness

Per section 93-16, HRS, this report will be available for electronic review on the Department's website at https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/. For questions regarding this report, contact Jun D. Yang, the Coordinator on Homelessness, at jun.d.yang@hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryan I. Yamane
Director

Enclosure

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

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

REPORTS TO THE THIRTY-THIRD HAWAI`I STATE LEGISLATURE 2026

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 346-386, HAWAI`I REVISED STATUTES, ON THE STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS;

ACT 309, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2025, RELATING TO HOUSING;

AND

SECTION 346-381(9), HAWAI`I REVISED STATUTES, ON THE HAWAI`I INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS
HAWAI`I INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DECEMBER 2025

INTRODUCTION

These reports are submitted pursuant to section 346-389, Hawai`i Revised Statutes (HRS), on the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Act 309, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2025; and section 346-381(9), (HRS), relating to the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH). Key terms and their definitions are listed on page 26.

The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS)

Formally established by Act 252, SLH 2022, and administratively attached to the Department of Human Services (DHS), the SOHHS is led by the Coordinator on Homelessness (CH) and consists of five full-time staff who assist the CH in carrying out the duties and functions of the SOHHS. These duties and responsibilities include:

- Working with state, county, and community partners to develop solutions to prevent and end homelessness;
- Developing and testing innovative approaches such as the Kauhale Initiative and the Ohana Zone Programs;
- Identifying and addressing gaps in the homeless services system;
- Providing administrative support to the HICH; and
- Establishing and maintaining a statewide homelessness and housing clearinghouse.

The Kauhale Initiative and the 'Ohana Zones Program are innovative initiatives administered by the SOHHS to expand shelter, service, and housing capacity for individuals experiencing and exiting homelessness through low-barrier, cost-effective housing models with wraparound services, particularly for populations not adequately served by existing programs.

In 2025, the Legislature passed Act 309, SLH 2025, which provided additional funding and clarified programmatic requirements for the Kauhale Initiative and established the 'Ohana Zones[1] Programs. The act also requires SOHHS to submit a report to the Legislature that includes data on service metrics, evaluation of program objectives, and any proposed changes to the performance measures used to assess progress toward program goals.

Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

The HICH is modeled after the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)[2] and serves as the State's primary body for homelessness planning and policy development, with broad representation from state and county governments and the community. The HICH is composed of 27 members representing federal, state, and local government, as well as representatives from the faith-based and business communities.

[1] Prior to Act 309, SLH 2025, the Ohana Zones program was a pilot program.

[2] The operations of the USICH were curtailed in April 2025.

Since 2015, the CH has served as the chair of the HICH and has been administratively supported by the SOHHS staff. The HICH is tasked with directing state-level homelessness policy and coordinating intergovernmental efforts by developing and implementing a ten-year strategic plan, informing performance metrics for state-funded homelessness programs, and aligning state and county efforts to expand shelter capacity and increase housing inventory.

PART I:
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 346-389, HAWAI`I REVISED STATUTES, ON THE STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS

AND

ACT 309, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2025, RELATING TO HOUSING

Section 346-389, HRS, and Act 309, SLH 2025, require the Coordinator on Homelessness (CH) to submit an annual report to the Legislature on performance metrics of the State's efforts to address homelessness as well as the progress of initiatives led by the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS). Accordingly, this report highlights the following key areas:

I. Performance Metrics on Statewide Efforts to Address Homelessness
II. The Kauhale Initiative Annual Report
III. The Ohana Zone Pilot Program Annual Report

I. Performance Metrics on Statewide Efforts to Address Homelessness

A. Number of Persons Experiencing Homelessness Statewide (2005 to 2025).

The annual homeless Point in Time (PIT) Count is a crucial data source to evaluate the current state of homelessness. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities to conduct a PIT Count of unsheltered individuals at least every other calendar year. PIT Count data from states and territories are aggregated and reported to Congress annually. The PIT Count is typically conducted each January by Hawaii's two Continuum of Care (CoC) agencies – Partners in Care for Oʻahu (PIC) and Bridging the Gap (BTG) for Maui, Hawaiʻi, and Kauaʻi counties. The PIT Count includes a count of both sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness.

The two CoCs conducted the most recent unsheltered PIT Count in January 2024. An annual count of unsheltered individuals was not required in 2025. Figure 1 illustrates the total number of persons experiencing homelessness statewide since 2015, broken down by sheltered and unsheltered living situations.

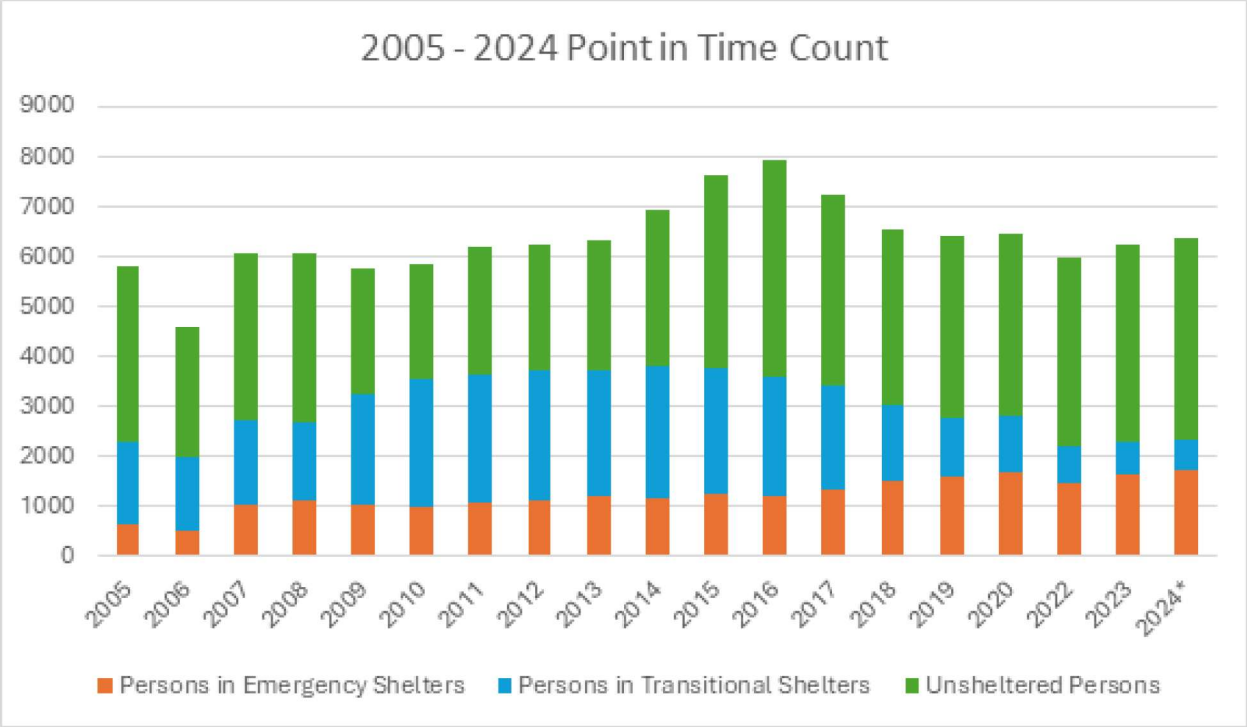


Figure 1. Statewide PIT Count (2005 to 2024). Source: HUD Homeless Population and Sub-Population Report.

The statewide number of people experiencing homelessness began to steadily rise following the economic recession of 2008, peaking in 2016 with approximately 7,921 people experiencing homelessness. Since 2016, the number of homeless individuals statewide has decreased by 1,592, a 19% overall reduction. There were also significant reductions in key homeless subpopulations since 2016:

- Family households experiencing homelessness declined by 49%, a reduction of 396 families;
- Veterans experiencing homelessness declined by 58%, a reduction of 387 veterans;
- Chronically homeless individuals declined by 10%, a reduction of 187 individuals; and
- Unsheltered homelessness declined by 6%, a reduction of 266 individuals.

While these trends represent positive outcomes relating to the State's efforts to end homelessness, unsheltered homelessness has gradually begun to increase since 2019. During the 2024 PIT Count, unsheltered individuals accounted for approximately 63% (4,042 individuals) of the statewide total of people experiencing homelessness (6,392 individuals). The number of chronically homeless individuals has also increased each year beginning in 2022, although chronic homeless status is often underreported.

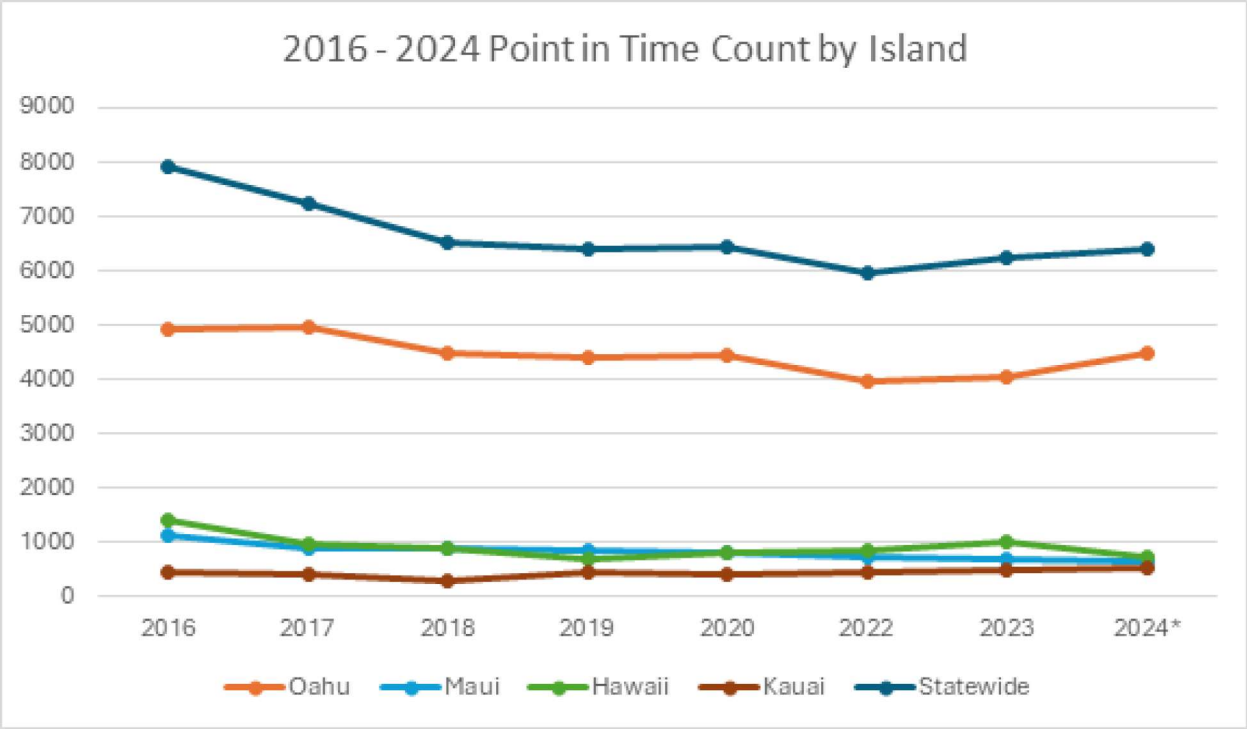


Figure 2. Statewide PIT Count by Island (2016 to 2024). Source: Partners in Care and Bridging the Gap.

Figure 2 illustrates trends in homelessness by island since 2016, including the statewide trend line. Changes in homelessness statewide largely correlate with changes in homelessness on Oahu. Homelessness on Oahu reached its lowest overall count since 2016 in 2022, but numbers have risen in the two following years.

It is important to note that homelessness data in this report does not reflect the number of individuals residing in Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) programs on Maui during the 2024 PIT Count. The inclusion of these households increases the statewide total by 2,328 households (5,245 individuals).

B. Housing Inventory and Placements to Permanent Housing.

The number of temporary and permanent housing beds for people experiencing homelessness directly impacts the State's ability to end homelessness. Historically, increases in the Housing Inventory Count (HIC), a report on the number of temporary and permanent housing beds exclusively for people experiencing homelessness, are correlated with reductions in homelessness.

Figure 3 illustrates statewide trends in the HIC since 2016, broken down by housing type. Over time, the State's inventory of temporary housing (emergency shelters, safe havens, and transitional housing) has declined, while the inventory of permanent housing (rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing) has increased. This shift largely aligns with federal guidance and funding requirements that prioritize funding permanent housing projects with federal homelessness resources.

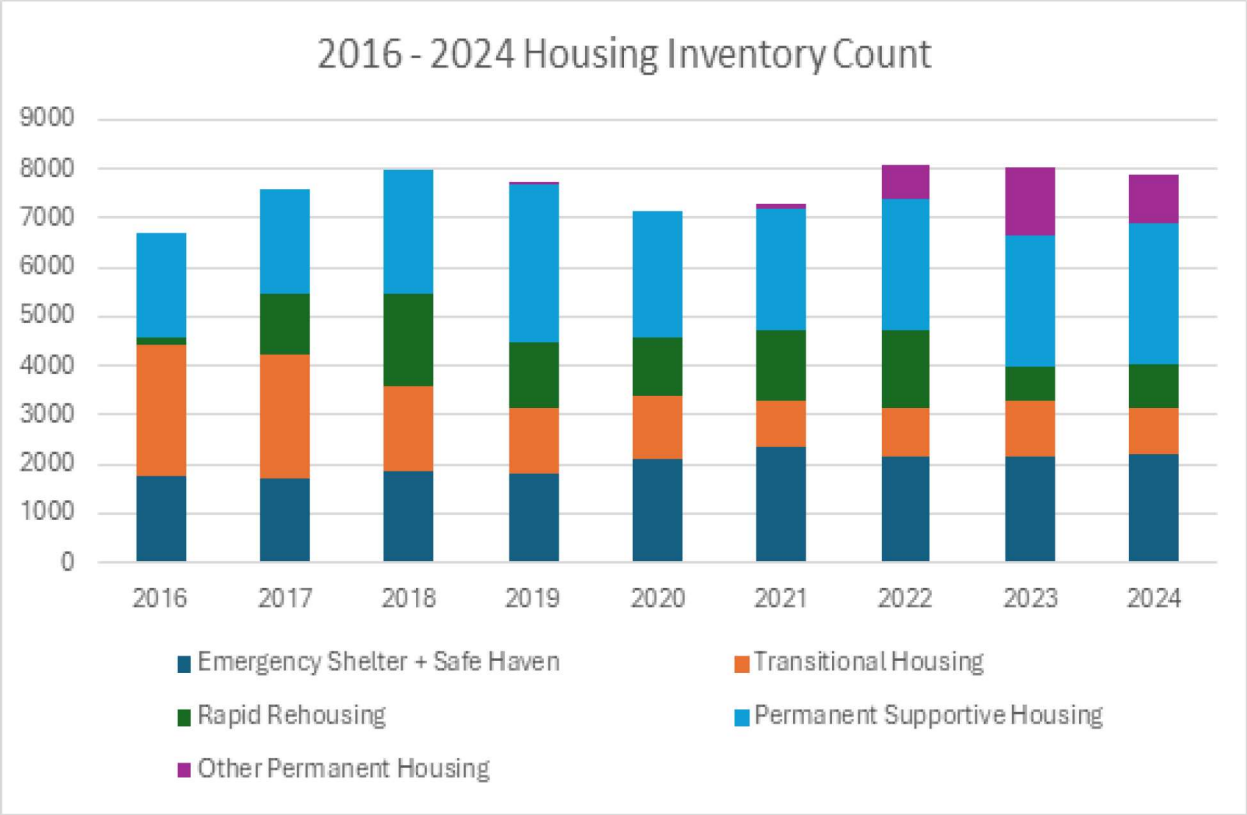


Figure 3. Statewide Housing Inventory Count (2016 to 2024). Source: HUD HIC Report.

In November 2025, HUD announced its intent to reverse previous guidance on the funding of permanent housing for people experiencing homeless using federal resources. In December 2025, HUD released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the CoC programs that proposed a wide range of changes from previous years, including a 30% program cap on permanent housing projects. Instead, HUD encouraged communities to reprioritize transitional housing, a program category it had previously removed from CoC funding competitions. As of December 30, 2025, the HUD website FY 25 CoC NOFO update states that the CoC NOFO is enjoined pending ongoing litigation.

C. Length of Stay in Homeless Programs, Exits to Permanent Housing, and Returns to Homelessness.

In addition to the number of people experiencing homelessness and the number of beds available to people experiencing homelessness, system performance metrics related to overall outcomes for homeless individuals who receive housing and other services must be examined.

These metrics help understand the relative impact the homeless service system has on homelessness at a high level and enable comparisons of statewide outcomes with national averages. Outcomes for specific programs may deviate from overall trends.

i. Length of Stay in Temporary Housing Programs (ES, SH, and TH)

Figure 4 illustrates the average length of stay in temporary housing programs (emergency shelters, safe havens, and transitional housing) on Oahu and the neighbor islands. In 2024, the average length of stay in temporary housing programs was 354 days on Oahu and 140 days on the neighbor islands.

While the length of time individuals remain in temporary housing on Oahu is increasing, longer participation in these programs is not always considered a negative outcome, especially for households needing additional support. However, extended lengths of stay in emergency shelters and other temporary housing programs are often indicative of a lack of permanent housing inventory. It is expected that the length of time in temporary housing programs will continue to increase if transitional housing inventory increases.

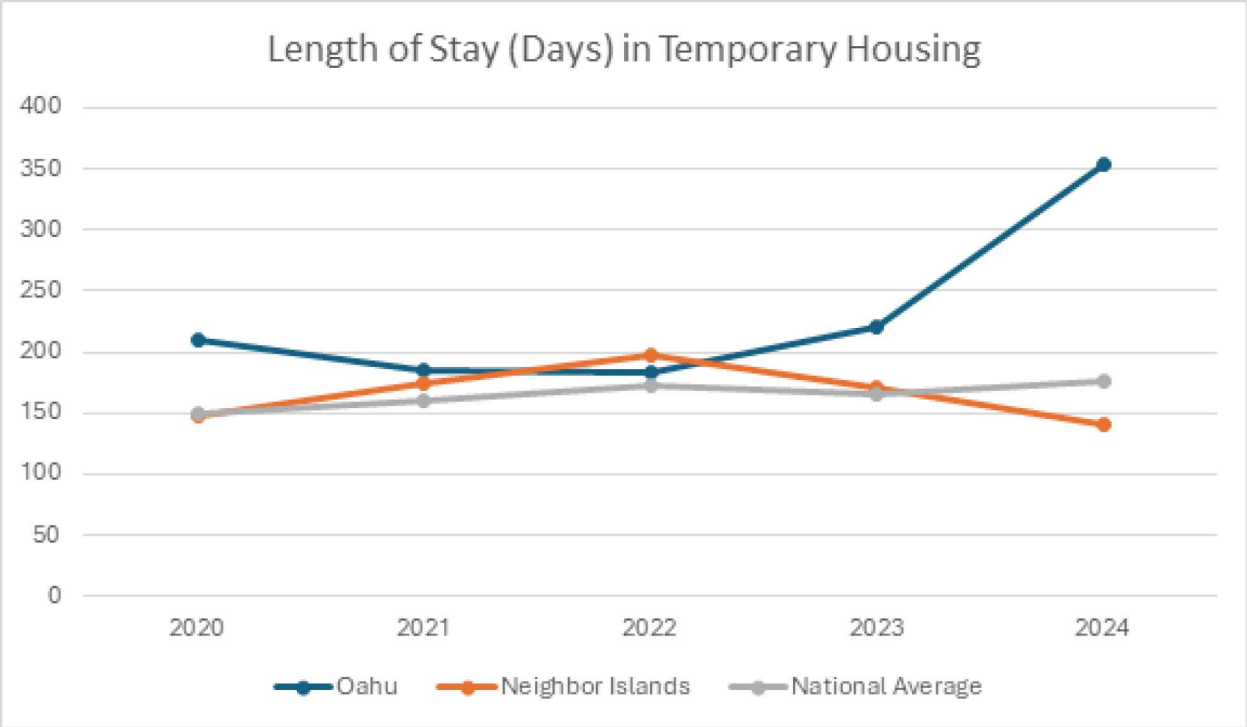


Figure 4. Length of Stay (Days) in Temporary Housing Programs (2020-2024). Source: HUD CoC System Performance Measures.

ii. Exits to Permanent Housing

Figure 5 illustrates the percentage of exits from homeless programs to permanent housing destinations. Data for 2025 is estimated from the CoCs' Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) dashboards using year-to-date information. Overall, exits to permanent housing have remained relatively stable on the neighbor islands, averaging greater than 50% of all exits, while the exit rate to permanent housing is lower on Oahu.

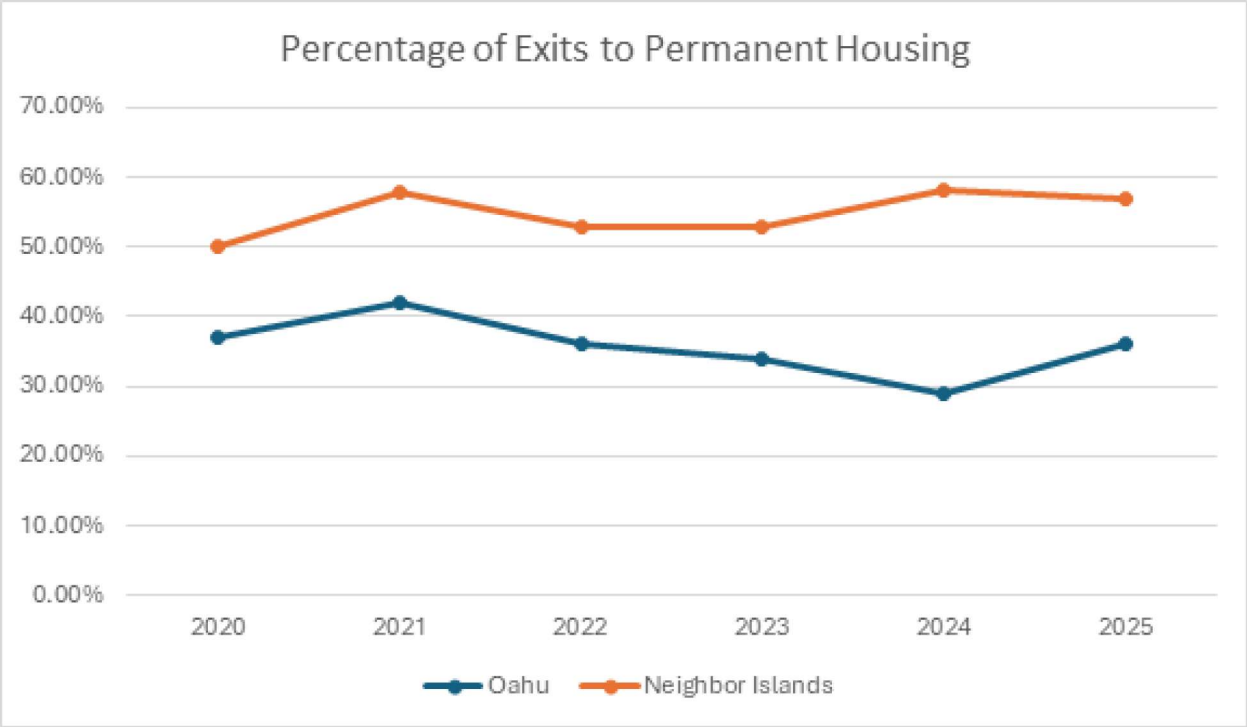


Figure 5. Percentage of Exits to Permanent Housing (2020 - 2024). Source: HUD Longitudinal System Analysis, Partners in Care, Bridging the Gap.

The lack of available permanent housing inventory, including housing options suitable for certain subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness, can increase the length of stay in homeless programs and the number of unsuccessful exits from homeless programs. Data for 2025 exits is based on self-reported data from each CoC up to the most recent month of HMIS data available at the time of this report.

iii. Returns to Homelessness Within 24 Months of Exiting to Permanent Housing

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of individuals who returned to homelessness (i.e., enrolled in a homeless program) within 24 months of exiting from a homeless program to a permanent housing destination. The recidivism rate on Oahu (13.8% of persons exited) and the neighbor islands (14.6% of persons exited) is lower than the national average of 17.4% in the 2024 reporting year.

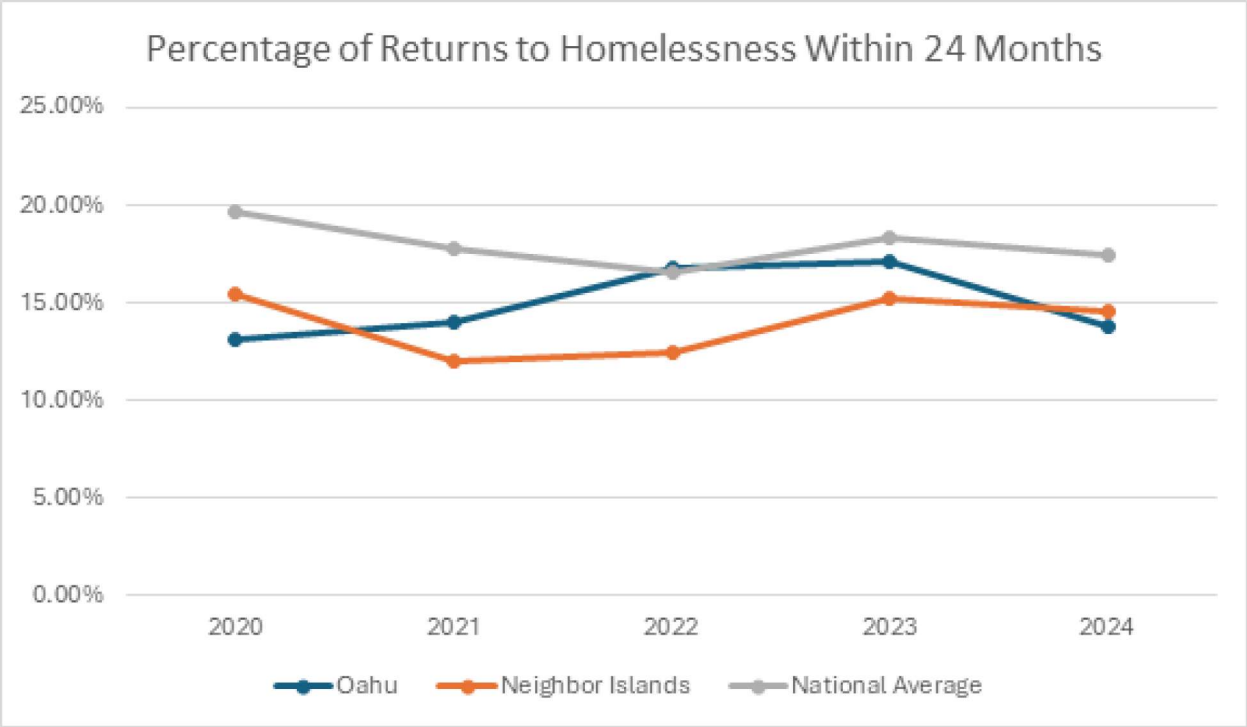


Figure 6. Percentage of Returns to Homelessness Within 24 Months (2020 - 2024). Source: HUD CoC System Performance Measures.

However, a relatively stable recidivism percentage indicates that many formerly homeless households may struggle to sustain permanent housing, even if enrolled in long-term programs that provide rent subsidies and supportive services. Additionally, households enrolled in time-limited programs, such as rapid rehousing, may lack the resources to achieve and maintain financial self-sufficiency in the current rental market after their rent subsidy ends.

II. The Kauhale Initiative Annual Report

Act 309, SLH 2025, provides additional funding for the Kauhale Initiative and the ʻOhana Zones programs administered by SOHHS and clarifies programmatic requirements for both programs. Act 309, SLH 2025, also requires SOHHS to submit a report to the Hawaiʻi State Legislature every four months detailing the expenditure of funds appropriated pursuant to the Act, as well as any appropriations made toward the Kauhale or ʻOhana Zones initiatives. Reports shall include:

(1) Data on the number of beds, occupancy, duration of stay, types of services provided, and next planned destination of participants who left the Kauhale;
(2) An evaluation of the Kauhale to determine whether the objectives set have been met or exceeded; and
(3) Any proposed changes that need to be made to the performance measures used to assess the achievement of program goals.

The Kauhale Initiative is a unique, innovative housing approach that strives to demonstrate cost-effectiveness by blending personal and communal living spaces for residents exiting homelessness. Residents of Kauhale receive robust wrap-around services, including case management and health care to help them remain housed long-term and prevent exits to homelessness. Several Kauhale specialize in providing low-barrier housing and supportive services for vulnerable subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness, including medically fragile adults, seniors, people with behavioral health needs, and survivors of domestic violence.

Act 309, SLH 2025, added the following definition of Kauhale to Chapter 346, HRS:

(1) A program to address the basic needs of individuals experiencing houselessness; and
(2) Affordable housing projects that are communal living spaces with individual household units and charge monthly rents no more than thirty per cent of the area median income level.

A. Performance Measures

The data used in this report was provided directly by Kauhale project operators and is generally current through November 30, 2025.

i. Total Number of Kauhale Beds

930	918	24
Total Kauhale Beds Created Since 2023	Active Kauhale Beds as of November 30, 2025	Active Kauhale Project Sites Statewide

As of November 30, 2025, there were 918 active Kauhale beds at 24 project sites statewide. This includes 930 beds created since 2023. The total number of beds created since 2023 does not include the temporary Maui Wildfire disaster beds created at Puʻuhonua O Nēnē as a part of the State's disaster response, which totaled approximately 144 at maximum capacity, but the number of beds in the reduced capacity site (60) is included in this report. These beds will be placed in "inactive status" upon the site's complete decommissioning by the end of December 2025.

ii. Occupancy

721	2,128	88%
Persons Residing in Kauhale on November 30, 2025	Persons Served in Kauhale Projects Through November 30, 2025	Kauhale Occupancy Rate on November 30, 2025, Based on Available Beds

As of November 30, 2025, approximately 721 individuals were residing in Kauhale projects. Since the Kauhale Initiative began, a total of 2,128 individuals have been served in Kauhale projects.

The 88% occupancy rate is calculated as total occupancy (721 persons) divided by the number of available beds (816). The following beds were excluded from the occupancy calculation:

- 30 new beds at Hoʻokahi Leo Kauhale, pending the completion of electrical connections to be performed by HECO.
- 64 new beds at Kīpūola Kauhale, pending the opening of the site to residents on December 1, 2025. The project is in the lease-up process.
- 20 beds at the Pūnāwai Medical Respite program, pending the reorganization of services and management of the program. The program is not currently under contract with SOHHS and has completed all contractual requirements.

The following projects have opened and are still in the “lease-up” process, resulting in lower occupancy rates until all beds are occupied:

- Hale Ula Lehua (0 of 10 beds filled) – actively recruiting residents.
- Kauhale at Iwilei Center (19 of 50 beds filled) – working with referring agencies and staff to manage the gradual occupancy of this Kauhale focused on adults with serious mental illness.

iii. Length of Stay

222 days

Average Length of Stay in Kauhale

As of November 30, 2025, the average length of stay in Kauhale projects was 222 days. Three active projects that have been open for more than 1 year at the time of this report have average lengths of stay exceeding 300 days. The longest average length of stay is at the Kamaʻokū Kauhale, which was the first pilot Kauhale that opened in December 2021.

There is no predetermined length of stay for Kauhale residents, and residents are encouraged to continue to work toward permanent housing with support from Kauhale project operators.

iv. Exit Destinations

359	280	249
Number of Persons Exiting Kauhale to Permanent Housing	Number of Persons Exiting Kauhale to Other Residential or Institutional Settings	Number of Persons Exiting Kauhale to Literal Homelessness

There were 888 reported exits from Kauhale projects through November 30, 2025. Of this total, 359 individuals (40%) exited to a permanent housing destination, while 280 individuals (32%) exited to other destinations, such as hospitals, treatment programs, temporarily staying with family, or other self-reported destinations. A total of 249 individuals (28%) exited back into homelessness.

Because Kauhale projects are designed to be low-barrier, it is expected that some individuals may not be ready to participate in a program right away. SOHHS convenes monthly meetings with Kauhale project operators to discuss program improvements, lessons learned, and best practices to prevent exits to homelessness and improve overall outcomes for all project participants.

B. Evaluation

SOHHS's strategic priorities include the following:

(1) Quickly move people off the streets and other places not meant for human habitation.
(2) Create safe, stable places for homeless individuals to heal from trauma and transform their lives.
(3) Build a robust housing ladder that offers person-focused pathways to deeply affordable permanent housing.

Since 2023, the Kauhale Initiative has funded 930 beds for unsheltered individuals. These beds have provided much-needed inventory for people experiencing the costly and harmful impacts of unsheltered homelessness with minimal entry requirements. In addition, Kauhale sites offer flexibility regarding the length of stay for all participants working toward housing independence.

Kauhale are an important component of the housing ladder for unsheltered households who lack the financial resources and social supports to immediately obtain permanent housing. Since 2023, 359 individuals exited Kauhale projects into permanent housing, accounting for 40% of the total exits recorded during this period.

Success Stories

- "Malia" was a resident of the Kauhale Program for 2 years. While in the program, she attended life skills classes and program activities that helped her to learn employment skills and increase her ability to find a job and start saving money. She

was on probation and completed her community service requirement, during which she also expanded her network of community social support. She attended financial literacy classes and saved $20K, which provided a solid financial foundation. She was released from probation on July 25, 2025, and moved into permanent housing on the Big Island in October 2025. This financial safety net and education will help her withstand financial emergencies and lessen the possibility of reoffending or returning to homelessness.

- "John" was renting a room in a house and paying rent every month, but quickly found himself facing homelessness when the owner of the home decided to move back in. Unable to find another affordable housing option, John was forced to pack his belongings and move into his car. When a Kauhale opened nearby, John contacted the project operator and quickly completed the move-in. The Kauhale's central location and affordable program fee allow John to keep his job and continue building up savings.

C. Proposed Changes to Performance Measures

SOHHS is encouraged by the reported Kauhale occupancy rates and participants' exit destinations. To better capture some of the project impacts of participants while residing in Kauhale, SOHHS will be working with project operators to begin documenting the following participant outcomes:

- Reduction in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and law enforcement encounters before and after entering a Kauhale project.
- Increases in income, including employment income, after entering a Kauhale project.
- Additional breakdown of temporary exit destinations to better understand the inflow and outflow of specific project types and subpopulations.

III. The 'Ohana Zones Pilot Program Annual Report

The 'Ohana Zones Pilot Program was established as a temporary pilot program by Act 209, SLH 2018, with the goal of creating additional service, shelter, and housing capacity for individuals experiencing homelessness who were not prioritized or who could not be served by existing homeless programs. At that time, an 'Ohana Zone was defined as a place:

(1) That has a program to address basic needs of individuals experiencing homelessness; and

(2) Where wrap-around services, social and health care services, transportation, and other services may be offered with the goals of alleviating poverty and transitioning individuals experiencing homelessness into affordable housing.

Act 128, SLH 2019, expanded the scope of the 'Ohana Zones Pilot Program to include locations on private lands and to allow for off-grid technologies. Act 235, SLH 2022,

extended the program through June 30, 2026, provided additional funding to SOHHS to continue administering ‘Ohana Zones pilot projects, and clarified programmatic requirements.

Act 309, SLH 2025, added the ‘Ohana Zones program into Chapter 346, HRS, establishing it as a permanent program.

A. Performance Measures

SOHHS contracts with each of the four major counties to administer ‘Ohana Zones programs. Data used in this report was provided directly from counties and program operators and is generally current through November 30, 2025.

i. Total Number of ‘Ohana Zones Beds

40	132
Active ‘Ohana Zone Shelter Beds	Active ‘Ohana Zone Permanent Housing Units

As of November 30, 2025, there were 40 active shelter beds and 132 active permanent housing units funded by the Ohana Zones program. These included the following projects:

Table 1. Ohana Zones programs as of November 30, 2025.

Program Name	County	Type of Program	Number of Beds/Units
Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered persons (HONU)	Honolulu	Shelter	40 (individual or family beds)
Housing First IV	Honolulu	Permanent Housing	60 (individual or family units and vouchers)
Huliau	Maui	Permanent Housing	12 (family units)
Kealaula and Pua Loke	Kauaʻi	Permanent Housing	60 (family units)
Multi-Service Programs	Hawaiʻi	TBD	TBD

SOHHS and the County of Hawaiʻi are in the process of executing a contract and budget amendment to permit the County to reallocate unspent ‘Ohana Zone funds to other direct service projects for unsheltered individuals. There are no active ‘Ohana Zone contracts on Hawaiʻi island as of November 30, 2025, but the County expects to award ‘Ohana Zone funds to a new shelter program in early 2026.

ii. Occupancy

300	5,355	92%
Persons Served in ‘Ohana Zones Programs on November 30, 2025	Persons Served in Active ‘Ohana Zones Programs Through November 30, 2025	‘Ohana Zone Occupancy Rate on November 30, 2025, Based on Available Beds

As of November 30, 2025, there were approximately 244 individuals served in active ‘Ohana Zone programs. The number of individuals served in these active projects since the beginning of the ‘Ohana Zones Pilot Program is approximately 5,256. The largest driver of this number is the HONU program, which has been in continuous operation since December 2019 and provides short-term triage and navigation to other shelters on O‘ahu.

The 95% occupancy rate for beds/units is based on the total number of occupied shelter beds and the total number of occupied housing units.

- Two housing units at Huliau were offline for repairs as of November 30, 2025, and could not be occupied.
- The City & County of Honolulu is working on a contract amendment to permit the use of ‘Ohana Zone subsidies at privately owned rental units, rather than only City-owned rental units, to increase utilization in the Housing First IV program.

iii. Length of Stay

50 days	766 days
Average Length of Stay in Ohana Zone Shelter Programs	Average Length of Stay in Ohana Zone Permanent Housing Programs

As of November 30, 2025, the average length of stay in ‘Ohana Zone shelter programs was 50 days. This estimate was provided by the City & County of Honolulu based on recent program data for the HONU program. Because the objective of the HONU program is to help stabilize unsheltered individuals and identify appropriate shelter placements, a longer length of stay is indicative of shelter vacancy challenges, especially for households with multiple unique needs (e.g., multiple pets, geographic preferences). At this time, the HONU program is the only ‘Ohana Zone shelter program being funded.

As of November 30, 2025, the average length of stay in ‘Ohana Zone permanent housing programs was 766 days. This is based on enrollment data from program operators. Because

these programs are intended to be long-term, long stays are expected. Some variation exists between programs depending on how long the program has been active.

- The Pua Loke location (Kaua‘i) opened in September 2024 and became fully occupied in January 2025.

iv. Exit Destinations

Due to significant programmatic differences in ‘Ohana Zone programs, exit destinations and outcomes are reported separately for shelter and permanent housing programs.

298	196	66%
Number of Persons Exiting Ohana Zone Permanent Housing Programs	Number of Persons Exiting Ohana Zone Permanent Housing Programs to Other Permanent Housing	Permanent Housing Exit Rate from Ohana Zone Permanent Housing Programs

There were approximately 298 reported exits from Ohana Zone permanent housing programs through November 30, 2025. Of this total, 196 individuals (66%) exited to a permanent housing destination. Due to longer expected lengths of stay in permanent housing programs, there have been fewer exits from these programs to report.

63%

Positive Exit Rate from Ohana Zone Shelter Programs

Data regarding exit destinations from ‘Ohana Zone shelter programs is provided by the City & County of Honolulu based on recent program data for the HONU program over the past 12 months. Positive exits include placements into shelters, family reunification (on-island and off-island), placement into boarding homes or other housing, placement into a medical care facility, and permanent housing. Negative exits are any exits back to unsheltered homelessness or unknown destinations.

B. Evaluation

SOHHS’s strategic priorities include the following:

(1) Quickly move people off the streets and other places not meant for human habitation.
(2) Create safe, stable places for homeless individuals to heal from trauma and transform their lives.

(3) Build a robust housing ladder that offers person-focused pathways to deeply affordable permanent housing.

Prior to the establishment of these priorities, the ʻOhana Zones Pilot Program was created to allow for flexible housing, shelter, and service models designed to address gaps in existing homeless resources. The scope of the ʻOhana Zones Pilot Program included a wide range of program models implemented with the support of each county.

The current ʻOhana Zones programs include shelter and housing programs that uniquely address unmet needs in the homeless service system. The HONU program provides 24/7 intake and referrals on Oʻahu and partners with non-traditional stakeholders (e.g., law enforcement, government workers) to offer a low-barrier shelter navigation option.

On the neighbor islands, ʻOhana Zone funds have been used to create dedicated housing resources for homeless households who might not otherwise qualify for permanent housing through the Coordinated Entry System due to being a lower priority based on vulnerability. The creation of these beds has proven invaluable to housing stability and future success for individuals and families who have been assisted. The permanent housing exit rate from permanent housing programs indicates that many households are better positioned to access other housing options in the future.

Success Stories

- "Gina" was a victim of domestic violence and a single mom of one. She was houseless, both on the street and couch-surfing. She moved to Kealaula on November 24, 2023. She has since become gainfully employed, increased her self-esteem, and become more self-reliant. She exited Kealaula on July 1, 2025, into a permanent housing private unit in Eleele.

- The household included a married couple with four children who entered the Huliau Project in April 2021, transitioning from an emergency shelter environment. At the time of entry, both adults were unemployed, and the family lacked several essential documents needed to access services and employment. Initial case management efforts focused on meeting immediate stabilization needs, including securing identification documents and birth certificates for all household members.

  Over time, the family grew, and by 2024, two additional children were born, increasing the household size to eight. As the family's needs evolved, Family Life Center (FLC) case managers provided consistent, intensive support and coordinated connections to a wide range of community-based resources. These included Maui Family Support Services (MFSS)/Kane Connection, Imua Preschool, Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO) Head Start, MEO Small Business Classes, Keiki o ka ʻĀina, the Department of Education (DOE) Homeless Liaison, as well as Maui Food Bank, Parents and Children Together (PACT), and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. These connections were critical in supporting the children's development, ensuring school

stability, strengthening parenting supports, and addressing food and basic needs.

A major focus of case management was employment stabilization. At program entry, neither adult was working. Through coordinated planning and support, both adults secured stable employment. Employment was obtained strategically to meet the family's childcare and transportation needs, with each parent working different shifts to ensure that one adult was always available to care for the children and transport them to school and early childhood programs. This intentional approach supported both workforce participation and family stability.

By the end of their stay at Huliau, the household demonstrated significant progress toward self-sufficiency. The family successfully maintained employment, consistently paid rent, and reported increased confidence in their ability to manage household responsibilities. The parents shared that they learned essential life skills, including budgeting, timely rent payments, responsible tenancy, problem-solving, goal-setting, taking action, and seeking assistance when needed. On March 11, 2025, the family successfully transitioned from the Huliau Project into permanent housing in the community. The transition was supported by a security deposit and limited rental assistance to ensure a smooth move and housing stability. The family expressed confidence that the skills, supports, and tools gained through Huliau would allow them to remain housed and successful long term.

This successful transition reflects FLC's program philosophy that Huliau is not intended to be permanent housing, but rather a place for families to stabilize, build skills, and move toward independence. With this family's transition to permanent housing, a unit has now become available for another family in need of the intensive support provided by Huliau, further supporting system flow and access for families experiencing homelessness.

- "Maile" is a 37-year-old single mom with two young children, who, prior to moving into Lima Ola on October 3, 2024, was living in her car at various parks around the island. As a single mom, she did her best to keep her family together, but sometimes had to leave her children with friends or family.

  Upon moving into Lima Ola, she set goals to improve her employment, secure stable employment, obtain a HUD voucher, and find permanent housing. Within a couple of months, she found employment that worked with her kid's schedule. This meant staff had to get creative with her case management meeting due to her work schedule. The meeting was held by phone, email, and in the evening, and included some weekend meetings.

  In mid-June, she received her voucher. After receiving her voucher, she submitted her Kai Olino Ph. 1 application, and her application was pulled for processing.

She was notified on June 27th that she had been approved and could sign her lease. She has successfully moved into permanent housing.

C. Proposed Changes to Performance Measures

SOHHS is encouraged by the long-term results of creating flexible shelter and permanent housing that allows homeless households to stabilize and improve their lives. To better capture some of the project impacts on participants while residing in ʻOhana Zones permanent housing programs, SOHHS will be working with program operators to begin documenting the following participant outcomes:

- Reduction in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and law enforcement encounters before and after entering permanent housing.
- Increases in income, including employment income, after entering permanent housing.
- Additional breakdown of temporary exit destinations to better understand the inflow and outflow of specific project types and subpopulations.

SOHHS will work with shelter program operators to better document participant outcomes consistent with the objectives of the shelter program and the average length of time participants spend in the program.

PART II:
REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 346-381(9), HAWAIʻI REVISED STATUTES RELATING TO THE HAWAIʻI INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

The Hawai`i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) is an advisory body that serves as the primary statewide entity for homelessness planning and policy development. Section 346-381(9), HRS, requires the HICH to submit a report to the Legislature on the progress of its activities, including the formation and progress of the ten-year strategic plan (Ten-Year Plan) to address homelessness, no later than twenty days before the convening of the regular session.

This report highlights the following key points:

(1) Overview of the Hawai`i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)
(2) Key Actions of the HICH in 2025

A record of HICH meetings convened in 2025, including meeting agendas and minutes, can be found online at https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/.

A. Overview of the Hawai`i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

1. Background and Purpose

The mission of the Hawai‘i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) is to prevent and end homelessness in Hawai‘i. The HICH advances this mission by coordinating efforts among governmental and private entities statewide, including federal, state, and local government agencies; private foundations; the business and faith-based communities; homeless service providers; and individuals with lived experience of homelessness. Section 346-381, Hawai‘i HRS, sets forth the specific duties and responsibilities of the HICH. Modeled after the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), the HICH is the first state interagency council on homelessness to be formally established by statute.

The Hawai‘i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) has existed in various forms for more than a decade, with its duties and organizational structure evolving as it transitioned from an informal body to a statutorily established advisory council. The HICH began as an informal, voluntary council in 2004 and was formally established in 2011 through Executive Order No. 11-21 issued by Governor Neil Abercrombie. The Council was subsequently codified in statute by Act 105, SLH 2012. The Legislature further amended the HICH statute through Act 76, SLH 2013; Act 81, SLH 2019; and, most recently, Act 252, SLH 2022.

The 2013 amendments expanded the Council’s membership, the 2019 amendment required the Governor to appoint the Governor’s Coordinator on Homelessness without regard to Chapter 76, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, and the 2022 amendment established the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, which, among other responsibilities, provides administrative support to the HICH.

2. Membership and Quorum

The Coordinator on Homelessness (CH) serves as the chair of the HICH, which is composed of 27 members representing a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including state agencies, legislators, federal and county governments, homeless service providers, and the faith-based and business communities. Membership includes individuals designated by county mayors, the House and Senate leadership, and members designated or requested by the Governor. A majority of the Council, defined as 14 of the 27 members, constitutes a quorum for the conduct of business and the validation of Council actions.

The most updated list of HICH membership information is available at https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/.

3. Organizational Structure and Staffing

The SOHHS and HICH are both attached to DHS for administrative purposes. The SOHHS includes the CH and five staff that, among other duties, provide administrative support to the

HICH and facilitate coordination and alignment of federal, State, and local efforts to address homelessness.

B. Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Address Homelessness

In 2012, the Hawai‘i Interagency Council on Homelessness adopted a ten-year strategic plan and framework to guide statewide efforts to address homelessness. The 2012 plan aligned with Opening Doors, the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, and established four key goals:

1. Re-tool the homelessness crisis response system.
2. Increase access to stable and affordable housing.
3. Increase economic stability and self-sufficiency.
4. Improve health and stability.

A revised ten-year plan and strategic framework to end homelessness for the period of 2022 through 2032 was adopted by the HICH at its May 16, 2022, regular meeting. This revised plan was adopted with the vision of establishing a housing-focused system that provides clear pathways to stable housing for individuals and families. It sets out goals to end homelessness in specific sub-populations among Veterans, people with disabling conditions, families with minor children, and unaccompanied youth.

To achieve this vision, the revised plan set out five specific focus areas that would drive its implementation:

1. Building System Capacity and Strengthening Core Competencies.

To function effectively, the homelessness response system requires a knowledgeable and qualified workforce that is innovative and able to course correct as needed.

Strategies to achieve this objective include building a shared understanding of system processes, developing competency-based practitioner profiles, expanding the use of peer specialists, and establishing forums for collaborative problem solving.

2. Strengthening System Leadership and Stakeholder Alignment.

The actions and behaviors of leaders shape the effectiveness of the system and require alignment across all stakeholders.

Strategies in this area include developing a shared understanding and common language among system leaders, using mediation services to address conflicts, strengthening interjurisdictional partnerships, and establishing competency-based leadership profiles. This focus area also emphasizes stronger alignment among federal, state, and county government efforts.

3. Investing in Organizational Support and Infrastructure.

The organizational structure of the system is critical to its effectiveness, including its ability to collect and manage data, assess system performance, and provide appropriate financial oversight. An effective infrastructure should also support strong partnerships among system stakeholders, including individuals with lived experience of homelessness, faith-based organizations, and the private sector.

Strategies in this area include developing methods to aggregate data across multiple systems, implementing technology solutions for real-time shelter and housing inventory tracking, mapping fiscal data across funding streams, refining service contracts across jurisdictions, and aligning performance metrics used in contracts.

4. Sustaining and Scaling Housing-focused Approaches.

Housing is the solution to homelessness and serves as the anchor of all strategies to end homelessness. An effective response system must prioritize strategies that expand the supply of low-income and affordable housing, support rapid connections to housing, and ensure stable transitions with appropriate services.

Strategies in this area include reinvesting in the State Affordable Rental Housing Plan to serve households across income levels, expanding financing strategies for permanent supportive housing, scaling both deep and shallow rental subsidies, strengthening cross-government partnerships to increase housing opportunities, reviewing policies and practices governing publicly funded affordable housing, and conducting a systemwide inventory of land and properties suitable for housing development or reuse. This focus area also emphasizes strengthening community and interpersonal connections through communal design, shared gathering spaces, and expanded system-level landlord engagement and incentive programs.

5. Diversion and Prevention to Address Households at Imminent Risk of Homelessness and connections to treatment for the most vulnerable

As quickly as providers transition homeless individuals and families into housing, many more individuals fall into homelessness for the first time due to economic hardship or a one-time crisis. In addition, some homeless individuals experience severe mental illness, substance use disorders, or chronic physical health conditions that require support outside of the homelessness system.

Strategies in this focus area drive implementation of homelessness prevention and diversion strategies to stabilize housing for those at risk of homelessness and to rapidly identify housing options for individuals without a previous history of homelessness. In addition, these strategies connect individuals with higher levels of acuity to other resources that can stabilize their situation and provide appropriate levels of care.

The revised ten-year plan builds on lessons learned from implementation of the 2012 plan and early findings from the evaluation of the ʻOhana Zones pilot program. The plan focuses on

strengthening the homelessness response system by emphasizing key implementation drivers that accelerate change and support the development of a housing-focused system.

By expanding system capacity through these drivers, the plan aims to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness, including higher rates of housing placement and shorter lengths of stay in shelters and other programs. Progress will be measured through indicators reflecting an effective system in which homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring, as well as metrics related to housing inventory. Specific performance measures are detailed in the preceding section of this report. The full text of both the 2012 and 2022 ten-year plans is available at https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich.

C. Key Actions of the HICH in 2025

Two regular meetings of the Hawai‘i Interagency Council on Homelessness were held in 2025, on September 16 and December 16. Due to staffing transitions within the SOHHS during the first half of 2025, there was a temporary hiatus following the previous regular meeting held on October 24, 2024.

D. Reports on the Implementation of the Hawaii Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to End Homelessness (2022-2032)

At the HICH Quarterly Meeting on September 16, 2025, the Council determined that a review of progress in implementing the Ten-Year Strategic Plan across the agencies and organizations represented by its members would be beneficial. The Council unanimously approved a motion requiring all HICH members to submit a report, prior to the December regular meeting, outlining their agency’s ongoing efforts and resources to address homelessness, aligned with one or more focus areas and strategies of the Strategic Plan.

While the request was intended to provide a comprehensive view of implementation, only 13 of the 27 required reports were received, limiting the ability to fully assess progress across the system. SOHHS staff continue to follow up with remaining members to obtain the outstanding submissions.

Table 2. Matrix of reports submitted by HICH members’ agencies on their implementation efforts of the 10-year strategic plan as it pertains to one or more of the focus areas and its strategies.

Agency	Competencies	Leadership	Organizational	Housing	Diversion & Prevention
Department of Health	—	—	—	2	4, 5, 11, 13, 14
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations	—	—	12	—	3, 6, 7, 9
Department of Business,	—	—	—	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8	3

Agency	Competencies	Leadership	Organizational	Housing	Diversion & Prevention
Economic Development and Tourism					
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands	—	—	—	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	—
Department of Defense	—	—	—	—	9, 12, 14
Department of the Attorney General	—	—	—	7	4, 11, 12, 13
Department of Education	—	—	—	—	1, 6, 7
City & County of Honolulu	—	—	2, 12	5	14
Hawai‘i County	—	—	12	1	4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13
Kaua‘i County	—	—	12	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	9
Homeless Programs Office	—	3	5, 7, 12	2, 3, 5	1, 6, 14
Continuum of Care of Oahu	2	—	—	5	4, 10, 12
Department of Veteran Affairs	4	—	—	2, 3, 9	6, 9, 10, 13, 14

At the December meeting, the Chair reviewed the submitted reports with the HICH members and facilitated discussions on identifying gaps, improving coordination, and better aligning current efforts and resources with the Ten-Year Strategic Plan's priorities and direction.

E. Presentations and Informational Briefings

The CH used the first regular HICH meeting of 2025 to ensure that the Council and participating stakeholders, including the Institute of Human Services and Hale Kipa, were informed and aligned on the status, direction, and priorities of the current state administration’s approach to addressing homelessness. The briefing provided updates on the development of SOHHS operation and coordination efforts, the progress of key SOHHS-led initiatives such as the Kauhale Initiative and the ‘Ohana Zones Program, and statutory changes impacting the office from the 2025 legislative session. The Chair also reviewed the budget appropriations for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 and their allocation across the Kauhale Initiative and the ‘Ohana Zones Pilot programs.

To maintain continuity with the priorities raised during the 2024 regular meetings, the Chair reviewed prior meeting minutes and addressed the Council's request for updates on programs and services focused on homeless youth. The CH invited Hale Kipa, a nonprofit service provider contracted to operate one of the Youth Kauhale programs, such as Kauhale Opio, to have its team provide a briefing to the Council and attendees on program implementation and progress.

Recordings of these presentations and related meeting materials are available on the SOHHS website at: https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/agenda-and-minutes/.

F. Overhaul of HICH Archived Materials and Recordings

As part of a broader modernization and system improvements to the SOHHS website, SOHHS staff undertook a comprehensive effort to upload, relink, and reorganize archived materials and available recordings from HICH meetings spanning 2013 to 2025.

These updates are scheduled for release in January 2026 and will be available at https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/agenda-and-minutes/.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Affordable housing—Generally, housing is considered "affordable" when the cost is less than 30 percent of a household's income. Conversely, when housing costs exceed this threshold, a household is 'housing-cost burdened.' With an estimated 57.5% of renters paying more than one-third of their income to rent, Hawai`i has the second-highest number of cost-burdened renters in the nation.5 In addition, the households with the most severe lack of affordable housing are extremely low-income, earning less than 30% Area Median Income (AMI).

Chronically Homeless—A chronically homeless person is a homeless person with a disability who has been homeless continuously for at least 12 months or has been homeless on at least four separate occasions over the past three years. The combined length of time in those four or more occasions must be twelve months or more, as specified in the Final Rule on the definition of "chronically homeless" issued by HUD in December 2015.6 A chronically homeless family is a family with an adult head of household who meets the definition of a chronically homeless person.

Continuum of Care (CoC)—A CoC is a regional or local planning body coordinating HUD funding for housing and services for homeless families and persons. In Hawai`i, there are two CoCs – Partners in Care for the island of O`ahu and Bridging the Gap for the other counties. Each CoC includes government agencies, homeless service providers, funders, and other interested community members. Each CoC is responsible for submitting an annual application for federal homeless assistance funds. The federal funding for homeless services is also known as "CoC funds." In addition to applying for funding, the CoC administers the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count of the homeless population and the annual Housing Inventory Count (HIC). These counts provide an overview of the State of homelessness in a CoC.

Coordinated Entry System (CES)—The Coordinated Entry System ensures that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to homeless resources. Based on their strengths and needs, they are quickly identified, assessed for, referred to, and connected to housing and assistance. A coordinated entry system helps communities prioritize housing and homeless assistance based on a homeless person's vulnerability and the severity of their needs. People who need assistance the most can receive it promptly. Federal law requires that CoCs establish a coordinated entry system.

Emergency shelter—An emergency shelter generally is a facility with overnight sleeping accommodations that provides short-term, temporary shelter for homeless persons and does not require occupants to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. Emergency shelters differ from transitional housing, which typically allows a maximum stay of up to 24 months.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)—The HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on housing and services for homeless persons, families, and persons at immediate risk of homelessness. Each CoC–Partners in Care and Bridging the Gap maintains its HMIS.

Homeless outreach—Homeless outreach includes meeting homeless persons on streets, sidewalks, or in remote rural areas, including beaches and valleys. Outreach providers assist with completing program applications, determining program eligibility, conducting housing searches, arranging placements, and working with the person to obtain identification and other vital documents (e.g., a birth certificate or a Social Security card).

Housing First—Housing First is a philosophy that provides homeless people with housing quickly, then services as needed. In a Housing First approach, the immediate and primary focus is on accessing and sustaining permanent housing for all homeless populations. In addition to the Housing First philosophy, the term refers to specific PSH programs operated by the State and the City and County of Honolulu. The State's and City's Housing First programs adopt the philosophy of targeting chronically homeless households for services.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)—The HIC is a point-in-time inventory of programs within a Continuum of Care that provides beds and units dedicated to serving homeless persons. The HIC includes beds for emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing beds.

Permanent supportive housing (PSH)—PSH is a service delivery model that combines low-barrier affordable housing, health care, and supportive services to enable homeless persons to attain and maintain permanent housing. PSH programs typically target chronically homeless persons or homeless persons who experience multiple housing barriers and cannot maintain housing stability without supportive services. As a result, PSH programs positively impact housing status and result in cost savings to various public service systems, including health care. The State and City Housing First programs that target chronically homeless persons are examples of PSH programs.

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count—A PIT Count is an unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community experiencing homelessness. The PIT Count includes both sheltered and unsheltered populations. HUD requires that communities receiving federal funds for homeless services conduct a PIT Count at least every other year. HUD also requires communities to identify whether a person is an individual, a member of a family unit, or an unaccompanied youth under 18. Also, communities must determine if a person is chronically homeless.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH)—Rapid Rehousing prioritizes moving a family or individual experiencing homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible. The duration of financial assistance provided in a rapid rehousing program can include either short-term (up to 3 months) or medium-term (6 months to 24 months) support. In general, the core components of Rapid Rehousing are housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program—"Section 8" refers to Section 8 of the Housing Act, which authorizes the payment of rental housing assistance to private landlords for low-income households. A common form of Section 8 assistance is the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program, also known as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which provides direct rental payment to the landlord. Typically, a Section 8 voucher recipient will pay

one-third of their income towards rent, with the remaining balance of rent provided by the Section 8 voucher payment. A Section 8 voucher typically provides a full rental subsidy instead of a shallow one.

Project-Based Voucher (PBV) – PBVs are part of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program and provide place-based subsidies to assist households in affording housing in the private market.

Supportive Housing – Supportive Housing is affordable housing with wraparound supportive services for vulnerable individuals and families, including homeless individuals, families, and other sub-populations with acute needs.

Transitional Shelter—Transitional shelter, also referred to as transitional housing, is designed to provide homeless persons and families with temporary stability and support to move to and maintain permanent housing eventually. Transitional housing is generally for up to 24 months with accompanying supportive services.