DEPT. COMM. NO. 393

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GOVERNOR

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CHAIR

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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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June 12, 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 State 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 monthly Oversight Coordinator Report for the month of April. This report includes actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. These reports may be reviewed electronically at http://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/reports.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at 808-587-4160.

Respectfully,

Mark Patterson
Chair

c: Governor's Office
Legislative Reference Bureau Library (1 hard copy)

Enclosure



Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – May 2026

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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 Friday 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 Tuesday, May 19, 2026, a Korean male in custody, 64 years old, was found unresponsive during a standing headcount at Oahu Community Correctional Center. Security immediately administered CPR. Medical staff were called at approximately 6:06pm. EMS was called at approximately 6:15pm and arrived at the facility at approximately 6:20pm. DCR records indicate that the decedent was transported to the hospital at approximately 6:40pm and was pronounced dead at approximately 7:02pm. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death and time of death.

On Saturday, May 26, 2026, security staff at Oahu Community Correctional Center reported receiving a call from a local hospital. The local hospital reported that a Vietnamese male in custody, 59 years old, passed away at 2:39pm. The decedent was reportedly at the hospital for a medical procedure at the time of death. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death and time of death.

Tours

No tours were made for the month of May

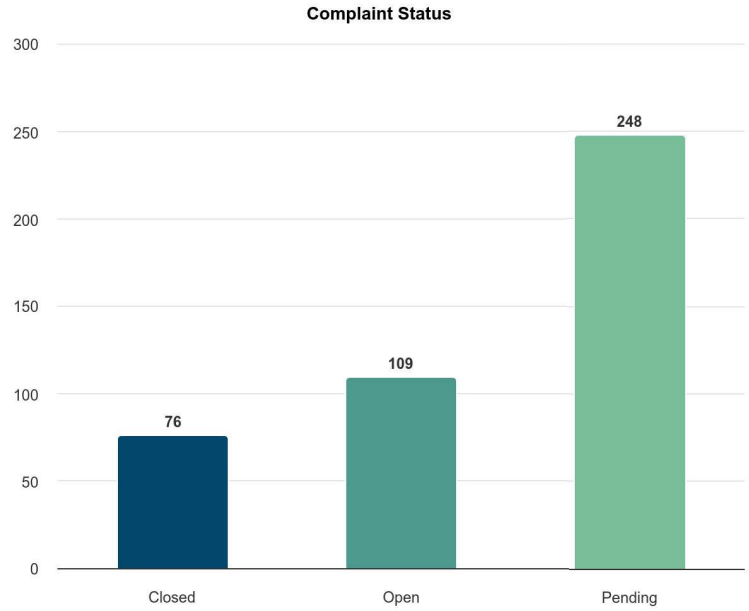
Events Attended

No events were attended for the month of May

Complaints Received by the Commission

After receiving dedicated funding for a case management system from the legislature, the Commission has been better equipped for tracking, monitoring, investigating, and responding to incoming complaints. Below is a breakdown of the office's current status of complaints including open complaints, pending complaints, closed complaints. Additionally, there is a breakdown of how many complaints the Commission has received from each correctional facility.

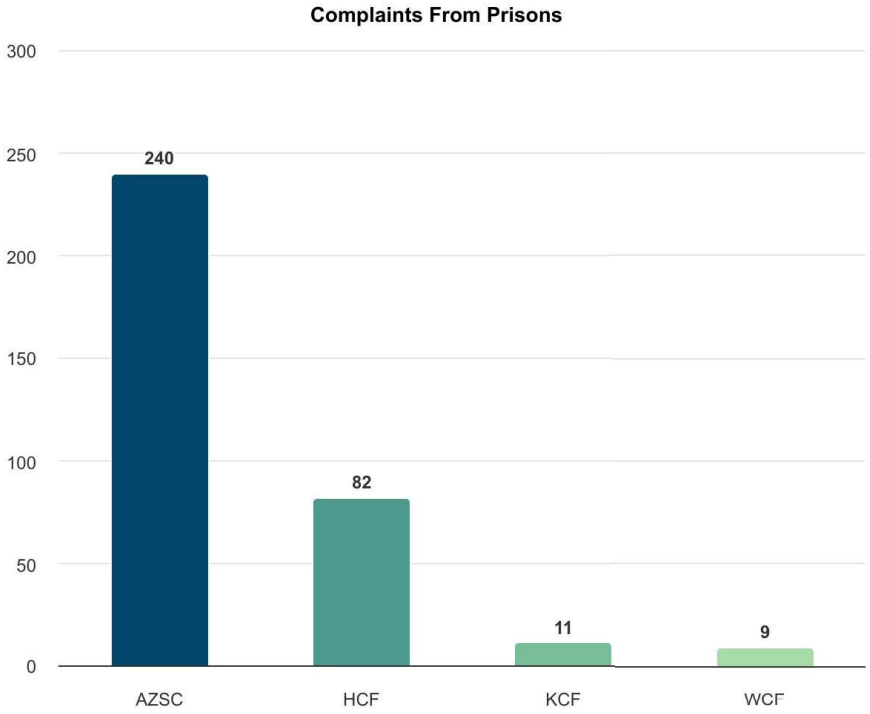
Complaint Status



***Note**: number of incoming complaints is subject to change as some letters may contain multiple complaints.*

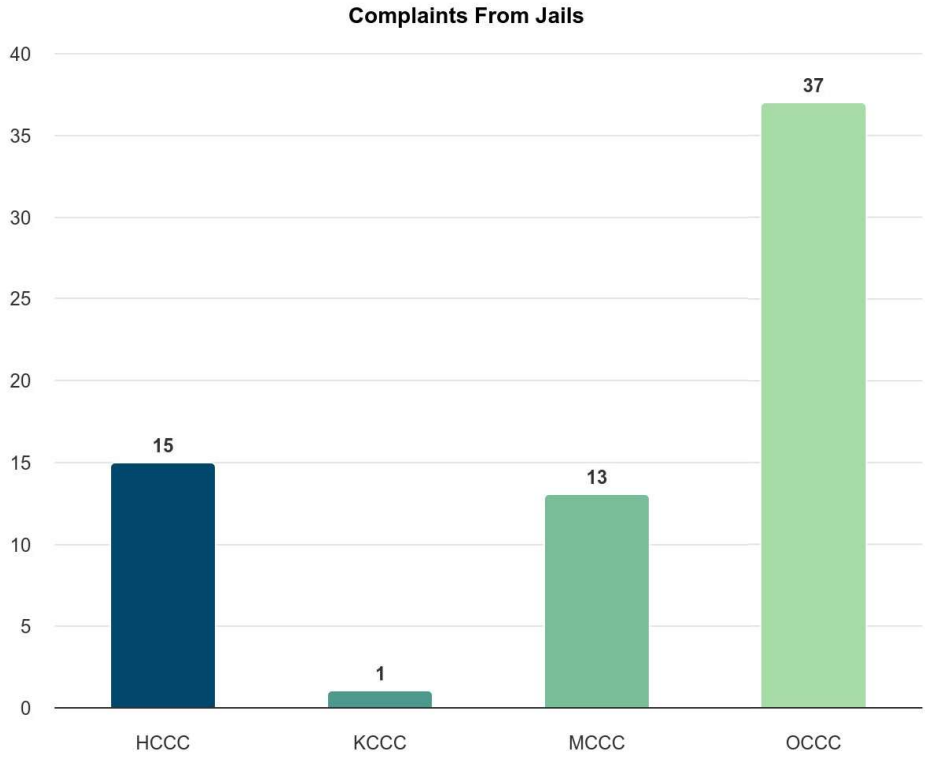
As of May 29, 2026, the Commission had 76 closed complaints and 248 complaints pending review and potential investigation. The Jail and Prison Oversight Specialists currently have 109 complaints that are open and being actively investigated, in addition to other assignments and projects that are critical to providing effective oversight, such as researching deaths in custody.

Complaints from Prison System



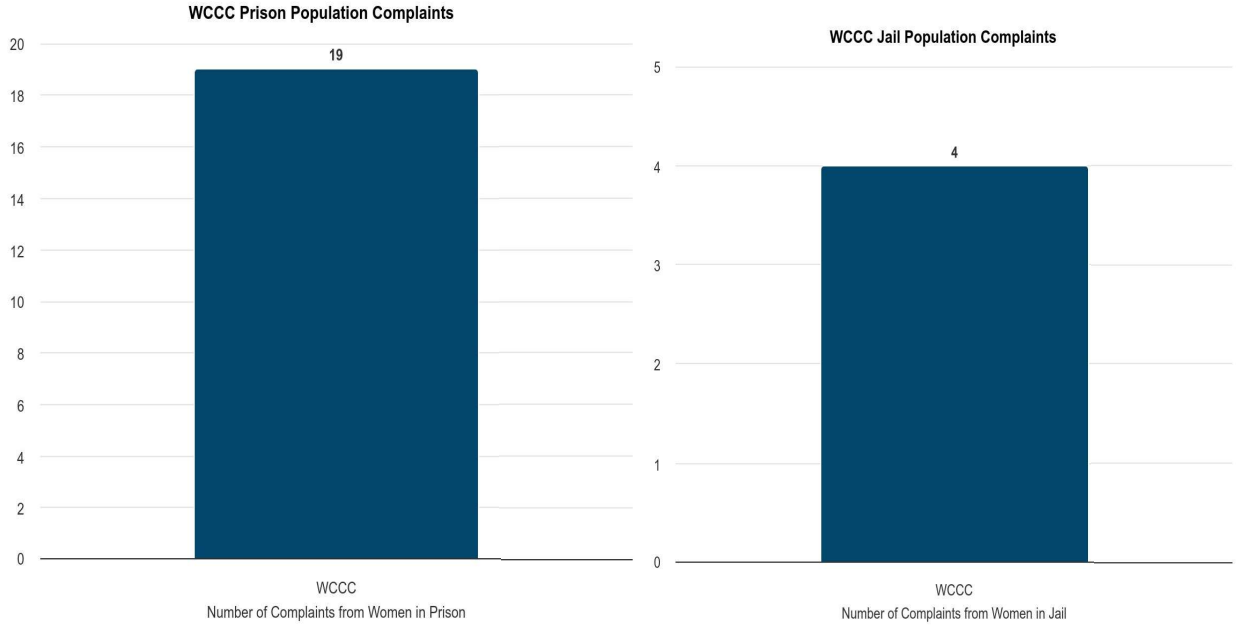
The Commission currently has a total of 342 complaints from the prison system (not including the Women's facility which is detailed below). A total of 240 complaints came from Saguaro Correctional Center (AZSC), a privately run facility in Arizona, 82 complaints from Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), 11 complaints from Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF), and 9 complaints from the Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF).

Complaints from Jail System



The Commission currently has a total of 57 complaints from the jails (not including the Women's facility which is detailed below). A total of 12 complaints came from the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), one complaint from the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC), 11 complaints from the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC), and 33 complaints from the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC).

Complaints from Women's Hybrid System



The Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) functions as the State's only hybrid facility housing the jail and prison population of women. The Commission received 19 complaints from the prison side of WCCC, and four complaints from the jail side of WCCC.

The Commission will continue to report on complaints on a monthly basis based on feedback from the Commissioners and public on what statistics are best to make available. If you have feedback you would like to share regarding complaint information you would like to see, please email us at hcsoc@hawaii.gov.

Findings on Lack of Movement Throughout the Prison System

Concerns Regarding Lack of Bed Utilization at Minimum Custody Facilities

The Commission has consistently reported on concerns regarding a lack of bed utilization at minimum custody facilities. Hawaii has two minimum custody prisons for men - Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF) and Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF). These facilities are designed for people who pose low public safety risk and are eligible for rehabilitation-focused programming. WCF can hold 334 individuals, and KCF can hold 160 individuals. Despite this:

- Both facilities are less full now than they were in 2023 (WCF is at 50% capacity, KCF is at 48% capacity).
- At the same time, **hundreds of people who qualify for minimum custody** remain housed in Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) (a higher-security prison), or Saguaro Correctional Center in Arizona (AZSC) (higher security, out-of-state prison).

The Commission has found that minimum custody beds are sitting empty while eligible individuals are housed in more expensive, more restrictive, and less rehabilitative settings.

	November 13, 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

	October 17, 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
KCF	13	65	--	--	--	--	78

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster

	November 17, 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
KCF	23	62	1	--	--	--	86

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster

	May 26, 2026 – Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	30	422	363	--	--	815
HCF	8	162	335	237	3	11	756
WCF	22	164	--	--	--	--	186
KCF	22	50	--	--	--	--	72

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster

The above charts highlight that since 2023, between 200–260 people classified as *minimum custody or below* have remained in Halawa or Saguaro. Meanwhile, Waiawa's population dropped consistently from 181 (2023) to 136 (2024) and 165 (2025). In May 2026, for the first time since the Commission has tracked (lack of) movement through the system, Waiawa's population has

increased from its 181 (2023) to186 (2026). Kulani's population dropped from 85 (2023) to 78 (2024) to 86 (2025) and 72 (2026). The Commission believes that this is not a year-by-year fluctuation, but a sustained pattern.

Differences Between Minimum and Medium+ Facilities:

Minimum Custody Facilities:

- Are **far less restrictive** than medium or higher custody prisons
- Focus on:
  - Education
  - Vocational training
  - Substance use treatment
  - Reentry preparation
- Allow more movement, work opportunities, and pro-social behavior
- Are designed to prepare people for successful release

Medium and Higher Custody Facilities:

- Emphasize **security and control**, not rehabilitation
- Offer fewer programs
- Often have long waitlists for classes or treatment
- Increase the likelihood that individuals:
  - Serve their entire sentence
  - Are released without skills, treatment, or planning

Impact:

Underusing minimum custody facilities increases the risk of people returning to the community unprepared.

When people are housed in higher custody settings than necessary:

- They are less likely to receive:
  - Treatment
  - Job skills
  - Education
- They are more likely to "max out" their sentence and be released with **no supervision and no preparation.**

By contrast, people in minimum custody are:

- More engaged in programming
- More likely to earn credits
- More likely to transition gradually back into the community

Cost to State:

Cost differences:

- Higher custody incarceration is **inherently more expensive** as they require**:**
  - More staffing
  - More security resources

Leaving minimum custody beds empty while paying for higher custody placements is:

- Operationally inefficient
- Financially wasteful
- Contrary to best practice

What the Commission Has Recommended (and Why)

Since 2023, the Commission has recommended transferring eligible minimum custody individuals from Halawa and Saguaro and fully utilizing Kulani and Waiawa. This recommendation aligns custody level with actual risk, maximizes rehabilitative impact, improves reentry outcomes, and uses state facilities as intended. However, the recommendation has **not been implemented**. The same underutilization continues into 2026.

Although the Commission understands that not all Minimums will be eligible to be in a Minimum facility (based on factors such as finishing programming, waiting for and passing medical clearance, pending misconduct adjudication, etc.), the Commission is still concerned regarding the high number of lower-level classifications in higher level facilities. Leaving minimum custody facilities 50% underused while eligible individuals sit in higher custody settings undermines rehabilitation, public safety, and responsible stewardship of state resources. The Commission will continue to report on this issue until it has been appropriately addressed.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On May 14, 2026, 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/2026-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			**$264.99**	
TELEPHONE	$264.99	1	$264.99	APRIL
Inter-Island Travel			**$942.80**	
P. DIEM MEAL-KRT	$20.00	1	$20.00	03/23 - PER DIEM
CAR RENTAL-ANJ	$77.00	1	$77.00	04/17 - ENTERPRISE
CAR RENTAL-GC	$77.00	1	$77.00	04/17 - ENTERPRISE
AIRFARE-MTT	$192.20	1	$192.20	05/14 - ALASKA
AIRFARE-MKP	$192.20	1	$192.20	05/14 - ALASKA
AIRFARE-GC	$192.00	1	$192.20	05/14 - ALASKA
AIRFARE-CMA	$192.20	1	$192.20	05/14 - ALASKA
Mainland Travel			**$0.00**	
Conferences			**$0.00**	
		TOTAL	**$1,207.79**	

** 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 June 18, 2026. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on July 9, 2026, at Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building, 235 S. Beretania Street, Room 204, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 or online via teleconference . More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.