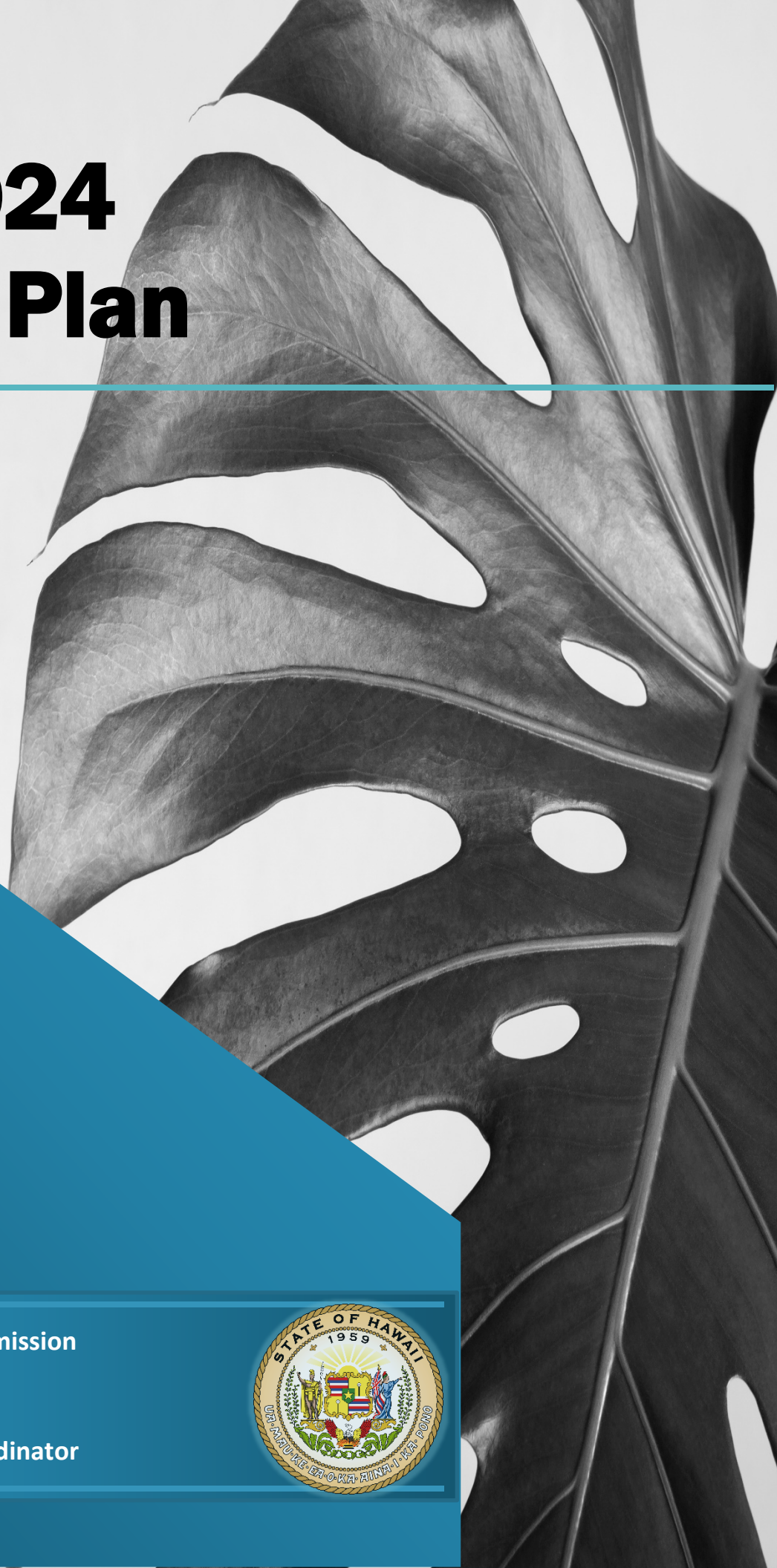
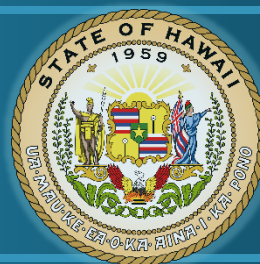


2023 - 2024 Strategic Plan



Correctional System Oversight Commission
January 1st, 2023

Christin M. Johnson, Oversight Coordinator



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Letter from the Chair

Aloha Mai Kakou,

This January 2023 Legislative session marks three years since the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission became a functioning body. In January 2020, new Commissioners met for the very first time: Theodore Sakai (Governor), Martha Torney (House of Representatives), Judge Michael A. Town Ret. (Senate), Judge Ronal Ibarra Ret. (Judiciary) and myself (Office of Hawaiian Affairs). Before we could review and begin our mandate from Act 179, COVID-19 hit and we were thrust into the unknown of correctional oversight during a worldwide pandemic. The Commission managed the next two years through thick and thin as we attempted to provide oversight on correctional emergency population control during the pandemic. The community that created us was the same community that sustained us during the pandemic as we had no staff.

The year 2022 will definitely mark the year we began to realize our full potential as a commission. Testimony provided by the Commission was given in support of Women's Prison Program Reform, delaying the building of the proposed new jail while supporting pre-trial reform and other bills supporting family re-unification. Most significantly in 2022 was the hiring of our first Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson. Ms. Johnson comes to Hawaii with a wealth of knowledge and passion for correctional oversight. The Commission finally has eyes and ears to physically go into each of the correctional facilities and provide an assessment of the current status of the correctional environment.

In 2023, the HCSOC will strive to earnestly begin our work in transforming from a punitive model to a more effective therapeutic model with the Department of Public Safety. We will set the parameter of this vision so we can begin taking the first steps to creating movement that will evolve into a longer strategic plan. This journey will take time as there are multiple state systems involved to create cohesiveness in the holistic treatment of our most marginalized populations. The first step is to realize that change is needed and then believe that change can happen.

*Mai nana 'inoino na hewa o kanaka aka E huikala a ma'ema'e no
Behold not with Malevolence the sins of man but forgive and cleanse*

Queen Lydia Kamaka'eha Lili'uokalani

Sincerely,



Mark Patterson

Letter from the Oversight Coordinator

Aloha kākou!

Let me begin by expressing what an honor and privilege it is to serve as the first Oversight Coordinator for the State of Hawaii. I understand that oversight is new to the state, and I am thrilled to be a part of this historic moment of opening and setting the foundation for the new oversight office. Throughout my career, I have seen the injustices that occur within our corrections system, and those experiences have further fueled my passion for effective oversight. I promise you that I will always be honest, transparent, and responsive in this role. Not only to those in custody, but to families, friends, officers, stakeholders, and staff.

We are so lucky to have such a committed and experienced Commission who has shaped the vision for this office. This strategic plan is aligned with topic areas that the Commission cares deeply about in addition to the priorities set in our mandate (Hawaii Revised Statute 353L). This plan incorporates priorities, objectives, and strategies and I hope it gives a clear roadmap to what we expect to accomplish in the next twelve months.

This is an important opportunity to ensure transparency, accountability, support safe conditions for staff and those in custody in the jails and prisons, and implement positive reform and rehabilitative efforts. Since starting in July, I have had the opportunity to become familiar with all eight correctional facilities on-island in addition to visiting the private facility in Arizona, meet with staff and people in custody, and connect with community partners. I deeply appreciate those who have welcomed me with open arms, and I am looking forward to working together to find solutions to systemic problems we will be facing in 2023 and beyond.

In service,



Christin M. Johnson

INTRODUCTION

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, or the Commission) was created by Act 179, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, “to ensure transparency, support safe conditions for employees, inmates, and detainees, and provide positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system.” This Commission’s first Oversight Coordinator was hired in July of 2022 and this strategic plan sets the priorities for the oversight office for the next twelve months. The plan and priorities are not meant to replace or overshadow the important work that government and community stakeholders have already focused on and put substantial work into. Instead, this plan is meant to build on and encompass that work, including the recommendations from the 2019 House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force on Prison Reform report.

This strategic plan is one of the first priorities set by the Oversight Coordinator to explain what oversight is, why it is beneficial, and to highlight future plans for the oversight office.

BACKGROUND

In 2016, a House Concurrent Resolution was passed requesting the establishment of a task force to study effective incarceration policies to improve Hawaii’s correctional system. The task force was successfully created and published a report in December of 2018. The HRC 85 Taskforce report, *Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities*, found that, “Hawaii’s correctional system is not producing acceptable, cost-effective, or sustainable outcomes and needs immediate and profound change.” The primary recommendation from the task force was for Hawaii to immediately begin to transition from a punitive to a rehabilitative correctional system. Among many additional recommendations, the task force also recommended that an oversight commission be created to immediately address prison suicides, sexual assaults, and other unacceptable and unlawful conditions in our prison system.

In 2019, through the passage of House Bill 1552, Act 179, the legislature found that independent oversight of the State’s correctional system will ensure transparency, supports safe conditions for employees, inmates, and detainees, and provides positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system. Act 179 successfully 1) established the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission, 2) created a position for an Oversight Coordinator for the Commission, 3) extended the sunset date of the Reentry Commission to 1/1/2020, 4) Repealed the Reentry Commission and Corrections Population Management

Commission on 1/1/2020, and 5) transferred all rights, powers, functions, and duties of those commissions to the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission.

Today, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission's mandate is Chapter 353L of the Hawaii Revised Statute. The Commission consists of five members who must be residents of Hawaii and appointed as follows:

- 1) One member shall be appointed by the Governor (*Commissioner Ted Sakai*);
- 2) One member shall be appointed by the President of the Senate (*Commissioner Honorable Mike Town*);
- 3) One member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives (*Commissioner Martha Torney*);
- 4) One member shall be appointed by the Chief Justice (*Commissioner Honorable Ron Ibarra*); and
- 5) One member shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (*Commissioner and Chair Mark Patterson*).

The Commissioners possess knowledge in criminal justice, correctional systems, Native Hawaiian culture-based practices with an emphasis on healing and reducing recidivism, best practices for effective correctional systems, and crime victim specialization. The Commission began meeting publicly on a monthly basis in January of 2020. However, fiscal biennium 2019-2021 funds that were appropriated to the Commission were not released from the Department of Budget and Finance due to Covid-19, putting a hold on hiring staff. The funds were released in 2022, and the Commission's first Oversight Coordinator started in July of 2022.

WHAT IS OVERSIGHT?

Oversight can be described as an independent body that reviews, investigates, audits, and makes policy recommendations to a separate agency (or agencies) it oversees. Effective oversight agencies are run and staffed by civilians, meaning they are individuals who are not law enforcement officers or correction officers. There are various types of oversight and best practices for successful oversight as described by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). NACOLE is a non-profit organization that works to create a community of support for independent, civilian oversight entities that seek to make their local law enforcement agencies, jails, and prisons more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the communities they serve.

According to NACOLE, there are thirteen general principles that are considered key components of successful civilian oversight:



Additionally, NACOLE has identified four models of oversight. The most common models of oversight are 1) Review-Focused, 2) Monitor/Auditor-Focused, 3) Investigation-Focused and 4) Hybrid models.

Review	Monitor/Auditor	Investigation	Hybrid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Receives complaints and forwards them to the law enforcement agency for investigation. They can then review the findings and either remand the case back for further investigation, or recommend case disposition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Focuses on a wider range of policies, practices and procedures by ensuring complaint investigations comply with established policies and procedures. Can involved themselves in ongoing investigations by observing interviews, asking questions, and overseeing the overall direction of the department’s investigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Employs professionally trained investigative staff to conduct investigations of allegations of misconduct independently of the department’s internal affair unit. Investigators will conduct interviews, gather evidence, prepare investigative reports, and Make recommendations or findings as to whether the evidence supports the allegations in the complaint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Contains elements from one of more of the three models.

The Review model receives complaints and forwards them to the law enforcement agency for investigation. They can then review the findings and either remand the case back for further investigation or recommend case disposition. The Auditor/Monitor model focuses on a wider range of policies, practices and procedures by ensuring complaint investigations comply with established policies and procedures. Auditor/Monitors can be involved in ongoing investigations by observing interviews, asking questions, and overseeing the overall direction of the Department's investigation.

The Investigation model employs professionally trained investigative staff to conduct investigations of allegations of misconduct independently of the department's internal affair unit. Investigators will conduct interviews, gather evidence, prepare investigative reports, and make recommendations or findings as to whether the evidence supports the allegations in the complaint. The Hybrid model contains elements from one or more of the three models previously listed. The Hybrid model is becoming increasingly more utilized by oversight agencies and is the model the HCSOC will be adopting into practice.

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission is proud to be a member of NACOLE and use their guiding practices in addition to the guidance from national oversight leaders in the creation of this oversight office. As highlighted by Michele Deitch, a senior lecturer at the University of Texas and Director of the Jail and Prison Innovation Lab, there are various benefits to civilian oversight including, but not limited to:

- **Benefits to Incarcerated People**

Regular monitoring also allows for the early detection of problems, which may save people in custody from experiencing mistreatment in the first place, and improves their quality of care, programming options, and interactions with facility staff.

- **Benefits to Correctional Administrators**

Oversight enables administrators to begin a public dialogue about what their institutions can reasonably accomplish and what they need in terms of training, funding, and technical assistance for those purposes.

- **Benefits to Judges, Prosecutors, Defense Lawyers, and Policymakers**

Monitoring and inspections could potentially allow a judge to know if it is safe to sentence someone to a term of incarceration. Accurate information and data about programming outcomes, living conditions, and rehabilitative efforts could also allow other justice leaders, including prosecutors and defense attorneys, to make better arguments and decisions about each defendant's future.

- **Benefits to the Media and the General Public**

Transparency is one of the pillars of a democratic society, and external oversight creates the opportunity to honor this value and engage the public in an important dialogue about correctional practices

It is important to note that there is a fine line between oversight and operations. Oversight is not meant to complete the Department of Public Safety’s job for them. Instead, oversight is to ensure that the Department has the resources and tools it needs to be successful, in addition to ensuring those tools are utilized effectively and appropriately. A good example of this would be the grievance system. The grievance system is in place in all facilities to ensure people in custody have a means for addressing problems they have within the facility. Instead of HCSOC addressing the complaint at hand, we will be ensuring the grievance system is working effectively so the Department can resolve initial complaints before approaching the Commission. This is another way in which HCSOC is focused on systemic change throughout the Department.

VISION. MISSION. VALUES.

An organization’s vision is an aspirational statement which expresses the plan or “vision” for the future and intended impact on the world. Our vision is:

**HCSOC will be the leader in corrections oversight
and will set the standard for best practices nationwide.**

An organization’s mission is an action-based statement that declares the purpose of an organization and how they serve their community. Our mission is:

**Through targeted change, accountability, transparency, and engagement, HCSOC
will produce progressive and sustainable outcomes to better public safety
in the state of Hawaii and facilitate a correctional system transition to a
rehabilitative and therapeutic model.**

An organization’s values are the set of guiding principles and fundamental beliefs that help a group of people function together as a team and work toward a common business goal. Our values are:

- **‘Alohilohi**
- **Kuleana**
- **Pono**
- **Aloha**
- **Ha’aha’a**



'Alohilohi
(*Transparency*)

Being upfront and honest about our work.



Kuleana
(*Accountability*)

Always following through and following up to accomplish what we said we would do.



Pono
(*Integrity*)

Being honest and having strong moral principles.



Aloha
(*Compassion*)

Being genuinely concerned about other people and people's needs.



Ha'aha'a
(*Humility*)

Intentionally looking for ways to lift others to higher levels of confidence and experiences.

USING THE PLAN

The Office of the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission will use this strategic plan to guide our operations, time, and financial investments. This plan is intended to be a living breathing document. We will be learning throughout the implementation of this plan and recognize and acknowledge that updates will need to be made. As we continue to work more collaboratively internally and externally, we will uncover more opportunities to reimagine public safety, and increase transparency and accountability.

We commit to being transparent about our learnings and forthcoming updates.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Per the 353L mandate, the Commission has four core functions:

- 1) Oversee the State's correctional system and have jurisdiction over investigating complaints at correctional facilities and facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model;
- 2) Establish maximum inmate population limits for each correctional facility and formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each correctional facility;
- 3) Work with the department of public safety in monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program, including facility educational and treatment

programs, rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees. The commission may make recommendations to the department of public safety, the Hawaii paroling authority, and the legislature regarding reentry and parole services; and

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

These four functions will guide all strategic priorities (oversight, rehabilitation, population limits, and reentry) to ensure best practices for an effective correctional system.

OVERSIGHT

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

Objective 1: Fully equip the Office of the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission to serve the state of Hawaii.

Strategies:

1. Determine and seek appropriate funding for staff hires, travel for on-site facility monitoring, staff development, and basic office needs.
2. Develop standard training for staff that encompasses the history, organization, and changes within the Department of Public Safety in addition to the history, culture, and concerns of the communities served by the Department of Public Safety.
3. Develop and adopt rules, office policies, and standard operating procedures to ensure consistency and efficiency.

Objective 2: Create and finalize investigative and monitoring procedures for investigating complaints at correctional facilities.

Strategies:

1. Partner with a pro-bono company to assist in designing an internal (and forward-facing) case management system. Members of the public must be able to access the demographic and high-level data regarding types of complaints we receive, when we receive them, and from which facilities the complaints are reported.

2. Develop training standards aligned with national standards for best practices while touring facilities, speaking to staff, and speaking to those in custody to ensure the utmost professionalism in addition to the development of an investigative manual to ensure consistency, efficiency, and thoroughness in all investigations.
3. Hire a Jail Monitor and a Prison Monitor to complete investigations and monitoring at their respective facilities.

Objective 3: Increase engagement and transparency related to public safety and corrections.

Strategies

1. Promote and maintain a strong digital presence by social media and the HCSOC website to ensure information is easily accessible and understandable.
2. Adjust meeting logistics, including but not limited to, location, virtual capabilities, and structure in order to increase community participation and elevate resident voice.
3. Ensure that public information is released in an easily understandable format, in addition to creating an automatic emailing list for those interested in office updates.

REHABILITATION

Facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model.

Objective 1: Evaluate current Department of Public Safety policies, practices, and procedures for increased innovation and focus on rehabilitation.

Strategies:

1. Using key recommendations from the HCR 85 Taskforce report, the Reentry Commission Strategic Plan, and other relevant studies, evaluate which recommendations have been implemented into the Department of Public Safety policies and practices, which are in progress, and which have not been implemented.
2. Regularly evaluate trends in complaints received, the findings of those complaints, the Department's grievance system processes to assess current policies and to submit solid policy recommendations.
3. Regularly tour correctional facilities, announced and unannounced, to monitor conditions, hear from staff, and speak to

those in custody, in addition to completing specific tours relevant to data collection or systemic analysis.

Objective 2: Conduct ongoing research studies of the operation and administration of correctional system laws in other jurisdictions and locally.

Strategies:

1. Partner with local colleges and universities to create opportunities for students to be involved in academic research and policy change through an internship program.
2. Partner with local and national nonprofit organizations to assist in conducting research studies of other jurisdictions with the goal of transitioning Hawaii to a more effective and sustainable correctional system that focuses on rehabilitation instead of punishment.
3. Hire a minimum of two researchers to assist with investigative studies, policy, and legislative changes that are vital to creating a more effective correctional system.

Objective 3: Create opportunities to work in partnership with community, government, and nonprofit stakeholders to design and recommend changes that support rehabilitation and safer communities.

Strategies:

1. Reinvest in recommendations that existed prior to Act 179 from community partners that include but are not limited to the HCR 85 Taskforce report, the Reentry Commission Strategic Plan, and other relevant studies.
2. Engage with community organizations, County officials, and other stakeholders who are focused on reentry and rehabilitation efforts.
3. Advocate for federal and state resources to fund community efforts towards reentry and rehabilitation to create safer communities.

POPULATION LIMITS

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

Objective 1: Support legislative changes that lead to more equity and safer communities while reserving incarceration for those who truly need to be detained.

Strategies:

1. Partner with local agencies to draft and/or publicly support legislation proven to safely lower inmate populations without jeopardizing public safety.
2. Use data and statistical analysis to evaluate public safety practices and publicly release information specific to inmate demographics for better understanding of the population.
3. Meet with various stakeholders and legislators regarding inequities behind cash bail, counterproductivity behind state imprisonment for lower-level crimes, and having state sentences be more proportional to crimes.
4. Partner with local agencies to find solutions in preventing the criminalization of homelessness and individuals experiencing mental health crises, many of whom are incarcerated in the jails specifically.

Objective 2: Establish maximum inmate population limits for each correctional facility.

Strategies:

1. Review the Corrections Population Management Commission's 2001 Annual Report and the Commission's Infectious Disease Emergency Capacities 2020 report to ensure inmate population limits are appropriate, particularly after Covid-19 restrictions begin to ease, by aligning with national standards.
2. Work with the Department of Public Safety to update all measurements of cells, dorms, and spaces used for housing, as many spaces have been changed or converted since 2001.

Objective 3: Formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each correctional facility.

Strategies:

1. Work in partnership with the Department of Public Safety and appropriate unions to ensure policies and procedures are written, taught, and exercised to keep the population at appropriate levels in each facility, including reviewing transfer policies.
2. Develop and sustain relationships with the Judiciary, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Department of Labor, Family Services, and the Taskforce on Homelessness to formulate policies that assist with lessening the inmate population.

3. Ensure the current assessment instruments, classification system, individual program planning, and corresponding reentry programming is properly being utilized to fill pre-transitional beds.

REENTRY

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

Objective 1: Familiarize the public with requirements set in 353H regarding the Offender Reentry System in addition to the Department of Public Safety Reentry Commission Strategic Plan.

Strategies:

1. Prepare and present information specific to the offender reentry process which includes mapping of the state's systems and programming efforts that are a reflection of current reentry practices of the Department of Public Safety.
2. Explain and present the current processes of each separate facility and county to ensure consistency across the state.
3. Host various Listening Sessions to receive feedback from community members, people in custody, families, Department staff, and other stakeholders. These Listening Sessions will be hosted publicly in addition to privately (within the correctional facilities) so the Commission can gather effective feedback.

Objective 2: Monitor and review the comprehensive offender reentry program, including facility educational and treatment programs, rehabilitative services, inter-facility transfer processes, parole preparation programs, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees.

Strategies:

1. Strategize and publicly post an oversight plan to assess and review all programming rehabilitative services, work furloughs, and the Hawaii paroling authority's oversight of parolees.

2. Request specific data sets that encompass all reentry programs in addition to the data and analysis that shows success of each program.
3. Create a set of standards that programming should meet to lessen recidivism and ensure program efficiency and effectiveness.

Objective 3: Ensure the timely release of inmates on parole when the minimum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services.

Strategies:

1. Host various Listening Sessions to receive feedback from programming staff, people in custody, facility administrators, and other stakeholders. These Listening Sessions will be hosted privately so the Commission can gather feedback within each correctional facility.
2. Use data and analysis to pull each individual's earliest release date and compare those who are considered, "Chair to Set" to find individuals waiting on programming or housing needs before being released.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this strategic plan is the initial step to ensure greater accountability and transparency within the Department of Public Safety. This plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, at minimum, to ensure the strategic priorities align with Hawaii's needs. Additionally, this plan will be used as a steppingstone towards a larger, five-year strategic plan that will encompass major problems to be addressed and strategies on how to address the problems. The five-year plan will include feedback and collaboration from county and state officials in addition to community, family, staff, and people in custody.

The next steps to implementing this plan include:

- Recruiting talented and passionate staff to execute the mission of HCSOC (*Current*)
- Designing and implementing procedures to operationalize strategies detailed in this plan (*Spring, 2023*)
- Updating the HCSOC website to ensure access to data and complaint tools are accessible (*Summer, 2023*)
- Reporting on the progress of this plan on a quarterly basis (*Spring, 2023*)

- Work in partnership with the community, families, people in custody, staff, Department of Public Safety, and other stakeholders to ensure open-mindedness and collaboration from those affected the most. (*Continuous*)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

It is no secret that without community partners, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission never would have come to fruition. The Commission and Oversight Coordinator would like to thank all community partners who have dedicated so much time, patience, and energy to ensuring accountability exists within the Department of Public Safety. We look forward to continuing to partner with you and thank you for your ongoing support. We do not take it for granted.

Mahalo!