



Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – January 18 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.

Death in Custody

On Thursday, January 4, 2024, a person in custody, male, 56 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) around 12:50pm. Staff immediately called for backup and onsite nursing staff in addition to 911 Emergency Services. Staff utilized chest compressions, AED, and Narcan before the EMS transported the individual to the Hilo Medical Center. The individual was declared deceased around 1:34pm. This appeared to be a death caused due to a drug overdose, however, an autopsy is being completed which will confirm the cause of death. Additionally, investigations by the Hilo Police Department and both the Departments of Law Enforcement and Corrections and Rehabilitation are underway.

Correctional Facility Tours

Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF) Tour

In accordance with the Commission's mandate to oversee the State's correctional system, on Thursday, December 21, 2023, directly following the HCSOC public meeting, the Commissioners and staff toured the Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF). After the tour, the Commissioners compiled their notes encompassing their impressions and offered recommendations including:

- 1) Increase the Population at Waiawa as Waiawa is One of the Most Rehabilitative Facilities in Hawaii
- 2) Expand the Opportunity to be Housed at a Minimum-Security Facility to Those who are Medically Frail
- 3) Identify a Vessel to Donate Excess Produce to the Community

These recommendations will be discussed during the January 18, 2023, public meeting. The full WCF Site Visit Observation report can be found on the Commission's website at: <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/facility-specific-reports/>.

Tour of Going Home Hawaii Reentry Housing

On Thursday, December 28, 2023, Commissioner Ron Ibarra, and Cara Compani, Reentry and Diversion Oversight Specialist toured Going Home Hawaii's reentry and recovery housing, services, and offices in Hilo and Kona on Hawai'i Island.

Going Home Hawai'i's (GHH) mission is to assist justice-involved men, women, and youth on Hawai'i Island with reintegration into community life through employment, education, housing, and appropriate services. GHH fulfills this mission by providing reentry and recovery housing with wraparound supportive services, including one-on-one care coordination, community-based volunteer mentors with similar lived experiences, programs in cultural and personal development, and support for justice-involved pregnant women who are struggling with or at risk for alcohol and illicit substance use.

Embracing the culture of E Ho'okanaka, persons of worth, GHH Hawai'i furthers the principle of equity and inclusion for all who are justice-involved through pathways of health, healing, and aloha.

GHH also works with stakeholders across the reentry continuum, including the judicial system, law enforcement, and organizations specializing in health, housing, employment, and education through its Hawai'i Island Going Home Consortium, Justice-Involved Homeless Intergovernmental Work Group, and Second Chance Summit.

GHH serves Hawai'i Island men and women who are justice-involved, both pre-and post-incarceration, and facing unstable housing or homelessness. When considering GHH's Reentry and Recovery Housing participants:

- 75% have a history of homelessness before incarceration;
- Many have mental and physical health issues, struggle with substance use disorders, and lack employment and access to reliable transportation;
- 22% are female; and
- 59% identify as Native Hawaiian or Part Hawaiian.

The Commission toured the GHH Kona Residence, a complex of two-bedroom apartments known as the Mahina Townhomes, including over 60 beds for reentry housing and permanent supportive housing. The Commission also toured three residences in Hilo serving as transitional housing for about 25 men and women.

GHH is seeking to expand permanent supportive housing on Hawai'i Island immediately, scale up community and crisis services, shift to health driven diversion programs, and increase deflection programs.

The Commission wishes to thank the entire GHH team—especially Les Estrella, CEO, and Desmon Haumea, Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner—and the GHH participants for the informative tour, opening their homes to the Commission, and the warm aloha. The Commission is impressed with the impactful and vital work of GHH and all of the services and support they offer to Hawai'i Island and Hawai'i overall.

Release of 2023 Annual Report

In accordance with 353L-6, the Commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature no less than twenty days before the convening of each regular session. The Commission's 2023 Annual Report includes a full and complete statement of actions taken by the Commission for the preceding year and recommendations, including proposed legislation, that the Commission deems necessary or desirable. To briefly highlight some of the accomplishments in the past year, the Commission has:

- ✓ Hosted 16 public meetings, including monthly meetings, facility-specific follow-up meetings, and community talk stories,
- ✓ Posted 23 public reports, including monthly reports, facility-specific reports, and a year-in-review since gaining staff,
- ✓ Became the first entity in the state to report on deaths in custody and the only entity in the state to report on the date, time, location, demographics of the individual, and initial cause of death,
- ✓ Sent five public correspondence and posted one media release,
- ✓ Been cited in at least 33 media articles,
- ✓ Completed 35 facility visits and 7 specialty site visits with judges, legislators, prosecutors, or other stakeholders,
- ✓ Submitted over 50 recommendations to the Department of Public Safety for their consideration,
- ✓ Established a new focus and strategy towards reentry,
- ✓ Attended 6 state or national conferences,
- ✓ Developed and released two strategic plans,
- ✓ Set and followed through with over 35 legislative priorities, and
- ✓ Convened and led a statewide task force on sentencing reform.

Corrections Staff Survey and Report

Consistent with the Commission's mandate to investigate complaints at correctional facilities, the HCSOC staff are 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 being 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 five states 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 survey, available electronically or on paper, is anonymous and confidential. After collecting results, the Commission will hold talk stories with staff to create recommendations for improving health, safety, the work environment, and concerns most important to staff. For the paper surveys, Commission staff have distributed and collected paper surveys on the following dates:

- Wednesday, January 3 – OCCC
- Thursday, January 4 – WCF
- Friday, January 5 – OCCC
- Monday, January 8 – KCF
- Tuesday, January 9 – WCCC
- Wednesday, January 10 – MCCC
- Friday, January 12 – KCCC
- ~~Monday, January 15 – HCCC – TBD due to rescheduling.~~
- Tuesday, January 16 – HCF

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

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.

Upcoming Meetings 2024

- ~~— January 11, 9am-12pm – Cancelled due to power outage.~~
- March 15, 9am-12pm
- June 6, 9am-12pm
- September 12, 9am-12pm

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.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – December

| | Cost | Qty | Total | Notes |
|--|---------|------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Office Equipment and Supplies | | | \$0 | |
| 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 | | | \$0 | |
| Wifi Hotspot | | | \$0 | |
| Heroku Monthly Plan - Complaint Management | | | \$0 | |
| Elastic Cloud Monthly Plan - Complaint Management | | | \$0 | |
| Inter-Island Correctional Facility Travel | | | \$0.00 | |
| Airfare | | | \$0 | |
| Car Rental | | | \$0 | |
| Daily Per Diem | | | \$0 | |
| Lodging+Tax | | | \$0 | |
| Ground Transportation | | | \$0 | |
| Airport Parking | | | \$0 | |
| Mainland Correctional Facility Travel | | | \$0.00 | |
| Airfare | | | \$0 | |
| Car Rental | | | \$0 | |
| Daily Per Diem | | | \$0 | |
| Lodging+Tax | | | \$0 | |
| Ground Transportation | | | \$0 | |
| Airport Parking | | | \$0 | |
| Memberships + Conferences | | | \$6,834.65 | |
| NACOLE (National Assoc. for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement) | | | \$0 | |
| National Association of Sentencing Commissions | | | \$0 | |
| Going Home Hawaii Reentry Summit | | | \$0 | |
| Airfare | \$1,717 | 1.00 | \$1,717 | \$758+\$959 |
| Car Rental | | | \$0 | |
| Daily Per Diem | \$2,298 | 1.00 | \$2,298 | \$563+\$63+\$493+\$679 |
| Lodging+Tax | \$2,189 | 1.00 | \$2,189 | \$583.23+\$583.23+\$245.20+\$777.64 |
| Ground Transportation | \$525 | 1.00 | \$525 | \$49.75+\$46.25+\$293.88+\$135.47 |
| Airport Parking | | | \$0 | |
| Baggage Fee | \$105 | 1.00 | \$105 | \$70+\$35 |
| TOTAL | | | \$6,835 | |

* Expenses reflect posted transactions

General Office Information

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

Website: <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov>

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

Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

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

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting held on January 18, 2024. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on February 15, 2024, at the Leiopapa A Kamehameha Building aka State Office Tower, 235 S Beretania Street, Room 204, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 and online via Zoom. More information can be found on the Commission's webpage here: <https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information/>.