



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report - September 21 2023

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Introduction

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

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

The Oversight Coordinator monthly reports are released on the third Thursday of each month to align with monthly Commission meetings where this report is publicly discussed.

In-Custody Death

On August 18, 2023, at the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), a person in custody, male, 56 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at approximately 4:20am. 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) were called and the person in custody was transported to the Hilo Medical Center. At approximately 5:19am, HCCC was notified that the individual was pronounced deceased. This appears to be a death by suicide. The Hilo Police Department and the Department of Public Safety's Internal Affairs Unit are conducting their respective investigations.

Hawaii Paroling Authority Hearings

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole when the minimum terms have been served instead of delaying the release for lack of programs and services, staff have been reviewing the Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA) hearings.

On Thursday, August 17, 2023, HCSOC staff observed the HPA hearings at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). The hearings were scheduled to be in-person but shifted to remote due to COVID cases at the facility. HPA Board members Milton Kotsubo and Gene DeMello, Jr., and HPA Board Chair Edmund "Fred" Hyun conducted around 20 hearings—including parole violations, parole considerations, parole reconsiderations, and fixing minimum terms—which lasted approximately nine hours.

These HCSOC hearing observations are part of ongoing and mandated efforts to monitor and review the Hawaii Paroling Authority's oversight of parolees and ensure that the comprehensive offender reentry system provides programs and services resulting in timely release. The intention was also to learn more about the parole experience and procedure for women in Hawaii and HPA's minimum setting process.

The HCSOC staff wishes to thank HPA Chairperson, Edmund "Fred" Hyun, Board Members, and staff for their assistance.

Legislative Correctional Facility Tours

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to oversee the state's correctional system, on August 22, 2023, the Oversight Coordinator toured the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) with Representative Mark Hashem, Corrections, Military & Veterans (CMV) Chair, Representative Linda Ichiyama, Water & Land (WAL) Committee Chair, Representative Nadine Nakamura, House Majority Leader, Representative Sonny Ganaden, Representative Mahina Poepoe, and Representative Luke Evslin. The intention of the tour was to bring awareness to the conditions of confinement at HCCC, and to illustrate areas where HCCC has improved in the past year. The tour was very successful, and the Commission wishes to thank Warden Mahoe and Chief of Security Kahapea for their time, and expertise.

Additionally, on September 8, 2023, the Oversight Coordinator toured the Saguaro Correctional Center with Senator Glenn Wakai, Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs (PSM) Chair, Senator Brandon Elefante Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs (PSM) Vice Chair, Michael Greenough, Senator Elefante's staff, Dr. Michael Champion, Senior Advisor to the Governor for Mental Health and the Justice System, and PSD leadership including Tommy Johnson, Director, Sanna Munoz, Deputy Director of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Melanie Martin, Deputy Director of Administration,. This was an introductory tour for the Senators and the Commission extends gratitude to Warden Wead for conducting the tour.



Going Home Hawai'i Reentry and Restoration Summit

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model, on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, HCSOC Commissioners, Coordinator, and staff attended the Going Home Hawaii (GHH) *Reentry and Restoration Summit* in Kona, Hawaii. GHH convened over 300 attendees with varied backgrounds, including legislators and government leaders, individuals with lived experience, community organizations, advocates for justice-involved individuals, and experts to discuss supportive housing, healthcare, career advancement, equity, community safety, the need for policy change, successful interventions, and investment priorities. The conversations, work, and demonstrated commitment of summit organizers, presenters, and

attendees align with the spirit of change necessary to actualize the impending transition to the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in January 2024.

Several—but not all—Presenter Highlights:

- The Oversight Coordinator led an informative and interactive breakout session on community safety with Chief Ben Moszkowicz, Hawaii Police Department.
- Dr. Jamee Miller, Founder of Ekolu Mea Nui presented on *Ho`iwai - A Pono Framework for Success After Incarceration*. Jamee highlighted the over-representation of Native Hawaiians in the system and the need for Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, language change, and alternatives to incarceration.
- The Department of Public Safety Director, Tommy Johnson, articulated the paradigm shift necessary to effect system-wide change and emphasized the need for diversion and community partnerships.
- Showing of *Beyond Bars: Prison Women Speak*, a film featuring incarcerated women telling their own stories produced by Tadia Rice.



From right to left: Commissioner Martha Torney, Commissioner Ron Ibarra, Oversight Coordinator Christin Johnson, and Reentry and Diversion Oversight Specialist, Cara Compagni attending the Going Home Hawai'i Reentry and Restoration Summit.

The HCSOC extends special thanks to Les Estrella, Kimi Palacio, and all GHH staff and volunteers who supported the Summit's planning and success.

House Concurrent Resolution 23 Task Force

Overview

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

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

Partnerships

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

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

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

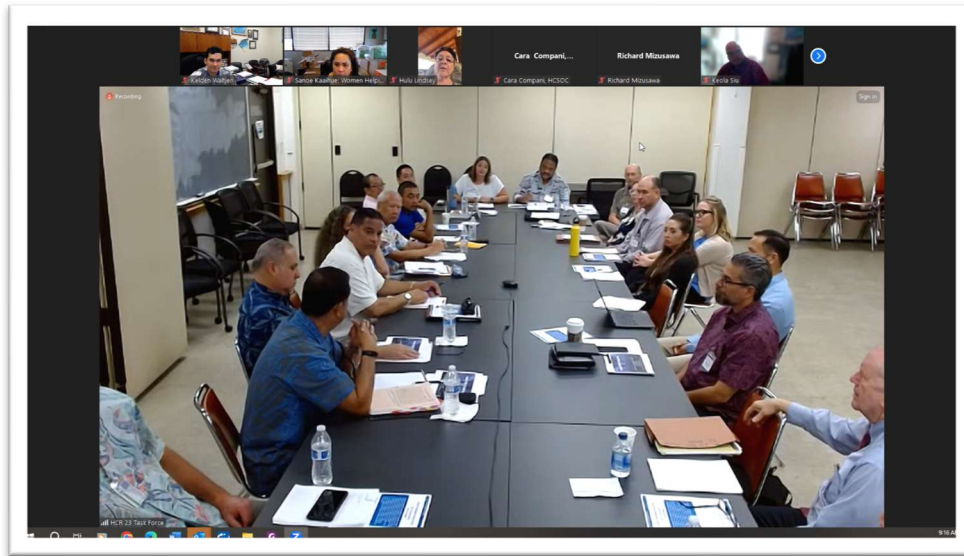
How the CSG Justice Center Will Assist:

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

Meetings

The Commission hosted a community outreach event on September 11, 2023 to create an opportunity for the community to share their thoughts with the Chair before the first task force meeting. Community members can submit testimony specific to the task force by emailing a copy to hcsoc@hawaii.gov. Additionally, community members can direct testimony to Mark Patterson, Chair, during the monthly Commission meetings.

The first task force meeting took place on September 12, 2023. Recordings from both the community meeting and task force meeting are available on the HCR23 website, and the Commission's YouTube Channel. More information regarding this task force can be found here: <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/hcr23-task-force/>.



HCR23 Task Force Meeting, courtesy of Prosecutor Kelden Waltjen

Community Meeting with Just Leadership USA

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model, on Friday, September 15, 2023, the Commission arranged a talk story with DeAnna Hoskins, President/CEO of Just Leadership USA (JLUSA), Ronald Simpson-Bey, Executive Vice President of Strategic Partnerships at JLUSA, and our community leaders here in Hawaii. The meeting served as an introduction and venue to discuss the work and mission of JLUSA and current efforts and opportunities identified by community leaders in Hawaii. Mahalo to Community Alliance on Prisons, Hawai'i Innocence Project, First Life After Prison (First LAP), RYSE, No Looking Back, ACLU Hawai'i, YWCA, and the Pu'a Foundation for joining us!

[Just Leadership USA](#) (JLUSA) is a national organization whose mission is to amplify the power of directly impacted people by investing, educating,

empowering, and elevating their voices, so they have the tools and resources to self-organize and advocate for themselves, their families, and their communities. Mahalo to DeAnna and Ronald for joining us!



Ronald Simpson-Bey addressing the community.



Group picture with Just Leadership USA and community members.

Breaking Cycles: Re-Envisioning A Health, Housing, And Corrections Continuum

Consistent with the Commission’s mandate to facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model, the Commission, the Correctional Reform Working Group, the University of Hawaii Manoa School of Architecture, and the Department of Public Safety are collectively planning a symposium to bring national and worldwide experts to Hawaii to examine the current correctional system and discuss the importance of culture and design when considering new jail or prison structures.

The symposium is scheduled for October 10-11 from 8:30am-4pm and will be held at the Laniākea — YWCA O’ahu.

Registration is OPEN!

Please register here for this free event!: <https://www.breaking-cycles-symposium.org/>

Breaking Cycles Symposium

October 10 & 11, 2023
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

YWCA Laniākea
1040 Richards Street

Scan to register for free:

<https://www.breaking-cycles-symposium.org>

Re-envisioning a Health, Housing, and Corrections Continuum

We are gathering local and national subject matter experts and stakeholders together to share knowledge and explore new approaches to corrections, diversion, and reentry.

Symposium partners: The Department of Public Safety (PSD), Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission, University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Architecture/Community Design Center (A/CDC), Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, Waioli E. Richardson School of Law, Therapeutic School of Social Work and Public Health, Department of Urban & Regional Planning, Malanapa Peace Institute, Correctional Reform Working Group, along with ABE/ND of the University of California, San Francisco.

Project Updates

Case Management System

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to investigate complaints at correctional facilities, the Coordinator has been working diligently with [Thoughtworks](#) to custom design a case management system to intake, organize, and respond to complaints received by the Commission. Thoughtworks is a leading technology consultancy of more than 11,500 staff across 51 offices in 18 countries. Their cross-functional teams of strategists, developers, data engineers and designers bring over two decades of global experience to every partnership.

The case management system will not only allow staff to organize complaints received, but it also autogenerates demographic information from those in custody. It will support the Coordinator in prioritizing projects based on specific complaint types at each facility. Additionally, the system enables staff to identify the complaint types and send a response letter with information related to the specific complaint type. The system is being finalized and will launch next month, October 2023. Thoughtworks will provide an overview of the system during the October 2023 Commission meeting. The Commission is so grateful for all of the time and work the Thoughtworks team has put into this project.

Staff-Focused Survey and Report

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to investigate complaints at correctional facilities, the HCSOC will be focusing on an all-encompassing staff survey to better understand the corrections environment; enhance data collection capacities to promote transparency and accountability; and recommend evidence-based programs and policies to improve conditions for those working in our jails and prisons.

The survey that will be utilized was created under the Urban Institute's Prison Research and Innovation Initiative (PRII), supported by Arnold Ventures. The survey has been distributed in facilities throughout Vermont, Delaware, Iowa, Missouri, and Colorado and was developed using participatory research methods, elevating the voices and perspectives of correctional staff. Vermont had a particularly successful survey launch with a response rate of 70% at the Southern State Correctional Facility. It is the Commission's goal to gather as much, if not more, participation.

The Commission is fortunate to have support for this project from the Department of Public Safety, and from the United Public Workers (UPW) Hawaii. Although this will be an independent project to distribute and gain perspectives from staff, the HCSOC looks forward to working closely with the Department of Public Safety and UPW on solutions.

Expenses for the Preceding Month - August

	Price/Item	Qty	Total	Notes
Office Equipment and Supplies			\$410	
Office Furniture			\$0	
General Office Supplies			\$0	
Staff and Commission Badges			\$0	
Staff and Commission Badge Holders			\$0	
Cell Phone			\$0	
Cell Phone Monthly Plan	\$345	1.00	\$345	July/August
Wifi Hotspot			\$0	
Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	\$50	1.00	\$50	
Elastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management	\$15	1.00	\$15	
Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel			\$262.17	
Airfare	\$262	1.00	\$262	Ronald (8/17, 9/12, 9/21)
Car Rental			\$0	
Daily Per Diem			\$0	
Lodging+Tax			\$0	
Ground Transportation			\$0	
Airport Parking			\$0	
Mainland Correctional Facility Travel			\$692.24	
Airfare	\$692	1.00	\$692	9/10
Car Rental			\$0	
Daily Per Diem			\$0	
Lodging+Tax			\$0	
Ground Transportation			\$0	
Airport Parking			\$0	
Memberships + Conferences			\$1,380.18	
NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement)	\$945	1.00	\$945	Mark, Christin, and Martha
National Association of Sentencing Commissions			\$0	
Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit	\$50	2.00	\$100	8/22-/823
Airfare	\$335	1.00	\$335	Christin, Cara, and Martha - GHH Summit
Car Rental			\$0	
Daily Per Diem			\$0	
Lodging+Tax			\$0	
Ground Transportation			\$0	
Airport Parking			\$0	
TOTAL			\$2,744	

General Office Information

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

Website: hcsoc.hawaii.gov

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

Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: [YouTube](#)
[LinkedIn](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on September 21, 2023. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on October 19, 2023, at the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), 830 Punchbowl Street Room 310, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 and online via Zoom. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/>.