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GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

DEPT. COMM. NO. 58
WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHAHA

December 2, 2025

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

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

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

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting copies of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Report as required by sections [202-2\(14\)](#), and [202-10](#), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

In accordance with section 93-16, HRS, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at <http://labor.hawaii.gov/find-a-report/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jade T. Butay".

Jade T. Butay
Director of Labor and Industrial Relations

Enclosure

c: Legislative Reference Bureau Library
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STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION



WIOA TITLE I & III ANNUAL STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE

PROGRAM YEAR 2024

(JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025)



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The State of Hawai'i – Project Year 2024 Economic Outlook

While there has been some evidence that the economic shadows of COVID-19 were retreating from Hawai'i, the impact of the 2023 Lahaina Wildfire was still apparent in Program Year 2024 (PY 24). These events impacted the key sector of tourism on the economy, moving the State to explore ways to immunize the economy from future shocks of similar nature. Newer challenges such as Federal policies impacting the local labor market (the Federal government is a major employer in Hawai'i), as well as national and international tourism, dampened signs of recovery. Despite these challenges, at the end of the program year, the unemployment rate was noted by the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) to be [2.8% in May 2025](#), which was the closest it had come to the pre-pandemic rate of 2.1% in March 2020.

There was an increase in the real gross domestic product, from an average \$88.6 billion to \$90.3 billion from 2023 to 2024, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis referenced in the Hawai'i Labor Market Dynamics 2024 report published by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)'s Office of Research and Statistics, as part of its Hawai'i Workforce Infonet project. Its Labor Market Information (LMI) dashboard, can be accessed through [HireNet Hawai'i \(HNN\)](#), the State's electronic job board and case management system, provides real-time visualizations of key data points, including top industries. The LMI Home Page is available as a public-facing portal for labor data that can also be accessed through HNN.

Leisure and Hospitality, Government, and Trade, Transportation & Utilities have been the top three industries for the past program year, trading places with Professional and Business Services and Educational and Health Services at times. Tourism, which is included under Leisure and Hospitality, was impacted the most by the twin punches of COVID and the Lahaina Fire, with the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawaii, [UHERO](#) data showing that visitor arrivals to the islands began to trend up again from pre-pandemic numbers, after a dip post-wildfire. Visitor expenditures, as of June 2024, have been less consistent keeping pace due in part to an increase in the costs of accommodations.

Attempting to come to terms with the State's reliance on tourism, and to find viable complements to it, has been one of the major goals of the [DLIR](#), led by Director, Jade T. Butay. Within the DLIR, the Workforce Development Division ([WDD](#)) and the Workforce Development Council ([WDC](#)) currently work together to administer the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs via the local workforce development boards. WDD administers the Title III program. Throughout PY 24, WDC



held a series of meetings or “Catalyst groups” to strategize the implementation of the Unified State Plan, approved by the US DOL in Spring 2024. Discussions surrounded the complex explorations of the potential impact of and wielding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other technologies, as a potential new industry, tool, and threat.

Apprenticeships have been given priority by workforce leadership to ensure that underserved and underrepresented populations are at the forefront of the shift in the economy’s growth. Construction and trades are a vital sector of the workforce, which apprenticeships have long nurtured. WDD has focused on expanding the Apprenticeship Program to non-traditional apprenticeship programs. Embracing technology, the acquisition of Virtual Reality headsets to provide exploration and training opportunities, has put the efforts at the forefront of innovation. Internships have proven to be another key tool to prepare the workforce in Hawai‘i, with WDD deploying two major programs (one federally funded, one State-funded).

In order to provide a streamlined pathway for temporary professional licensure of a military spouse, State agencies continued to serve our military members and their spouses by issuing expedited temporary licenses to military spouses who have been licensed in good standing in another jurisdiction of the United States for at least one year, so long as the license is current, active, without conditions or restrictions, and the licensure requirements of the other jurisdiction are equivalent to or exceed those of Hawai‘i.

State Strategic Goals and Vision in Program Year 2024

Following US DOL’s acceptance of Hawaii’s [WIOA Unified State Plan for Hawai‘i \(2024 – 2027\)](#), the State started to further refine and to enact the strategies embedded in it during Program Year 2024 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). Having brought together Hawai‘i’s partners from Titles I through IV, workforce, education, community, and business stakeholders remained unified in promoting the Four pillars of the Plan:

- **Pillar I – Aligning with Economic Development:** Explored sector strategy, living wages, and future-ready jobs. A “Living Wage Summit” was proposed to engage employers in redefining job quality.
- **Pillar II – Strengthening Education & Training Alliances:** Focused on credential relevance, work-based learning, and systemwide collaboration between Department of Education (DOE) and University of Hawaii (UH).
- **Pillar III – Eliminating Barriers to Career Success:** Centered on childcare, transportation, digital access, and inclusion for justice-involved and disabled



individuals. A statewide gaps analysis is underway.

- **Pillar IV – Creating Workforce Synergy:** Introduced **the Generational Commitment**, a unifying North Star goal for 2045.

These strategies inform [Governor Josh Green, M.D.](#)'s vision for the future of work under the DLIR's WDD and WDC. WDD and WDC work together to develop the workforce amidst the challenges faced by Hawaii residents which include housing, education, and technology driven changes to work. To foster collaboration across Title I through IV stakeholders, prior to implementation of the plan, Catalyst groups that were also deemed Permitted interaction groups (PIG) for each of the four pillars were formed. WDC board members and subcommittee members joined stakeholders across agencies, local boards, providers, and the business community to brainstorm strategies for the coming efforts of the four pillars.

The 2nd Annual Future of Work Conference was held by DLIR, WDC, and the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i ([COC Hawai'i](#)) in September 2024. Stakeholders from Tourism, Defense, Construction, Health Care, Technology/Information Technology, Energy, and the Public Sectors participated. On September 30, 2024, the WDC, in collaboration with the DLIR and the COC Hawai'i, hosted the 2nd Annual Future of Work Conference at the Japanese Cultural Center. This year's event attracted over 300 participants, eager to explore Hawai'i's evolving job landscape.

The DLIR's Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants program, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), moved towards its end, largely having achieved its goals of introducing the populace to jobs in the State via paid internships. This initiative dovetails with the Hele Imua Internship Program, targeted to current students and recent graduates.

Throughout PY 2024, the Council hosted the Employer Engagement Committee, The Military and Veteran Affairs Committee, Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee, Youth Services Committee, Technology and Performance Management Committee (previously Performance Measures and Financial Accountability Committee), Special Projects Committee, and the Executive Committee. Public meetings remained hybrid, conducted in person with remote options in compliance with the Sunshine Law.



Powerful Partnerships

Connecting People and Opportunity – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

In PY 2024, the partnership between the WDD and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ([DVR](#)), Title IV under WIOA, stood out as one of Hawai‘i’s strongest examples of cross-agency collaboration in action. Together, these two WIOA core programs drove statewide progress toward an inclusive, resilient workforce—one that opens doors for every resident, including individuals with disabilities, to achieve meaningful, competitive, and integrated employment. WDD and DVR joined forces at career fairs, hiring events, and expos across every island—connecting employers with hundreds of job seekers, including youth, veterans, displaced workers, and individuals with disabilities.

WDD and DVR continued to deliver on the Unified State Plan’s vision to *prioritize services for populations with barriers to employment* by coordinating resources, aligning training and business engagement, and creating direct pathways from learning to lasting careers.

DVR’s Employment Team Initiatives and Collaboration with DLIR, State, Federal, and Public Partners

- Employment First and National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) Grant Activities: The NEON Grant, administered by the USDOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy continued in PY 24. DLIR/WDD, Department of Health (DOH), DOE, the Developmental Disabilities Council, UH Center on Disability Studies, Work Now Hawai‘i, and DVR maintained their partnership and efforts towards establishing Hawai‘i as an Employment First state.
- Job Fairs, Career Expos, and Hiring Events: DVR and WDD participated in numerous statewide hiring events connecting employers and job seekers, including specialized events for youth, veterans, displaced workers, and individuals with disabilities.
- DVR and WDD partnered on the Hele Imua Internship program, in which WDD placed paid interns in State offices. DVR had three Hele Imua interns, one of whom was hired as a contractor by DVR.
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Collaboration: DLIR and DVR continued to promote the WOTC program among employers, offering eligibility and filing guidance to encourage inclusivity.
- Support for Veterans and Transitioning Service Members.
- WDD’s Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER), Ramon Ruiz, continued



serving on the State Rehabilitation Council, ensuring the voice of veterans remains integrated into statewide disability employment strategies; DVR consumers and staff were invited to hiring events, where DVR had a table.

- **Joint Representation on Workforce Boards:** The DVR Administrator and representatives from various branches statewide, along with WDD Branch Office Managers, actively served on the State WDC and the various local Workforce Development Boards, presenting DVR updates and strengthening cross-program alignment in planning and service delivery.
- **Unified State Plan Development:** DVR and WDD, along with the WDC and other partners, collaborated closely on implementation of Hawai'i's Unified State Plan, with a shared commitment to a coordinated, customer-centered workforce system that supports all Hawai'i residents in achieving competitive, integrated employment.

Serving the Community with the Department of Human Services (DHS)

First-to-Work Job Development and Job Preparedness Services

The First-to-Work (FTW) program, operated through a subcontract between the DLIR and the [DHS](#) Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD), supports Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients in preparing for employment and achieving financial self-sufficiency. DLIR Job Developers, stationed in DHS offices, provide job development services to FTW participants and establish Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) sites to expand hands-on learning opportunities. Job Readiness Training (JRT) classes are available in the Counties of Kaua'i, Hawai'i, and Maui.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program is a voluntary statewide initiative that supports individuals receiving SNAP benefits. Designed to help able-bodied adults enter and succeed in the workforce, SNAP E&T emphasizes employment, work experience, training, on-the-job training, and limited job search activities. Through a subcontract between the DLIR and DHS, WDD staff provide E&T services to SNAP participants in the Counties of Kaua'i and Hawai'i. WDD staff also work to connect participants with additional workforce opportunities, including Hele Imua Internship Program and Registered Apprenticeship programs.



Leveraging Resources – Partnership with the University of Hawai‘i

DLIR spearheaded the efforts to complete Hawai‘i’s WIOA Unified State Plan (2024-2027), partnering with stakeholders, to create the workforce plan, which was accepted by USDOL in Spring 2024. One of the four key pillars of focus for Hawai‘i is to create Education and Training alliances.

In PY 24, WDD extended its sub-grantee contract with the University of Hawai‘i Community Colleges ([UHCC](#)) under the Good Jobs Challenge grant, funded by the Economic Development Administration and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Through the Good Jobs Hawai‘i initiative, UHCC partnered with various organizations and employers in the healthcare, technology, clean energy/skilled trades, and creative industries to design and deliver free training programs for the community.

As a sub-grantee, WDD is able to refer participants to these training opportunities. This partnership has also strengthened the coordination of wraparound services, as WDD staff—based at the AJC—can connect participants to additional support services that enhance their chances of success in the Good Jobs program.

Programs and Initiatives Advancing the Goals & Vision of Hawai‘i’s Unified State Plan

Community Service Grant - Digital Literacy

DLIR’s USDOL Community Project grant awarded in PY 22, continued its partnership with Hawai‘i DOE, Hawai‘i State Public Library System (HSPLS) and DBEDT to address the need for [digital literacy](#) across the State based on its [Statewide Digital Equity Plan](#). With the implementation of the Hawai‘i Digital Work Skills Initiative, the multi-level digital work skills program provided program participants (WIOA participants and community members), as well as the interested public with free digital work skill training classes at local public libraries Statewide and by [Waipahu Community School for Adults](#), Title II under WIOA. This initiative introduced digital literacy proficiencies, providing beginner to intermediate-level free digital literacy classes.

Employment & Training Fund (ETF)

The Employment and Training Fund (ETF) supports employers and workers through innovative programs, including training in business-specific skills, new occupational areas, management, and support services. Since its inception, ETF has helped train over 91,000 workers. The ETF Micro Program allows employers to register employees for



short-term, non-credit courses from ETF-approved providers to enhance skills and meet workplace demands. As of PY 24, fifteen organizations delivered training through the program, resulting in 518 course registrations and serving 542 employees from 92 businesses statewide. Additional program details are available in the ETF Annual Report.

Federal Bonding

WDD administers a federally funded bonding program, a unique hiring incentive tool that provides fidelity bonds to employers hiring justice-involved individuals, including those impacted by opioid or drug use. Through active participation in the Going Home Hawai'i Consortium—a statewide and national network of public and private partners—WDD shares program information with agencies serving justice-involved individuals, as well as directly with those being released from Hawai'i correctional facilities, supporting innovative and culturally responsive reentry and reintegration services.

Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator (HI CAN)

In partnership with the DLIR, Enterprise Technology Services (ETS), DHS, Research Improving People's Lives (RIPL), and the National Governors Association Workforce Innovation Network, the State developed the Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator (HI CAN). This innovative platform leverages machine learning (ML), artificial intelligence (AI), state administrative data, and cloud computing to generate customized job and training recommendations for Hawai'i residents. By combining advanced technology with a human-centered design, HI CAN provides jobseekers with personalized, data-driven career guidance and referrals to supportive services through integration with the Hawai'i Next: HNH platform for those conducting career research and planning.

HireNet Hawai'i

[HireNet Hawai'i](http://www.hirenethawaii.com) (www.hirenethawaii.com), the State's electronic job board and case management system, connects employers and jobseekers at AJCs statewide at no cost to the public. The vendor, Geographic Solutions, Inc., has customized HireNet Hawai'i (HNH) for Hawai'i's workforce programs. Modules are updated to streamline tools for case management, document management, or to add features for new programs. Anyone with internet access and a computer can self-register and obtain online services, while those needing individualized service can contact or visit the nearest Hawai'i AJC. In PY 24, 6,169 participants used HNH to obtain individualized services, up from 5,130 the previous year.



Internships

The DLIR WDD administers the Hele Imua Internship Program, a statewide initiative that began as a pilot in PY 22 and has continued through PY 24. The program provides up to 12-week internship opportunities for current college students and recent graduates across various State agencies, including partners under WIOA Titles II and IV.

Annual appropriations from the State Legislature support the continued placement of interns within departments and agencies across the executive branch. In PY 24, a total of 386 interns were placed in State agencies. Of this total, 182 were high school students who participated in a summer internship program that included financial literacy workshops to enhance career readiness and foundational life skills.

Internship placements were made across a broad range of State offices and agencies, including but not limited to: Office of the Governor; Office of the Lieutenant Governor; Accounting and General Services (DAGS); Department of Agriculture (HDOA); Department of the Attorney General (AG); Department of Budget and Finance (B&F); Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT); Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA); Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR); Department of Defense (DOD); Department of Education (DOE); Office of Elections; Enterprise Technology Services (ETS); Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC); Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS); Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL); Department of Health (DOH); Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD); Department of Human Services (DHS); Office of Information Technology Services (OITS); Judiciary; DLIR; Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR); Department of Law Enforcement; Legislature and Legislative Reference Bureau; Department of Public Safety; Senate; and Department of Taxation (DOTAX). Internship placements covered a diverse range of occupational fields, including Information Technology Specialist, Human Resources Assistant, Program Specialist, Accountant, Environmental Health Specialist, Engineer, Research Statistician, Marketing Specialist, Housing Coordinator, and Elections Specialist.

The Hele Imua Internship Program continues to expand access to work-based learning experiences within State government, supporting the development of Hawai'i's future workforce and strengthening career pathways into public service.

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW)

The Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) program operates under the Wagner-Peyser (WP) framework, providing employment services and benefits to migrant workers



while ensuring their labor rights are protected. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) coordinates with each Local Office Manager (LOMA) to ensure that MSFWs are accurately identified, receive necessary Employment Services (ES) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) services, and are properly reported in the HNH reporting system. In alignment with the WP Act, Final Rule (TEN 10-23), effective January 23, 2024, requires state merit staff to provide services to both MSFWs and Employment Services customers. These changes must be fully implemented by January 22, 2026.

National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) – Quest Disaster Recovery

Hawai‘i’s DLIR WDD was awarded \$10,595,171 under a Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). The purpose of this grant was to assist individuals adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in entering, returning to, or advancing in high-quality jobs within growth industries. Originally established as a two-year grant, the project received a no-cost extension, extending the period of performance to three years, from September 2022 through September 2025.

As of June 30, 2025, a total of 425 participants were enrolled in the program, exceeding the original enrollment goal of 300 by 41 percent. The program was operated by the Counties of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i, and Maui, along with DLIR’s WDD. Each operated the project within its respective AJC. Two contracted partners supported implementation:

- COC Hawai‘i – responsible for sector partnerships and business engagement activities.
- The Kalaimoku Group (TKG) – responsible for community outreach and participant recruitment.

National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) – Lahaina Wildfire

Following the Lahaina Wildfire on August 8, 2023, the USDOL approved the National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) on August 25, 2023, to support disaster recovery and workforce reemployment efforts. Administrative startup was completed rapidly to deliver services to affected residents as soon as possible.

By June 30, 2025, the program had served 444 participants, exceeding its goal of 350 by 27 percent. Most participants were employed in temporary humanitarian assistance positions, including work in food hubs, social services, and community resource centers. The total grant award was \$13,031,320.



DLIR partnered with Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO) as the primary contractor due to its extensive community network and experience operating federally funded programs. MEO subcontracted Employer Options, a staffing agency that served as the employer of record for temporary private sector positions. The DLIR WDD, Maui Branch focused on creating temporary jobs with state agencies engaged in recovery and humanitarian services.

Through strong collaboration among DLIR, MEO, Employer Options, and community partners, the Lahaina Wildfire NDWG provided timely employment opportunities, critical community support, and meaningful income for residents affected by the disaster, contributing significantly to Maui's overall recovery efforts.

Rapid Response / Layoff Aversion Activities

Rapid Response (RR) activities are carried out by the WDD with the AJC staff and local workforce development boards. These efforts ensure timely coordination and support for workers affected by layoffs or business closures. Under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, Hawai'i businesses with 50 or more employees are required to provide the DLIR with a WARN letter at least 60 calendar days before a covered plant closing or mass layoff.

In PY 24, a total of 24 WARN notices were submitted to DLIR—a decrease from 36 notices in PY 2023. Additionally, 11 companies with fewer than 50 employees voluntarily submitted notices regarding upcoming sales, mergers, furloughs, or closures. All companies were contacted by Rapid Response team members, who offered assistance and provided orientation sessions and layoff resources for impacted employees.

During the year, an estimated 983 workers were affected—a significant decline from the 2,872 workers reported in the previous program year. Among companies that submitted WARN letters detailing total workforce impact:

- 10 companies reported a 100% reduction in their workforce (either through total layoffs or reemployment under new ownership).
- The lowest staff reduction recorded was 1.39%.
- The overall average reduction across all companies submitting notices was 60.88%.

There were 21 different companies for 29 locations that submitted WARN notices. The breakdown of WARN notices by county is as follows:



- O‘ahu: 21
- Maui: 3
- Kaua‘i: 3
- Hawai‘i: 2
- Total: 24

Registered Apprenticeship Program

In PY 24, there were 1,486 newly registered and reinstated apprentices in Hawai‘i. The majority of new apprentices were enrolled in construction trade programs. During the same period, 480 apprentices completed their programs and attained journey worker status. As of June 30, 2025, the State had a total of 5,375 registered apprentices across all industries.

In recognition of 2024 National Apprenticeship Week, Governor Josh Green issued a proclamation declaring November 17–23, 2024, as Hawai‘i Apprenticeship Week, encouraging residents to recognize and support Registered Apprenticeship as a proven model for developing a skilled workforce.

The week’s activities included a bus tour of the Hawai‘i Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training and Plumbers and Pipefitters Apprenticeship facilities on November 19, 2024, attended by more than 50 participants, including Hawai‘i Job Corps students, high school educators, and workforce partners.

A virtual presentation held on November 21, 2024, featured sponsors such as the Hawai‘i Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Fund, Associated Builders and Contractors Hawai‘i, and the Hawai‘i Behavioral Health Training Institute, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and a representative from the USDOL, providing updates on Registered Apprenticeship initiatives nationwide. In total, more than 300 individuals participated in the week’s events, which provided opportunities for sponsors to highlight their programs and promote apprenticeship as a viable career pathway.

As the State Apprenticeship Agency, the DLIR continues to rely on the State Apprenticeship Council (SAC) as an advisory body to the DLIR Director on all apprenticeship-related matters. During PY 24, the SAC met quarterly to review proposed revisions to existing program standards and to address other issues related to apprenticeship policy and oversight.

As part of DLIR’s efforts to expand the Apprenticeship Program the-DLIR leased 22



virtual reality headsets or goggles which are available in the AJCs of each county. Virtual reality exploration is intended to help to expand apprenticeship to current trades and non-construction trades as well.

The Federal grants awarded to DLIR by the USDOL under the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) Base Formula Grants Rounds 1 and 2 concluded on June 30, 2025. DLIR's request for a no-cost extension for these grants was denied by USDOL. However, on June 25, 2025, DLIR was awarded \$556,981 under the State Apprenticeship Expansion Base Formula Funding Round 3. The three-year grant, spanning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028, will support continued efforts to build statewide capacity as the State Apprenticeship Agency and to promote and expand registered apprenticeship programs across Hawai'i.

The USDOL also awarded the DLIR \$4,999,707 under the SAE Base Formula Round 2 Competitive Funding. The grant period runs from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027. Of this amount, \$4,442,124 was sub-awarded to the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) to develop and implement a Teacher Apprenticeship Program for K–12 licensed teachers.

The program aims to register 142 teacher apprentices and engage 500 pre-apprenticeship participants. It is sponsored by HTSB, in partnership with the Hawai'i DOE, Hawai'i Government Employees Association (HGEA), and the Hawai'i State Teachers Association.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) continued the phase-out termination status in PY 24, a process that began in July 2022. Since that time, no new TAA petitions have been authorized. However, outreach and services may continue for workers who remain eligible under previously approved petitions. Hawai'i received a \$100,000 allocation to support outreach, case management, and administrative costs associated with serving eligible workers.

Veteran Services & Jobs for Veterans Services Grant

The Jobs for Veterans Services Grant (JVSG) supported individualized career services and case management for veterans facing employment barriers, including those at risk of homelessness, with disabilities, low-income status, or prior incarceration. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists partnered with the Veterans Administration, WIOA partners, Homeless Veterans Reintegration grantees, and other



resources to help veterans transition to stable employment. On O‘ahu, the JVSG-funded Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) worked with businesses statewide to connect veterans to opportunities while also serving on the AJC Business Services Team.

In PY 2024, job fairs and special recruitments targeted veterans statewide, and the LVER led promotion of the Hire Vets Medallion Program recognizing employers who hire and retain veterans. The State also sponsored professional development for AJC and partner staff on serving veterans with disabilities, substance abuse disorders, and justice-involved veterans, as well as leadership in integrating veteran services. Key AJC staff and partners met statewide in January 2025 to report progress and update plans to enhance veteran services. In March 2025, federal-led online training clarified revised DVOP eligibility criteria and AJC intake responsibilities for veteran screening.

WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth)

Under the WIOA, services to Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Workers are contracted to the Chief Local Elected Officials (Mayors) of each county in partnership with the local workforce development boards (WDB).

In the City and County of Honolulu, the O‘ahu WDB contracts with the Department of Community Services, WorkHawai‘i Division to provide services. In the Counties of Hawai‘i and Maui, services are provided through Goodwill Hawai‘i. For Kaua‘i County, the USDOL granted a waiver allowing the WDD to directly provide these services.

The WIOA Adult Program assists individuals who meet eligibility criteria and face barriers to employment. Priority of service is given to veterans, public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and those who are basic skills deficient, among other priority groups.

Services include, but are not limited to, occupational training, on-the-job training (OJT), job development, and job placement.

The WIOA DW Program assists individuals who have been laid off or terminated, have received a notice of layoff, or have exhausted unemployment benefits and are unlikely to return to their previous industry or occupation. Services include career and training assistance, job placement, and reemployment support.

The WIOA Youth Program provides services to eligible youth who face barriers to education, training, and employment, with a statewide focus on out-of-school youth.



Participants have access to fourteen program elements, including career counseling, mentoring, financial literacy, and work-based learning opportunities.

WIOA Title III (WAGNER-PEYSER ACT EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

Under Title III of WIOA, the Wagner-Peyser (WP) program provides universal employment services—including job search assistance, career counseling, unemployment insurance filing assistance, and labor market information—to support all eligible job seekers and employers across the State. In PY 24, WP exceeded all performance measures, demonstrating continued success in delivering employment services statewide.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program, administered by the USDOL and the U.S. Department of Treasury, supports employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment, including people with disabilities, veterans, ex-felons, the economically disadvantaged, and the long-term unemployed. The program incentivizes employers to hire from these target groups through federal tax credits.

WDD administrative staff process WOTC applications submitted by hundreds of participating employers each year. To improve efficiency, a WOTC module was recently added to the HNH portal, streamlining the application and processing workflow.

Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS) & Hawai‘i Workforce Infonet (HIWI)

Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS) enabled Hawai‘i to provide reliable Labor Market Information (LMI), particularly in-demand jobs and long-term employment projections for the state and counties. It also allowed the maintenance of the Worker’s Information Database (WID) and the production of a statewide economic report. All these are publicly accessible via the HIWI website to provide jobseekers and students timely data to help them acquire relevant skills to help them gain employment.

Partnership with Unemployment Insurance (UI) Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)

In PY 24, the WDD continued its partnership with the DLIR Unemployment Insurance Division (UID) to strengthen alignment with the WIOA and create a clear entry point to other workforce system partners. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WDD and UID, WDD provided Reemployment Services and Eligibility



Assessment (RESEA) services to UI claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits, in accordance with the RESEA Grant State Plan. To ensure accessibility, WDD delivered services both virtually and in person, resulting in 2,859 individuals completing an initial RESEA session and 2,547 individuals completing a subsequent RESEA session during PY 2024.

American Job Center Public Awareness and Engagement Campaign Project

Becker Communications, Inc. (BCI) conducted a statewide public awareness and evaluation campaign to address the low visibility of Hawai'i's AJCs. The project was designed to develop innovative outreach strategies, conduct research through pre surveys, and improve access for priority populations.

Key activities included administering a baseline awareness survey, developing targeted messaging, conducting media relations, implementing digital campaigns, managing social media content, delivering community presentations, and executing email outreach. Media coverage spanned Hawai'i News Now, KHON2, KITV4, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, ethnic and neighbor island media outlets and publications. Community engagement efforts targeted employers, job seekers, veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth, and rural populations.

Evaluation components included survey findings, media analytics, social media engagement metrics, website traffic, and community feedback. Data collected through the evaluation informed future communication strategies, identified ongoing awareness gaps, and supported continuous improvement in customer engagement. The project strengthened system visibility, employer awareness, access to services, and alignment between workforce offerings and community needs.

Building Community College Workforce Capacity Project

The UHCC conducted a statewide evaluation to strengthen their capacity to identify WIOA-eligible students and deliver aligned workforce training. The project addressed WIOA 20 CFR §682.210 by developing common intake procedures, improving coordination across WIOA core partners, and expanding employer-validated training pathways.

Evaluation activities included mapping existing intake processes, surveying campus practices, analyzing participant data, reviewing Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) policies, and benchmarking against other states. Partners included local workforce



development boards, WDD, the COC Hawai'i, and statewide sector partnerships. Data collection involved administrative records, customer feedback, staff interviews, and labor market projections.

Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7-12) Project

Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education evaluated and expanded its statewide work-based learning (WBL) intermediary model to address employer shortages and improve career readiness for grades 7–12. The project supported innovative programs, employer engagement, and evidence-based youth strategies.

Intermediaries coordinated internships, job shadowing, career fairs, teacher externships, and employer recruitment. Evaluation components included participation tracking, employer feedback, student reflections, and documentation of regional disparities. The initiative built on prior success: in the previous year, intermediaries facilitated nearly 200 WBL activities involving 1,000 professionals and 15,000 students. Partners included Hawai'i DOE, GEAR UP Hawai'i, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, the Workforce Funders Collaborative, and intermediary providers such as the COC Hawai'i, Kaua'i Economic Development Board, and Cultivate Hawai'i.

The evaluation examined alignment with labor market needs, equity of access, and impact on student readiness. Findings will support development of standardized WBL practices, expansion into underserved regions, and stronger connections between education and industry. This project benefited WIOA-eligible youth, students with disabilities, and disadvantaged populations by providing early exposure to career pathways, building employability skills, and supporting informed transitions to postsecondary education and employment.



WIOA Outcomes – Program Year 2024

In PY 24, Hawai'i raised its performance targets for all workforce programs under WIOA. These programs are designed to help individuals find meaningful employment, gain new skills, and improve their wages earned. While most of the program goals were met, the overall percentage of targets achieved slightly dropped compared to the previous program year. This decline is likely due to the higher performance targets set for the year (Figure 1- Statewide WIOA Outcomes – Program Year 2023 & 2024 Comparison).

Indicator	PY 23 Target	PY 23 Actual	PY 23 Ratio	PY 23 NUM	PY 23 DEN	PY 24 Target	PY 24 Actual	PY 24 Ratio	PY 24 NUM	PY 24 DEN	% Change in NUM/ Actual Median Earnings
Adult											
Employment Rate, Q2	60.0%	75.0%	125.0%	174	232	72.5%	70.4%	97.1%	181	257	4.02%
Employment Rate, Q4	65.0%	76.7%	118.0%	161	210	74%	75.3%	101.7%	140	186	-13.04%
Median Earnings	\$ 6,800	\$ 8,725	128.3%	NA	NA	\$7,500	\$7,858	104.8%	NA	NA	-9.94%
Credential Rate	58.0%	63.4%	109.3%	59	93	50.4%	56%	111.1%	51	91	-13.56%
Measurable Skill Gains	55.0%	46.7%	84.9%	106	227	50.4%	53.7%	106.5%	168	313	58.49%
Dislocated Worker											
Employment Rate, Q2	71.0%	71.3%	100.4%	57	80	72%	71.9%	99.86%	46	64	-19.3%
Employment Rate, Q4	76.0%	70.1%	92.2%	75	107	77.5%	80.9%	104.39%	38	47	-49.33%
Median Earnings	\$ 8,500	\$11,405	134.2%	NA	NA	\$9,500	\$10,330	108.74%	NA	NA	-9.43%
Credential Rate	68.0%	76.9%	113.1%	30	39	50.5%	26.7%	52.87%	4	15	-86.67%
Measurable Skill Gains	57.0%	48.3%	84.7%	14	29	50.5%	61%	120.79%	25	41	78.57%
Youth											
Employment, Education, or Training Rate, Q2	68.0%	66.7%	98.1%	48	72	67%	67.7%	101.04%	21	31	-56.25%
Employment, Education, or Training Rate, Q4	62.0%	66.4%	107.1%	81	122	64%	66.7%	104.22%	30	45	-62.96%
Median Earnings	\$ 4,300	\$ 5,570	129.5%	NA	NA	\$5,000	\$6,488	129.76%	NA	NA	16.48%
Credential Rate	65.0%	55.7%	85.7%	49	88	62%	69%	111.29%	29	42	-40.81%
Measurable Skill Gains	53.0%	39.2%	74%	40	102	50.5%	47.5%	94.06%	86	181	115%
Wagner-Peyser											
Employment Rate, Q2	54.0%	61.1%	113.1%	1,820	2,977	57%	61.8%	108.42%	1,791	2,897	-1.59%
Employment Rate, Q4	52.0%	61.8%	118.8%	1,846	2,985	61%	64.1%	105.08%	1,780	2,777	-3.58%
Median Earnings	\$ 7,300	\$ 9,690	132.7%	NA	NA	\$8,300	\$10,404	125.35%	NA	NA	7.37%

Notes: NUM, short for Numerator, pertains to the number of program participants included in the Denominator (DEN) that were employed (for Employment Rate metrics for Q2 and Q4), are in education or training program that led to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment (for Credential Rate), and achieved measurable skills gains based on attainment of at least one gain (for Measurable Skills Gains). DEN, short for Denominator, is the total number of participants.

Figure 1 – STATEWIDE WIOA OUTCOMES – PROGRAM YEAR 2023 & 2024 COMPARISON

Each program's performance is measured by comparing their actual results to the goals set, which were negotiated with USDOL. These comparisons are shown as percentages and called performance ratios, or simply ratios. A ratio that is above 100% indicates that the program exceeded its goal, and a ratio below 100% means it fell short of its goal. These ratios help show how each program performed compared to their performance targets or goals.



The WP program, which provides basic career services to job seekers to help them gain employment, met all 3 of its statewide goals: helping people find employment (Employment Rate, Q2), helping people stay employed (Employment Rate, Q4), and helping people increase their wages (Median Earnings). This continues a four-year trend of meeting all state-level targets, which showcases consistency. In PY 24, the performance ratios ranged from 105% to 125%, which means that the program performed 5% to 25% better than the target goals (Figure 2 – Ratio of Performance Results per Program – Program Year 2024).

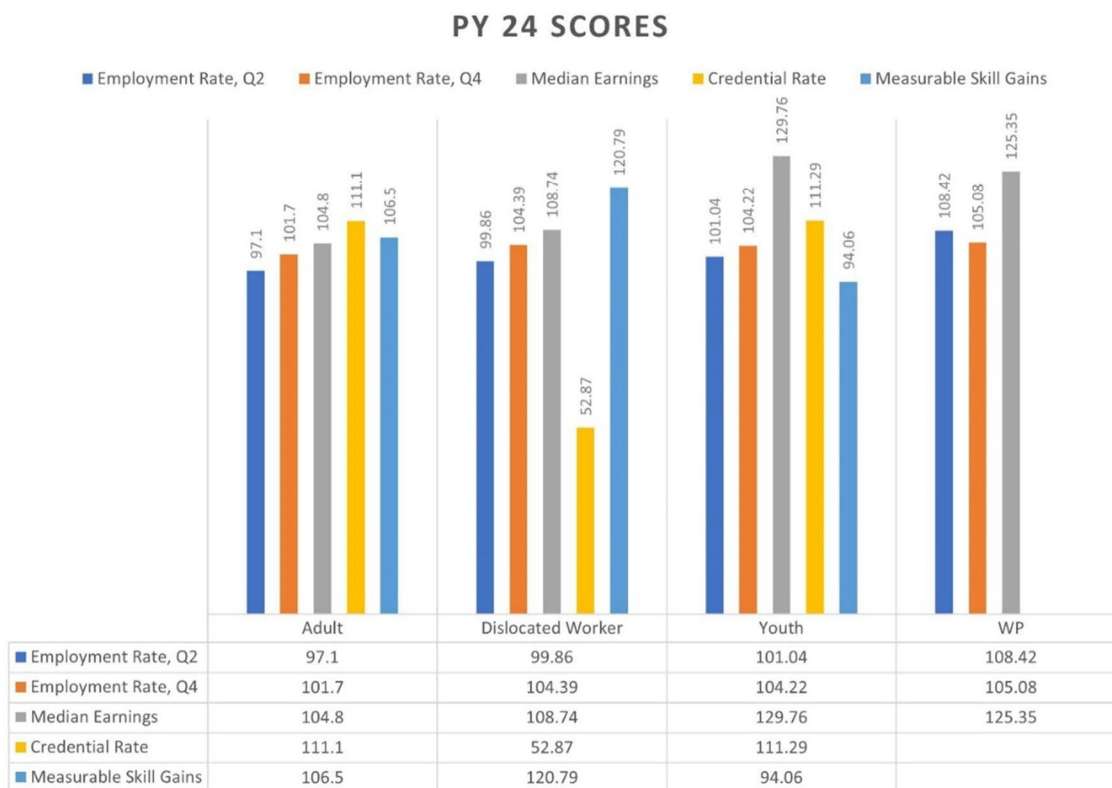


Figure 2 – WIOA TITLE I AND III - RATIO OF PERFORMANCE RESULTS PER PROGRAM – PROGRAM YEAR 2024

The WIOA Adult program met most of its performance goals for PY 2024 but didn't quite meet the target for Employment Rate in the second quarter after exit (Q2). The performance ratio for that measure was 97.1%, meaning it came in just 2.9% below the goal (Figure 2 – Ratio of Performance Results per Program – Program Year 2024). The highest performance ratio for the Adult program was for the Credential Rate at 111.1%, which means the program performed 11.1% above the target and about 2% higher than it did in PY 23 (Figure 1 – Statewide WIOA Outcomes – Program Year 2023 & 2024 Comparison). The program also made noticeable progress on Measurable Skill Gains (MSG), which wasn't met in the previous year. In PY 24, the MSG performance ratio was 106.5%, or 6.5% above the goal, making it the second-highest performing measure for



the Adult program.

The WIOA Dislocated Worker (DW) program, which supports individuals who have lost or been displaced from their jobs, did not meet its performance targets for Employment Rate in Q2 and Credential Attainment. The target for Employment Rate in Q2 was just missed with the performance ratio being 99.86%, less than 1% in meeting the target goal. The Credential Attainment was unfortunately a much more significant decline with the goal being 50.4% and the actual rate being 26.7%. This means that 4 of the 15 individuals in the DW program participated in a WIOA activity that led to earning a credential. Despite the challenges that the DW program faced in PY 24, the DW program did significantly better in the MSG target goal overall and compared to the previous program year, as it was not met in PY 23. Additionally, the DW program also reported higher Median Earnings compared to the Adult program in PY 24, which suggests that many DW participants have returned to the workforce and have secured higher paying employment. This was also evident in each County (Figure 3 – Statewide and County WIOA Outcomes – Program Year 2024).

Indicator	Statewide Actual	Statewide Total Participants	Hawaii Actual	Hawaii Total Participants	Kauai Actual	Kauai Total Participants	Maui Actual	Maui Total Participants	Oahu Actual	Oahu Total Participants
Adult										
Employment Rate, Q2	70.4%	257	75.7%	70	0%	4	50%	20	72.4%	163
Employment Rate, Q4	75.3%	186	73.8%	103	50%	2	62.5%	8	79.5%	73
Median Earnings	\$7,858	NA	\$7,822	NA	\$0	NA	\$10,202	NA	\$7,873	NA
Credential Rate	56%	91	64.9%	57	0%	0	0%	1	42.4%	33
Measurable Skill Gains	53.7%	313	29.3%	58	0%	1	6.7%	15	62.8%	239
Dislocated Worker										
Employment Rate, Q2	71.9%	64	66.7%	9	33.3%	3	58.3%	12	80%	40
Employment Rate, Q4	80.9%	47	90%	20	50%	4	83.3%	6	76.5%	17
Median Earnings	\$10,330	NA	\$8,708	NA	\$12,323	NA	\$10,507	NA	\$10,559	NA
Credential Rate	26.7%	15	33.3%	6	0%	2	0%	0	28.6%	7
Measurable Skill Gains	61%	41	42.9%	14	0%	0	100%	3	66.7%	24
Youth										
Employment, Education, or Training Rate, Q2	67.7%	31	62.5%	8	0%	1	100%	3	68.4%	19
Employment, Education, or Training Rate, Q4	66.7%	45	55.6%	9	0%	0	80%	5	67.7%	31
Median Earnings	\$6,488	NA	\$8,894	NA	\$0	NA	\$7,789	NA	\$4,804	NA
Credential Rate	69%	42	50%	8	0%	0	33.3%	3	77.4%	31
Measurable Skill Gains	47.5%	181	31.1%	45	0%	0	32.1%	28	58.3%	108
Wagner-Peyser										
Employment Rate, Q2	61.8%	2,897	59.6%	890	54.9%	246	63.3%	572	63.6%	1,389
Employment Rate, Q4	64.1%	2,777	62.3%	589	61.1%	229	64.2%	593	65.3%	1,366
Median Earnings	\$10,404	NA	\$9,036	NA	\$10,564	NA	\$8,724	NA	\$12,249	NA

Figure 3 - STATEWIDE AND COUNTY WIOA OUTCOMES - PROGRAM YEAR 2024

The WIOA Youth program showed the most notable improvement compared to the previous program year. In PY 23, the program met only two performance goals. In PY 24,



it met all but one, MSG, which was also not met the previous program year (Figure 1 – Statewide WIOA Outcomes – Program Year 2023 & 2024 Comparison). The Youth programs strongest performance was in Credential Attainment. This goal was not met in PY 23, with a performance ratio just over 85%, but in PY 24, the program exceeded the target with a ratio of 111.29%. These improvements reflect meaningful progress in delivering services and support to youth participants across Hawai‘i.

In summary, PY 24 showed both progress and areas that still need improvement across Hawaii’s WIOA programs. Most programs met the majority of their performance goals, with some showing gains compared to the previous year. The WP program continued to meet all three of its statewide goals, maintaining a four-year trend of consistent performance. The Adult program also met most of its goals, with strong results in Credential Attainment and MSG, although it fell slightly below the target for Employment Rate in Q2. The Dislocated Worker program had more mixed results, missing two goals, including a significant drop in Credential Attainment. However, it did better in MSG compared to the previous year and reported higher Median Earnings than the Adult program, suggesting that many participants were able to return to the workforce and secure higher-paying jobs.

The Youth program showed the most improvement from the previous year. In PY 23, it only met two goals, but in PY 24, it met all but one, MSG, which was also not met the year before. The biggest gain was in Credential Attainment, which increased from just over 85% in PY 23 to 111.29% in PY 24. These improvements suggest that the program is making progress in supporting youth participants. While there are still areas to work on, especially around Credential Attainment and MSG, the overall results show that the programs are moving in the right direction. Continued efforts to align services with participant needs, improve data tracking, and support staff capacity will be important going forward.

Performance Accountability System

Effectiveness In Serving Employers

Hawai‘i used primary indicators of effectiveness in serving employers:

- Retention with the Same Employer (in the 2nd and 4th Quarter).
- Repeat Business Customers (percentage of repeat employers using services within the previous three years).

PY 24 was the first year that the USDOL required for Title I through IV programs to



report on the measure jointing. Due to separate case management and reporting systems, the measure has not yet been fully integrated but was combined for this report. The Title I and III Statewide rate for **Retention with the Same Employer** was 68.50%, which was slightly higher from PY 23. **Repeat Business Customer Rate** declined from 34.4% in PY 23 to 21.60% in PY 24. For Title IV Retention with the Same Employer was 26%; Repeat Business Customer Rate was 21.9%. The three reporting Titles (I, III, and IV) had an overall 65.46% Retention Rate and a 21.90% Repeat Business Customer Rate.

Common Exit

Hawai'i's common exit policy was first issued in 2021 and is still in use:

<https://labor.Hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2021/06/Final-Joint-WIOA-Bulletin-001-21-Common-Exit-Policy-6.10.21.pdf>. Common exits cover participants enrolled in multiple USDOL funded program (Adult, DW, and Youth under Title I of WIOA, WP Employment Services under Title III of WIOA, NDWG; TAA; or JVSG). Exits occur when a participant has not received staff-assisted services, individualized career services, training services, or youth support services for at least 90 consecutive days; and no future services are scheduled.

The State's case management system, HNH, tracks these programs and applies a common exit when the participant co-enrolled in at least two programs has not received a service for 90 calendar days and does not have a planned service gap. Self-service, information-only activities, or follow-up services are not used to determine the common exit date (see 20 CFR §677.150(c)(1)(i)). The date of exit is not recorded manually but calculated automatically in HNH, 90 days after completion of any one of the last provided services. HNH calculates common exits using a database query programmed to a 90-day exit countdown. Self-services, information-only services or activities, and follow-up services do not delay, postpone, or affect the exit date.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction surveys are conducted as part of each AJC certification every three years. Continuous quality improvement is expected to be a feature of the ongoing certification process for each AJC, which is based on a point system that evaluates effectiveness and programmatic and physical accessibility. Community feedback and a method for capturing and responding to that feedback are incorporated into the workforce system. AJC certifications provided customer satisfaction feedback. Goodwill Hawai'i, the provider for Maui and Hawaii counties, regularly collects customer service feedback. Some of the feedback from customer service surveys identified that awareness of AJCs has been low, resulting in a media campaign to raise that awareness among the public.



Data Validation

PY 24 data validation of programs was remotely conducted by the WDD administrative staff prior to certifying the outcomes of the Annual Report in September 2025. Data Validation for the WIOA for Adult, DW, Youth, NDWG, WP, and JVSG programs, conducted from June 16 – July 22, 2025, for PY 2024 outcomes. Hawai'i uses the USDOL Employment and Training Administration's Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) No. 23-19, Change 1 (issued October 25, 2022) and 2 (issued May 12, 2023), as the basis of its WIOA Bulletin:

<https://labor.Hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2023/08/WIOA-Bulletin-29-19-Change-3.pdf>. The Standard Operating Procedures manual outlines the foundation for procedures (<http://labor.Hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2021/11/DataValidation-SOPManual-v1.0-July30-2021.pdf>) followed by additional guidance for electronic document management provided in [Joint-WIOA-Bulletin-02-23-Document-Management-Module-in-Hirenet-Hawai'i.pdf](#) and the previously noted WIOA Bulletin No. 29-19, Change 3. The Data Validation policy was approved on July 29, 2022, updated on August 7, 2023 (based on TEGL No. 23-19, change 2). The methods for reviewing PY 24 files followed procedures from the Data Validation manual and subsequent bulletins, including the methodology of gathering samples based on active versus exited participants, split by local areas and programs. Available manpower and time were factors in selecting the sample size, which was 151 for this program year.

Training of WDD Offices and Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) staff took place online in June 2025. Training for WDD staff performing data validation took place in WDD's offices in June 2025. Notices went out to WDD Offices and LWDBs, informing them of remote data validation by State WDD staff. The electronic downloads of participant records from HNH were reviewed against a review file checklist based on the Participant Individual Record Layout. Counts of appropriate documentation and matches between electronic downloads of files were taken for participants in the random sample. Errors that may have impacted the accuracy of the Performance Report were corrected by September 26, 2025, by WDD staff and/or LWDB's provider staff. The error threshold for missing source documentation and failed data elements was targeted at 10% with a standard deviation of 5%. The tolerated error rate was 15%.

The Statewide error rate (mean percent) for missing source documentation was 16.3%, with a standard deviation of 25.9%. The range of errors was from 0% to 100%. Lack of documentation was found in only two programs, which upon review was largely due to documentation not properly linked within HNH. These cases were subsequently corrected.



The mean percent of failed data matches was 6.9%, with a standard deviation of 15.1%. The minimum rate improved from the PY 23 low of 7.6% to 0%. However, the maximum range of errors went from 14.4% to 88.%. There was widespread improvement in the minimum error among most programs, particularly in the NDWG programs (Lahaina and QUEST). Failed data matches above the tolerated 15% rate were mostly found (5 or more cases) in Adult, Youth, and WP programs.

Some improvement is likely because of digital documentation standardized in PY 23. Validation continues to benefit from the widening of acceptable documents including self-attestation and case notes. Despite the improved collection of standard documents facilitated by document management modules in HNH, deficiencies in data validation can be attributed to deviation from existing data collection policies and Standard Operating Procedures that require upload of documents to HNH. Training from State and local boards to new and reassigned staff are intended to mitigate many of the errors.

Results have been captured as PDFs and will be kept for three years in line with State and current federal records retention policy. Ongoing data entry control and monitoring procedures will include program monitoring, periodic source documentation, and data accuracy training for local area and provider program staff. Technical assistance and training on document management was given to local areas and their providers throughout the program year. Additional technical assistance and data validation training is scheduled for the PY 25.

Technical Assistance

USDOL and the Employment and Training Administration Federal Program Officers (FPO) and Fiscal Staff provided technical assistance remotely to DLIR and local board staff throughout the year.

TheGATeam provided comprehensive fiscal training provided to all fiscal personnel and leadership staff with fiscal responsibilities in June 2025. Uniform Guidance requirements, cost allocation, procurement, internal controls, documentation standards, and allowable cost determinations were covered (see also Statewide Governor's Reserve Fund).

In March 2025, a full day of training was dedicated to Veteran Priority of Service and Uniform National Threshold for Entered Employment Rate with USDOL and the FPO from Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) of the USDOL.



Waivers

Hawai‘i’s waiver of WIOA Section 107(b) requirements allows the State Board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a local board, noted in the Unified State Plan (2024 – 2027), granted by the USDOL’s Employment and Training Administration. The previous waiver of June 2022 allowed DLIR to assume the responsibility of administering service delivery upon Kaua‘i County’s local elected officials’ request. WIOA Title I services were delivered by the local Kaua‘i WDD/AJC office in PY 24. Kaua‘i staff has had ongoing training and technical assistance to aid in their provision of services. Although goals in PY 24 were not met in the Adult and Youth programs, Median Earnings within the DW program were the highest across the State. WP outcomes were largely met, with Kaua‘i having the second highest Median Earnings rate in the state even with the lowest population of the four major counties. Kaua‘i also has the lowest employment rate in the State at 2.6% in 2024 per UHERO (and is forecast to have the lowest in 2025). These factors likely influence the low engagement of its residents in WIOA programs. With a forecast of an increase in its unemployment rate to increase to levels comparable to the rest of the State in 2026 and beyond, extensive outreach will be planned moving forward to maximize the impact and utilization of WIOA programs in Kaua‘i.

Statewide Fund Activities

WIOA unexpended funds from the local counties for the previous program year, 2023 totaled \$4,530,780 some of which was used for Statewide activities as outlined in 20 CFR §682.210. Some financed projects included the following: 1) Summer Youth Financial Literacy and Work Experience Program; 2) Ready-to-Work (career and work-based training to high-school students with disabilities); 3) Fiscal Policy Review, Training, and Operations Manual Update; and 4) Studies for Research and Evaluation.

1) Ready To Work Program

The Workforce Transition Center’s Ready-to-Work Program partners with participating high schools across the state to support Special Education students in building career readiness and workplace skills. The program emphasizes both technical and soft skills development to help students become productive, contributing members of their communities.

In-class instruction includes simulated retail “store” environments that provide students with hands-on training in real-world job scenarios. Once students demonstrate readiness, they are placed with local business partners for community-based work experiences, limited to no more than ten hours per week.



To ensure student success, the program also offers supportive services such as work-appropriate clothing and safety footwear. The Ready to Work program helps students get ready for employment after high school by offering practical experience.

Through collaboration with the Workforce Transition Center, schools can deliver hands-on job training tailored to students in special education programs. Participating schools included Castle High School, Kapolei High School, Leilehua High School, Konawaena High School, Waiakea High School, and Maui High School.

2) Summer Youth Financial Literacy and Work Experience Program

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) empowers young participants with vital life and career skills through a dynamic blend of financial literacy education and real-world work experience. Throughout the program, students take part in interactive workshops and hands-on activities designed to deepen their understanding of budgeting, saving, and investing, while also gaining valuable on-the-job experience through partnerships with local organizations. By the end of PY 24, nearly 200 students were looking forward to having their participation marked along with the successful conclusion of SYEP's third consecutive year. Youth were scheduled to attend a graduation ceremony celebrating their achievements with families, community leaders, and program participants, honoring the students' accomplishments and the impact of their journey.

3) Fiscal Policy Review, Training, and Operations Manual

As part of Technical Assistance DLIR contracted a fiscal training provider developed comprehensive training materials for fiscal personnel and updated the written fiscal policies and operational guidance to reflect clarified procedures and strengthen statewide consistency.

4) Studies For Research and Evaluation

Per 20 CFR §682.220, states must conduct evaluations in coordination with State and local workforce development boards. The State of Hawai'i conducted evaluations to assess the needs and to identify viable solutions to the problems



located in its inquiries. The completed research was selected and supported in collaboration with local boards.

Research to Improve Hawai'i's WIOA Workforce System Project

Grantee: Axios Strategy LLC

Completed as of June 30, 2025; Fund amount: \$100,000

The State contracted with Axios Strategy, LLC, a research provider to examine systemic challenges within Hawai'i's WIOA workforce system and identify improvements to enhance performance, fund utilization, and overall system effectiveness. The project conducted research to review operational barriers and evaluate evidence-based practices that could strengthen participant engagement and service delivery. The contractor analyzed administrative and performance data, mapping referral pathways, and assessing current outreach and enrollment practices to identify potential innovative practices. The contractor examined best practices from high-performing states, focusing on standardized intake systems, coordinated referrals, improved employer engagement models, and effective communication strategies used to raise visibility of workforce services. These comparisons provided insight into approaches that could be adapted to Hawai'i's unique geographic and economic conditions, resulting in policy and operational recommendations. The findings supported continuous system improvement and informed the State's broader efforts to modernize and strengthen Hawai'i's WIOA workforce system.



APPENDIX

Success Stories



Mia

PROGRAM:

Hele Imua Internship Program

LOCAL AREA:

City & County of Honolulu

After graduating from UH Mānoa with a B.B.A. in Management, Mia was eager to gain work experience that would help her launch a career with the State of Hawai‘i. She learned about the Hele Imua Internship Program during a resource fair and decided to apply to gain firsthand experience working in a state office. In February 2025, Mia was placed with the Department of Health’s Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division. There, she received training in a variety of administrative support functions and played an active role in the division’s daily operations.

“My Hele Imua Internship lasted 6 months and was truly amazing! The training and work experience I received from my host site helped me qualify for a full-time position at the very office I interned at,” Mia shared. “I’m now working as an Administrative Specialist – Professional Trainee I as of August 15th, and I’m so grateful for everything this internship program has done for me. It truly helped launch my career, and I’ll always look back on this experience as a meaningful steppingstone.”

Mia’s story is a testament to how the Hele Imua Internship Program empowers recent graduates to gain valuable experience and transition into meaningful careers in public service.



William “Will”

PROGRAM:

QUEST

LOCAL AREA:

Hawai'i County



A Journey of Perseverance and Pride

When William “Will” began his journey with the QUEST Internship Program at Kea‘au High School in September, 2024, he stepped into the role of School Custodian II – Intern with quiet determination. From the start, it was clear that Will wasn’t just there to do a job, he was there to make a difference.

Mr. Raleigh Peralta, the school’s Head Custodian, quickly took notice. “I was so impressed by the pride Will put into every task,” he shared. “No matter how small the assignment, he gave it his full effort.”

Over the course of three 89-day hires, Will’s consistency and dedication stood out. His willingness to learn, strong work ethic, and positive attitude earned him the respect of his colleagues and the confidence of his supervisors. Recognizing his potential, Mr. Peralta encouraged him to apply for an upcoming School Custodian II position.

While waiting for that opportunity, the Department of Education offered Will another temporary 89-day position in the same role—without benefits, but with the chance to keep doing the work he loved. Will didn’t hesitate. Grateful for the opportunity, he accepted, knowing each day was another step toward something greater.

That perseverance paid off. In September 2025, Mr. Peralta proudly shared that Will Cravens had been hired as a permanent School Custodian II, officially joining the DOE team. Even more inspiring, Will achieved the highest interview score among all applicants for the position.

Today, Will’s story stands as a testament to what hard work, humility, and perseverance can achieve. His journey reflects the true spirit of the QUEST Internship Program helping individuals prove themselves, grow their skills, and transform opportunities into lasting success. As Mr. Peralta put it best:

“Programs like QUEST give people a chance to shows what they’re capable of. Will is proof of what can happen when you take that chance and run with it.”





Almicar

PROGRAM:

Wagner-Peyser

LOCAL AREA:

Hawai'i County

Almicar first came to the American Job Center seeking support in his job search. A blind veteran with a master's degree in leadership studies, Almicar also serves as a pastor in his local church. His commitment to service and personal growth is evident in every step of his journey.

Recently, Almicar discovered an opportunity to become a Blind Vendor—a role that aligns with his qualifications and aspirations. In September, he reached out for help navigating the training modules required for certification. Since then, we've met daily to work through the curriculum together, and Almicar has successfully completed eight modules so far. From what we can tell, there should be 11 modules that need to be completed.

Watching Almicar engage with the training using adaptive tools and techniques has been truly inspiring. His resilience, intellect, and unwavering dedication make him a remarkable example of perseverance and purpose. Almicar's journey is a testament to the power of determination and the importance of accessible career pathways.



Jenny

PROGRAM:

RESEA

LOCAL AREA:

Hawai'i County

Turning Transition Into Triumph

When Jenny joined the RESEA program in September 2024, she brought with her years of experience and a strong work ethic, but also the uncertainty that comes with career transition. Having previously worked remotely in a high-paying role as a Scrum Master, Jenny faced an unexpected challenge upon returning to Hawai'i: the local job market didn't offer many opportunities that matched her experience or her previous salary level.

Rather than letting that discourage her, Jenny approached the situation with determination and openness. During her RESEA orientation, she expressed interest in learning about new career pathways and was referred to the DLIR website to explore internship opportunities. Though she applied for a range of positions, some beyond her expertise, others under different job titles—she continued to face roadblocks. But Jenny never gave up.

That's when the QUEST Internship Program became her turning point. Encouraged to see this as an opportunity for growth, Jenny applied and was soon placed at the Hilo Benioff Medical Center (HBMC) as an IT Specialist Intern, starting on February 3, 2025.

From day one, Jenny embraced the challenge of stepping into a new environment. She quickly learned the ins and outs of information technology within a hospital setting, a world quite different from her previous corporate experience. Her supervisors soon noticed her curiosity, professionalism, and eagerness to learn. Jenny wasn't just adapting; she was excelling.

After six months of hard work, Jenny's efforts paid off. She applied for and was offered a full-time position as an IT Specialist I at HBMC. What began as a daunting career transition transformed into a rewarding new chapter.

Jenny's journey is a powerful reminder that success doesn't always follow a straight path. Through persistence, adaptability, and the support of the RESEA and QUEST programs, she turned uncertainty into opportunity and found a new sense of purpose along the way.





Kamahina

PROGRAM:

WIOA Youth

LOCAL AREA:

Maui County

Kamahina was referred by a community organization on the island of Moloka'i to the WIOA Youth Program in Maui County, Goodwill Hawaii Ola I Ka Hana Youth Program (Ola). She relocated her family from Moloka'i as she was accepted to UH Maui College into the Dentistry program. Overcoming barriers of housing, and not being able to work due to the demands of the Dentistry program that she was enrolled in, Kamahina continued to persevere and focus on her goal.

Ola provided Kamahina with the support services needed for her to complete the course, including but not limited to scrubs, dental loupes, and school supplies, as well as assistance with paying for her tuition. With the support received by Ola staff, Kamahina was able to pass her tests and licensure exams for her dental hygiene license. Upon receiving her credential, she will be able to submit and apply for her dental hygiene license in the State of Hawai'i.

As Kamahina was nearing the end of her program and will be graduating in May 2025 from UH Maui College as a Dental Hygienist, her goal was to be able to move home to Moloka'i to find employment there and serve her community.

Since completion of her degree, Kamahina has moved back to Moloka'i, was able to secure housing and employment, and currently works for Moloka'i Community Health Center as a full-time Dental Hygienist.



Jeremias

PROGRAM:

WIOA Adult and QUEST

LOCAL AREA:

Hawai'i County

Jeremias joined the Adult Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program through a referral from QUEST employer Kohala Plants Inc., with the goal of enrolling in the QUEST Internship Program. Program Specialist Ja'ie met with Jeremias to determine his eligibility and discuss the possibility of subsidized employment with Kohala Plants. After the initial meeting, Ja'ie transitioned Jeremias to Program Specialist Moses, who provided direct career services, completed the intake and orientation process, and prepared him for placement at the QUEST site.

During intake and orientation, Jeremias completed all required documentation for enrollment. Based on his background and career goals, it was determined that he would greatly benefit from the QUEST program to build work skills—either to continue employment with Kohala Plants or to transition into a role better aligned with his newly acquired abilities.

Program Specialist Moses finalized the QUEST contract for subsidized employment, allowing Jeremias to begin work on July 14, 2025, as a nursery worker at Kohala Plants Inc. Together, Jeremias, Moses, and Kohala Plants owner Thomas Kadota developed a QUEST Internship Training Plan outlining Jeremias's duties, schedule, and responsibilities during the internship.

Through the program, Jeremias received support navigating his new role, his wages were fully covered, and assistance with work-related supplies. This included waterproof boots and a respirator to ensure safety and effectiveness in his nursery duties. In total, he received \$99.76 in support services.

Throughout the internship, Jeremias proved to be a well-rounded and motivated employee, eager to learn and take on new tasks. Feedback from both Jeremias and Thomas Kadota confirmed that the internship was mutually beneficial. In September 2025, Jeremias successfully completed the two-month QUEST Internship, gaining as many skills as possible within the contract period.

Before the internship concluded, Jeremias, Moses, and Thomas met to discuss next steps. Although Jeremias had completed the training tasks, the short duration of the internship limited his ability to fully master the skills. It was agreed that transitioning into a WIOA Adult On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract would provide continued professional development.



Following the meeting, Moses consulted with Program Manager Siniva to advocate for the OJT opportunity. An OJT contract was approved, allowing Jeremias to continue his employment with Kohala Plants Inc. under the WIOA Adult program. He remains in the nursery worker role, receiving ongoing support and guidance.

Both Jeremias and Thomas expressed their gratitude for the opportunities provided through the WIOA program, including the QUEST Internship and the OJT, which have contributed significantly to Jeremias's career growth.



OUTREACH AND SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Engaging with and Serving the Community

Future of Work Conference

On September 30, 2024, the Workforce Development Council (WDC), in collaboration with DLIR and COC Hawai'i, hosted the 2nd Annual Future of Work Conference at the Japanese Cultural Center. This year's event attracted over 300 participants, eager to explore Hawai'i's evolving job landscape.

DLIR Director Jade T. Butay emphasized, "Ensuring that businesses have skilled workers and that job seekers find the jobs they need is critical to equipping local businesses and workers with the talent and skills necessary as Hawai'i's economy evolves."

Renowned futurist Peter Schwartz, part of Salesforce's leadership team and a resident of the Big Island, delivered the keynote address. Drawing from his extensive experience in Silicon Valley and Singapore, Schwartz shared stories of communities working together to solve pressing issues. He pointed to a 1978 Hawai'i report that highlighted challenges like today's and emphasized the need for ongoing policy development to create solutions. His message left the audience feeling uplifted and inspired.

The event was well-attended by WDC board members, including Vice Chair Cary Miyashiro, Rossella Guardascione, Manu Bermudez, Della Teraoka, Scott Collins, Sean Knox, Lea Dias, Leslie Wilkins, Trang Malone, Rona Fukumoto, Dion Dizon, David Rodriguez, and Senator Donovan Dela Cruz.

Workforce Heroes Award

A key highlight of the conference was the Workforce Heroes Awards ceremony, an initiative led by WDC to recognize outstanding individuals across the islands.

2024 Honorees:

- Ariel Villanueva and Lord Ryan Lizardo (O'ahu)
- Nicolette van Der Lee (Maui)
- Kaina Makua (Kaua'i)
- Kevin Aki (Hawai'i Island)

Special Recognition:

- **Legislator of the Year:**
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz
- **Lifetime Achievement Award:**
David Lassner





Hawai'i Apprenticeship

(November 18 – 22)

To celebrate Hawai'i Apprenticeship Week (HAW) 2024, the DLIR WDD hosted a bus tour event to tour two registered apprenticeship program's training facilities, and a virtual event.

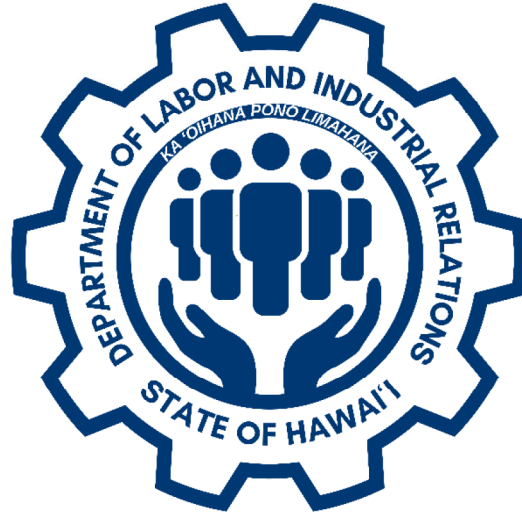
<https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdd/how-do-i-join-an-apprenticeship/>



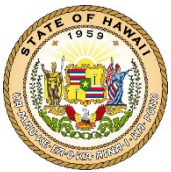
American Job Center – Public Awareness and Engagement Campaign

The DLIR conducted a statewide public awareness campaign for the AJC with Becker Communications Inc., which launched in June 2025. The campaign utilizes a multi-channel strategy, including video content, social media platforms, and traditional public relations outreach, to enhance public recognition of AJC services across Hawai'i.





**OUR MISSION IS TO IMPROVE THE
ECONOMIC SECURITY, PHYSICAL AND
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING, AND PRODUCTIVITY
OF WORKERS, AND TO ACHIEVE GOOD
LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS.**



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