

STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH (SCMH)
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
September 9, 2025 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and In-Person Location at Hale F Conference Room,
2201 Waimano Home Road, Pearl City, HI 96782

Members Present: Katherine Aumer, John Betlach, Lea Dias, Heidi Ilyavi, Jackie Jackson, Christine Montague-Hicks, Kathleen Merriam, Ray Rice, Mary Pat Waterhouse, Forrest Wells, Kristin Will

Members Excused: Jon Fujii, Marian Tsuji (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Asianna Saragosa-Torres, Tianna Celis-Webster

Guests, Presenters, and Staff: Valerie Yin (DOH CAMHD), Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand (DOH AMHD), Jocelyn Nazareno (DOH AMHD), Chanel Daluddung (DOH AMHD), Marissa “Squirrel” Celeste, Bud Wolf

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Call to Order: Meeting convened at 9:07 a.m. by Chairperson Katherine Aumer.
- Roll Call: Conducted by Secretary Mary Pat Waterhouse. Quorum established with 11 members present (8 needed).

II. Announcements

- Meeting protocol: If technology fails and cannot be restored within 30 minutes, the meeting will recess and reconvene on September 16 at 9:00 a.m. using the same Zoom link.
- Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (September): Out of Darkness walks scheduled on O‘ahu (Sept. 13), Hilo (Sept. 27), and Maui (Oct. 28).
- Membership Update: Chair Aumer announced Naomi Crozier’s completion of eight years of service, expressed gratefulness for her dedication, and recognized her insights from a Native Hawaiian perspective. The Governor’s office also announced that the housing sector seat will be filled out soon.
- Ex-Officio Clarification: Marian Tsuji remains the Council’s ex-officio member. This is different from Dr. Courtenay Matsu becoming the State Mental Health Authority Commissioner.

III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- August 9, 2025, meeting minutes draft was approved subject to corrections in name spellings. Lea Dias moved to approve, Jon Fujii seconded, and the rest unanimously voted in favor of approving.
- June 10, 2025, meeting minutes draft was approved. M. Waterhouse moved to approve, Jackie Jackson seconded, and the rest unanimously voted in favor.

IV. Community Input

Marissa “Squirrel” Celeste shared her personal journey of recovery, describing how she overcame post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and methamphetamine addiction. She shared that she has been clean for 22 years and credited her success to the support she received from the NAMI Diamond Head Clubhouse, United Self Help, and the use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). She emphasized the importance of having culturally inclusive recovery pathways to ensure that all individuals can access support that resonates with their backgrounds and experiences.

Chairperson Aumer led in expressing deep appreciation for Marissa’s sharing of her story of recovery and for her continued advocacy in the mental health community. Bud Wolf from United Self Help chimed in that United Self Help now offers six weekly support groups—three held online and three in person. He shared that more information can be found at unitedselfhelp.org and that the organization is recognized for its long-standing service and dedication to mental health advocacy.

V. Old Business

A. Presentations

1. *From Crisis to Recovery – Health and Resilience After the Maui Wildfires*

There was approval for a draft letter reaffirming the Council’s prior action to support MauiWES’s efforts to pursue grant and funding opportunities. Lea Dias moved to approve the letter, Jackie Jackson seconded the motion, and the Council unanimously approved.

There was approval for a draft thank you letter to Dr. Juarez and Team. Forrest Wells moved to approve the letter. L. Dias seconded the motion, and the Council unanimously approved.

2. *Hawaii Workplace Wellness & Quality of Life Survey” Results –*

There was approval for a draft thank you letter to Dr. Barile and Team. L. Dias moved to approve the letter. F. Wells seconded the motion, and the Council unanimously approved.

3. *“County Integrated Service Area Planning: Context, Insights and the Future” and “Rate Studies and their Impact”*

There were no draft letters of thank you presented. This agenda item was tabled.

B. Presentation, Discussion and Recommendation

Approved and Submitted Letter to SAMHSA

Submitted Plan and Application

FY26- FY27 Mental Health Block Grant Planning

Chair Aumer presented the formal letter reaffirming Council's prior action to support Hawaii's FY26-FY27 Mental Health Block Grant Plan and Application. She confirmed that Hawaii submitted this requirement for MHBG funding to SAMHSA. The letter fulfills the Council's role in the FY26-FY27 Mental Health Block Grant Plan Application.

(See attachment for copies of letters.)

V. New Business

Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand presented the Council discussion topics using a PowerPoint deck. Please refer to the attachment for details. After discussions, the key directions for action included:

- **Membership:** The status of each member will be provided including the link for applying again. The Council encouraged the use of staff and existing resources to announce vacancies and recruit applicants through social media and the Council website. For another Provider seat, a prescribing provider is preferred. The Council will continue prioritizing the filling of housing and service area board seats.
- **In-Person Meeting:** Scheduled for December 9, likely at an HIA Conference room, with optional training in the afternoon. The Council expressed interest in focusing on workforce issues, though there are concerns about covering the topic cohesively. It was noted that DHRD recently briefed the Legislature and should be invited to present to the Council in November or December.

Mary Pat Waterhouse moved that there be an in-person meeting. Heidi Ilyavi seconded. The members approved unanimously. A Permitted Interaction Group was recommended, with K. Aumer, L. Dias, and M.P. Waterhouse volunteering to participate.

C. Dang, as member of the public, suggested offering optional training on psychopharmacology. Staff will follow up on this recommendation.

- **Advocacy for Individuals with SMI and SED:** It will help the Council and other stakeholders if there was a report on supportive housing to better understand the needs of individuals with SMI and SED. It was clarified that in this context, supportive housing is used broadly to cover the continuum of housing needs. It includes group homes, Kauhale initiatives, and even Native Hawaiian perspectives.
- **M.P. Waterhouse** moved for the Council to become a potential client for internship and practicum programs and get support for completing a report on supportive housing. Christine Montague-Hicks seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. Staff will explore suitable internship or practicum opportunities and explore what is viable.

- Statutory role in reviewing and commenting on a State Comprehensive Integrated Service Plan (SCISP). Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand did not seek any action from the Council but explained the long road of deconstructing and reintroducing this mandated plan and planning process. She is hoping that the Council will finally get to review and comment on a SCISP, and not just an MHBG Plan, in 2026.

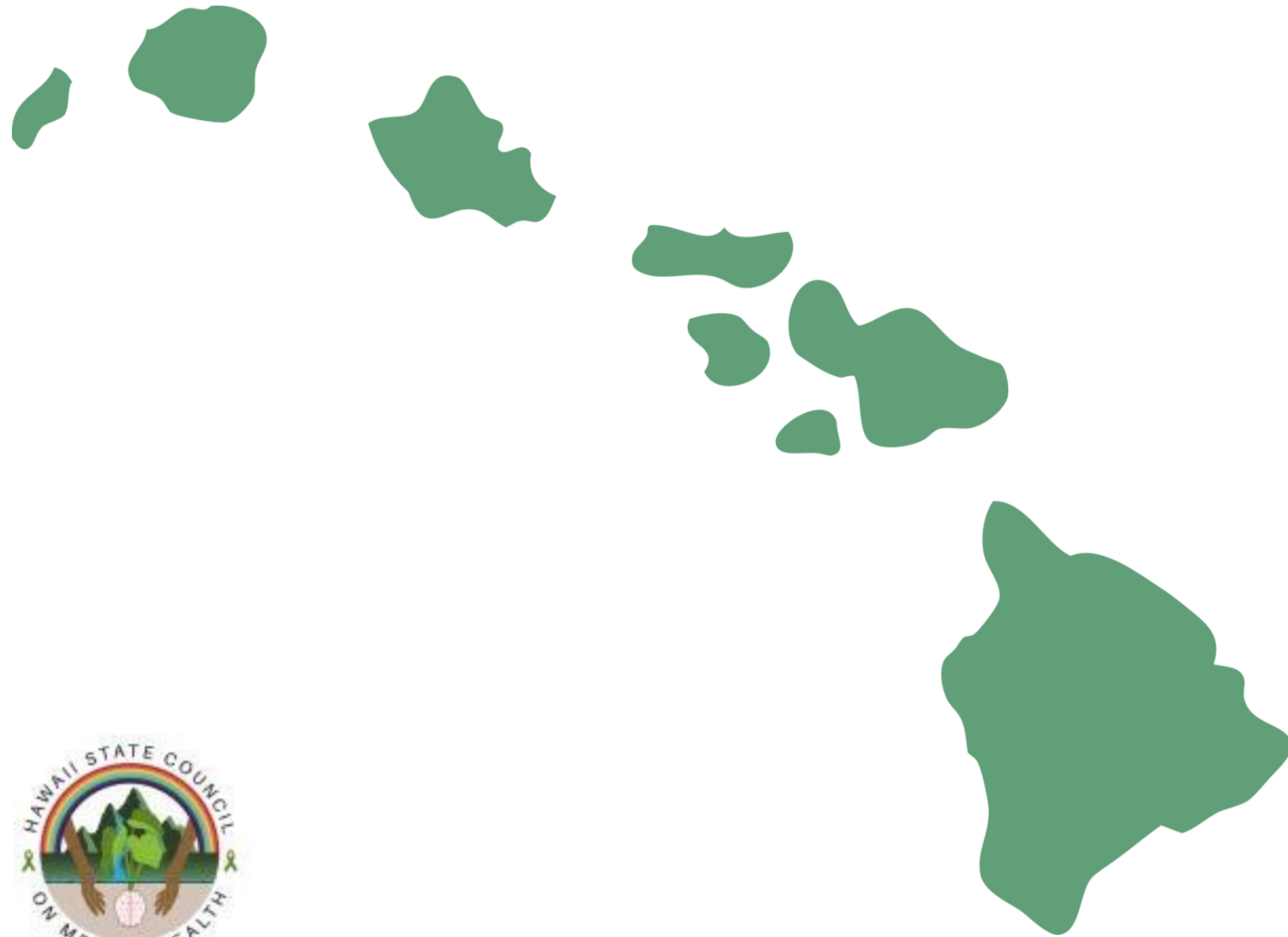
VII. Informational Reports

Tabled due to time constraints

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Aumer adjourned at 11:59 a.m. She thanked the members for their work and dedication.

#end#



State Council on Mental Health
Organizing for the next 12 months
October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026



Organizing for the Next Twelve Months To Address Role

MEMBERSHIP- HOW CAN WE HAVE 21 MEMBERS BY JULY 1, 2026?

Status of current members

Local Service Area Boards- Can the Council help?

2024 RETREAT PLANNING GOALS – SHOULD WE HOLD AN IN-PERSON MEETING ON DECEMBER 9?

Results of Poll

Should this have a workforce theme?

Should this be a planning forum/format?

Optional element?

ADVOCATING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SMI and SED –

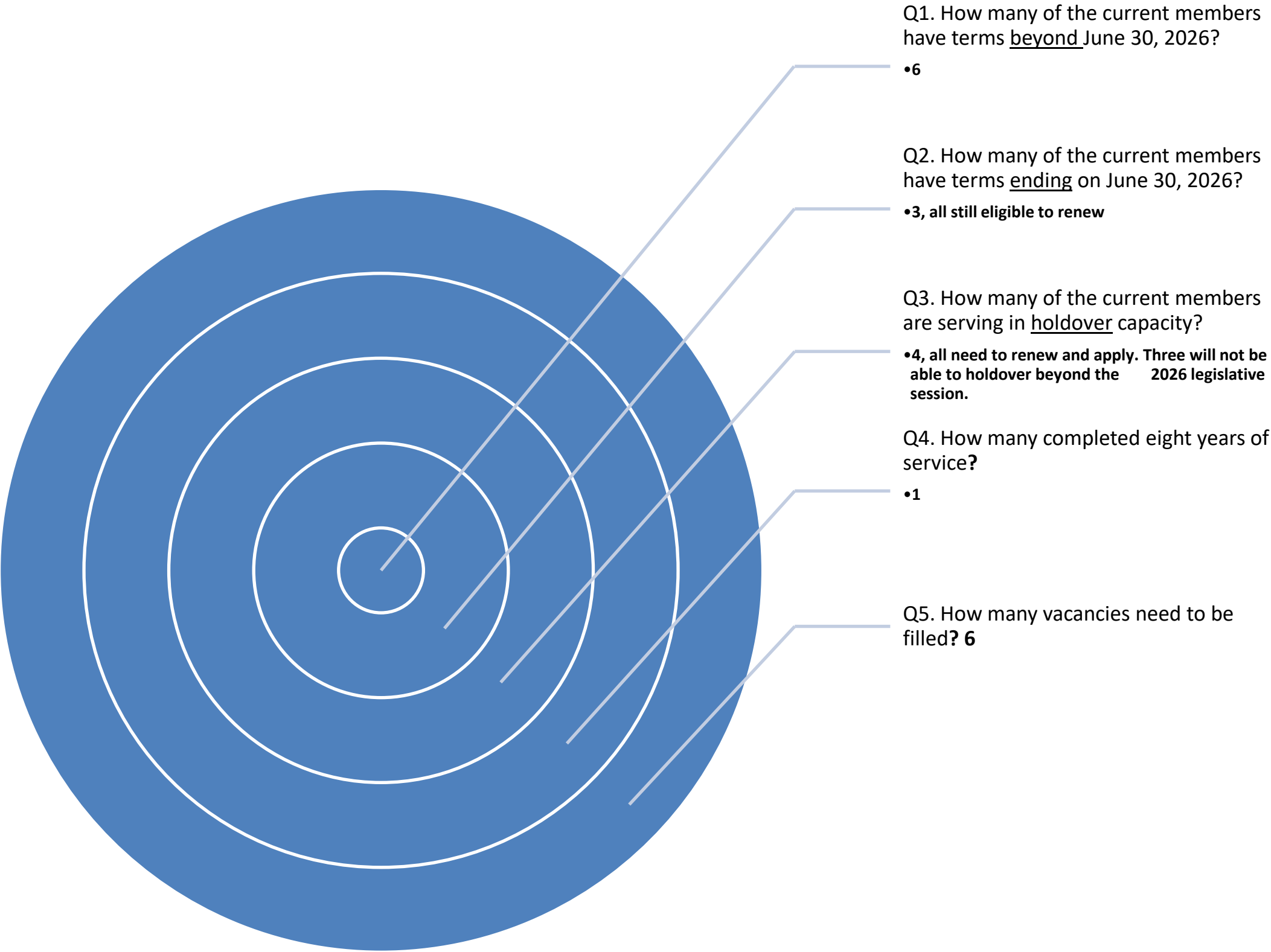
Is the Council interested in tapping UH program practicum and internship programs to help prepare a report on the subject of supportive housing? Resource directory (target groups)?

WILL THE COUNCIL BE ABLE TO REVIEW AND REPORT ON A SCISP/STATE PLAN IN 2026?

Planner's Update – Re-setting for Hawaii Revised Statutes 334.10 and 334.11 mandates

MEMBERSHIP

Discussion – How can the Council have 21 members by July 1, 2026



MEMBERSHIP

Discussion – Can we help local service area boards have more members by July 1, 2026

§334-11 Service area boards. (a) A service area board shall be established within the department of health for administrative purposes to advise each service area administrator. Each board shall consist of nine members appointed by the governor, who shall serve for terms to be determined by the governor. After the initial appointees, the governor shall fill each vacancy on a board by appointing a member from a list of four persons submitted by that board, except that, if the board is unable to achieve a quorum at two consecutive meetings called for the purpose of making such a list, the list may be provided by a group of at least seven service area consumers and nonproviders of mental health services. This group shall consist of all board members willing to participate in making the list and other area consumers and nonproviders of mental health services to be selected by the service area board chairperson and service area administrator. Any meeting called for the purpose of making the list shall be subject to part I of chapter 92.

RETREAT PLANNING GOALS

Discussion – Should the Council meet in-person on December 9?

Results of Poll

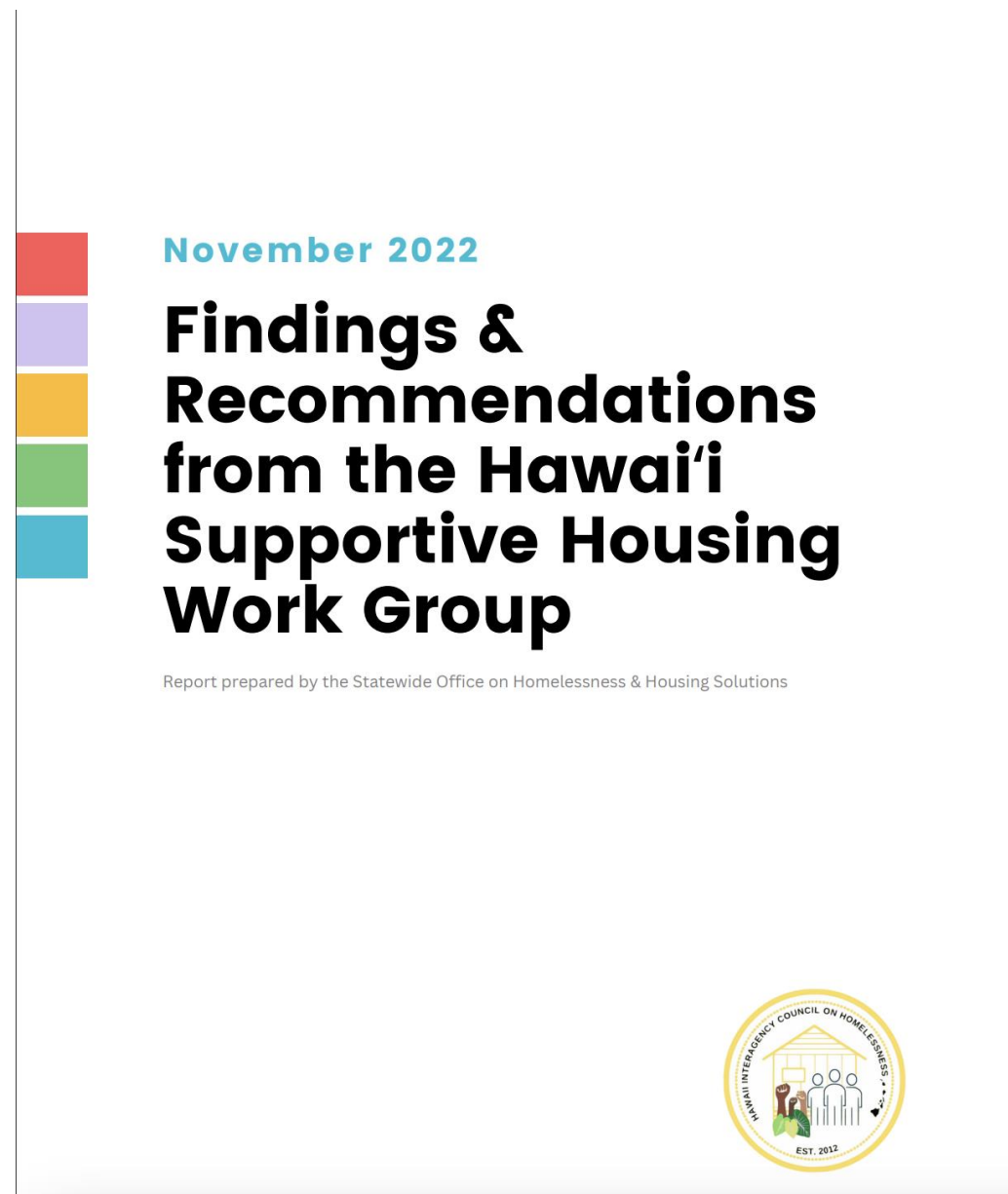
- Most were open to the four dates and times but two could only make it to a December 9, 9-12 noon session
- One can only attend virtually

Topics/Ideas

- Revive formal in-person oath taking (invite Legislator to conduct oath)?
- Forum on workforce topic?
 - SCR 67 & DHRD on State Employment
 - Career Pathways – DLIR Workforce Development Council or DOH Public Health Infrastructure Grant on UH-specific pathway agreements
 - AI, machine learning tools
- What should the goals be for this special meeting?
- Optional training –Native Hawaiian Worldview, perspectives on continuum of care

ADVOCATING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SMI, SED

Discussion – Should the Council tap one of the UH Practicum programs or internship programs to dive deeper and prepare a report on supportive housing?



There is a need to unpack more clearly the gaps and challenges in the case of housing services and communicate via a report.

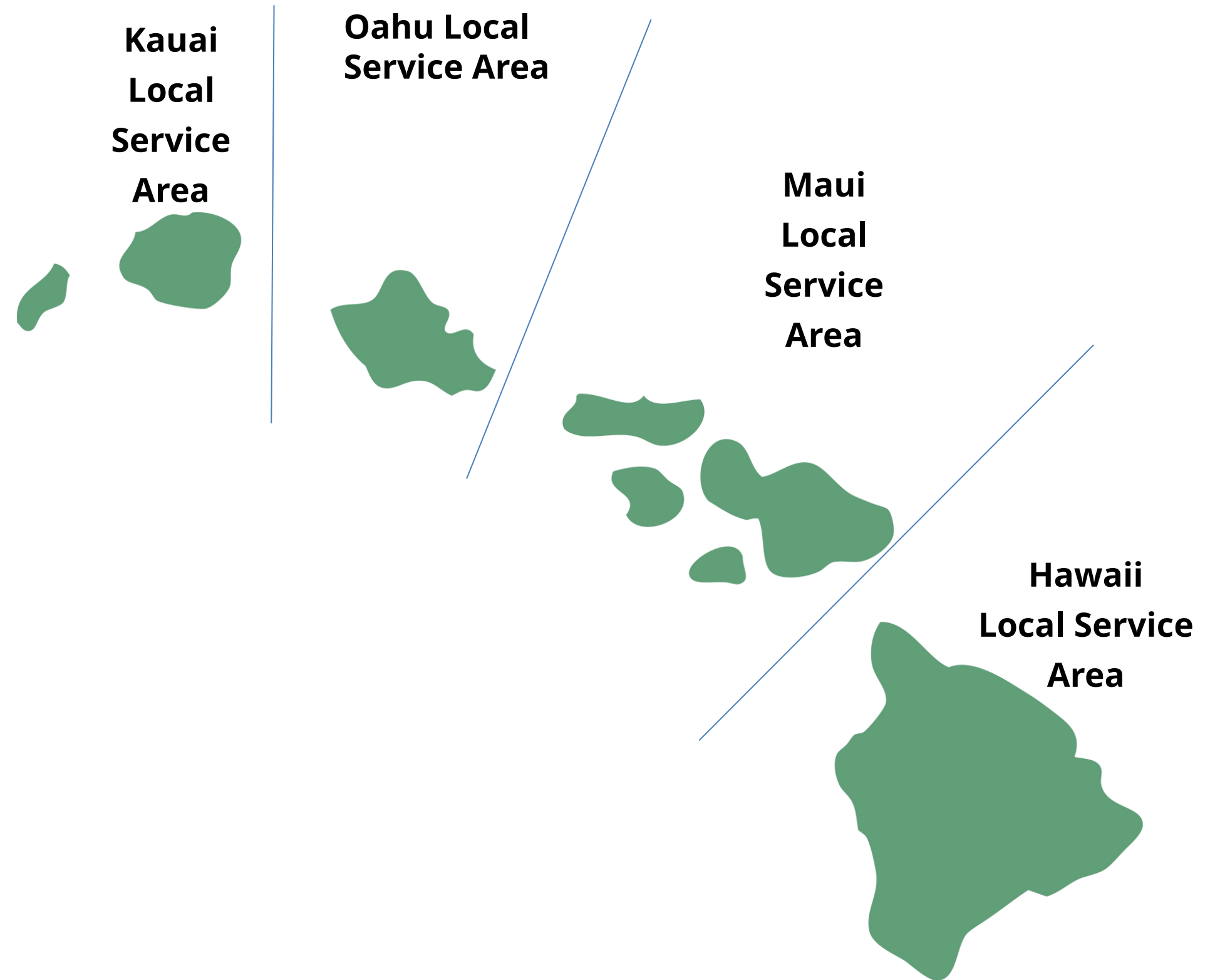
“...a more persistent loss of housing capacity stems from a growing gap between the provider reimbursement rates paid and increased costs of leasing or renting properties, making it financially unfeasible for some providers to maintain their existing units. Referral data further underscore the challenge that there are very limited HUD-supported units for low income consumer who often rely only on general assistance for income. These units that have been supported by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) cap rent at 30% which is the most affordable housing for the very low-income consumers. Other options are market price-based options in a State with the highest cost of living, and thus leaving many of the most vulnerable individuals on referral lists without affordable housing options. ---

Excerpts MHBG FY26-27 Application-

WILL THE COUNCIL BE ABLE TO REVIEW AND REPORT ON A SCISP/STATE PLAN IN 2026?

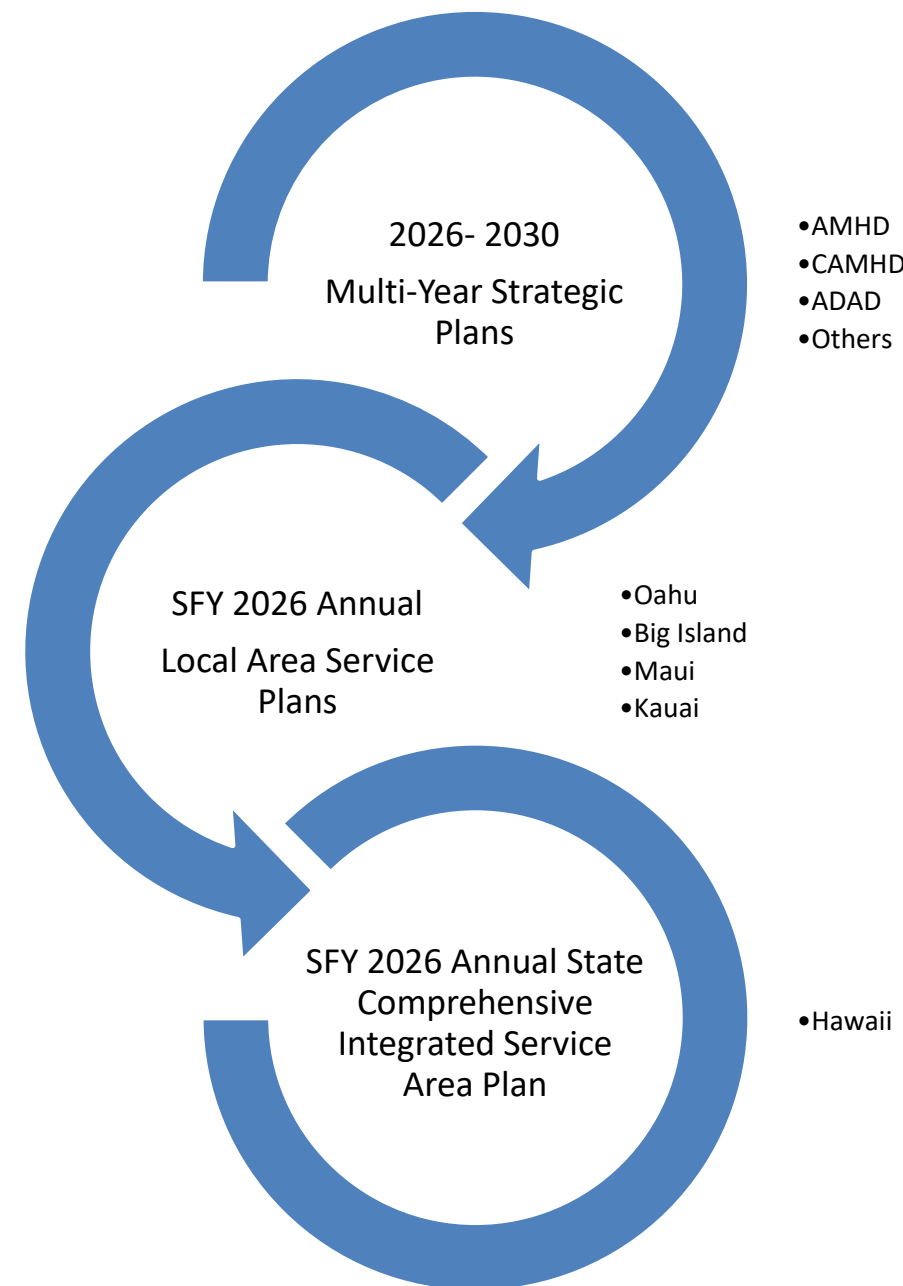
SOME CONFUSION BEYOND MHBG PLANNING

- Service Area Administrators are codified to **HELP** prepare/develop county service plans that feed into a State Plan; Council & SABs advisory
- CAMHD is codified to prepare 5-year plans; public hearing in every county.
- ADAD has revived strategic planning for substance abuse plan.
- AMHD will be re-articulating its long-term strategic plan
- There are other relevant plans like the Suicide Prevention Task Force Strategic Plan etc.



WILL THE COUNCIL BE ABLE TO REVIEW AND REPORT ON A SCISP/STATE PLAN IN 2026?

Planner's Update – A need to clarify and what the local and state service plans are and are not



Hawaii Divisional of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Report

State Council on Mental Health – 09/09/25

Data Report as of 9/2/25 for July 1 to Sept 30, 2025 (PY25 Q1)

PY24 Served				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
VR Participants	3698			
PE Participants (SWD)	1103			
Total	4801	0	0	0

PY24 Disability								
Primary Disability Type Group	Q1	%	Q2	%	Q3	%	Q4	%
(01-02) Visual	309	8.36						
(03-09) Auditory or Communicative	564	15.25						
(10-16) Physical	592	16.01						
(17) Cognitive	1140	30.83						
(18-19) Psychological or Psychosocial	1093	29.56						
Total	3698	100	0	0	0	0	0	0

HDVR Statewide Data																									
PY25 / SFY26 7/1/25 - 6/30/26																									
7/1/25 to 9/2/25	Applications					Eligibility					IPE Developed					Closed-Rehab					Closed-Other				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Oahu Branch																									
OB Section 1(Kapolei)	28				28	31				31	31				31	13				13	113				113
OB Section 2 (Transition)	32				32	19				19	24				24	10				10	14				14
OB Section 3 (Honolulu)	39				39	29				29	25				25	14				14	57				57
Deaf Services Section	1				1	3				3	3				3	3				3	6				6
Total	100	0	0	0	100	82	0	0	0	82	83	0	0	0	83	40	0	0	0	40	190	0	0	0	190
Services for the Blind Branch																									
Counseling Section	8				8	8				8	5				5	0				0	2				2
Total	8	0	0	0	8	8	0	0	0	8	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Maui Branch																									
Maui Office	23				23	23				23	24				24	4				4	28				28
Molokai Office	0				0	0				0	0				0	0				0	0				0
Total	23	0	0	0	23	23	0	0	0	23	24	0	0	0	24	4	0	0	0	4	28	0	0	0	28
Hawaii Island Branch																									
Hilo Office	20				20	16				16	15				15	1				1	6				6
Kona Office	2				2	4				4	3				3	2				2	2				2
Total	22	0	0	0	22	20	0	0	0	20	18	0	0	0	18	3	0	0	0	3	8	0	0	0	8
Kauai Branch																									
Kauai Section	10				10	9				9	5				5	1				1	0				0
Total	10	0	0	0	10	9	0	0	0	9	5	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Statewide Total	163	0	0	0	163	142	0	0	0	142	135	0	0	0	135	48	0	0	0	48	228	0	0	0	228

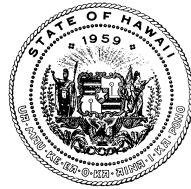
Q1: Successful Closure in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) 7/1/25 – 9/2/25			
Job Title	Participant	Wage	Hour Worked
Aerospace Engineers	1	45.10	40.00
Cashiers	2	16.81	28.00
Chemical Technicians	1	28.00	40.00
Childcare Workers	1	16.85	40.00
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1	16.00	15.00
Computer and Information Systems Managers	2	47.08	40.00
Construction and Building Inspectors	1	20.19	40.00
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	1	27.48	40.00
Customer Service Representatives	2	14.00	31.00
Dishwashers	2	18.00	36.50
Facilities Managers	1	40.00	40.00
First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	1	18.94	40.00
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1	19.62	40.00
Flight Attendants	1	60.02	26.00
Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	2	17.87	40.00
Helpers--Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, and Stucco Masons	1	30.03	40.00
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	1	40.00	40.00
Human Resources Managers	1	25.96	40.00
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5	14.83	22.80
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	3	16.40	21.67
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	1	40.00	40.00
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	1	43.10	40.00
Occupational Health and Safety Technicians	1	46.34	40.00
Office Clerks, General	1	17.00	40.00
Packers and Packagers, Hand	1	19.00	30.00
Postal Service Mail Carriers	1	28.85	40.00
Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists	1	53.84	40.00
Producers and Directors	1	64.90	40.00
Production Workers, All Other	1	15.50	20.00
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	1	92.31	10.00
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	1	40.00	40.00
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1	17.73	40.00
Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	1	14.00	25.00
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	1	14.00	40.00
Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	1	28.85	40.00
Teachers and Instructors, All Other	1	45.85	18.00

Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education	1	16.50	40.00
Average Total	48	30.55	34.70
Median Total	48	25.96	40.00

Cumulative Successful Closures in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) (7/1/25 to 6/30/26)			
	Participant	Wage	Hours Worked
Average Total	48	30.55	34.70
Median Total	48	25.96	40.00

Staff Vacancy Report	
DVR is actively hiring qualified individuals for various positions.	
Staff Vacancies as of 8/4/25	
County	Vacancies
Statewide/Administration and Staff Services Office	5
Oahu Branch	10
Services for the Blind Branch (Ho`opono)	9
Hawaii Branch (Hilo/Kona)	5
Maui Branch (Maui, Molokai/Lanai)	3
Kauai	3.5
Total	35.5/112 (31.7% vacant)

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA
MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I



KATHERINE AUMER, PhD
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

**STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH**
P.O. Box 3378, Room 256
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

September 9, 2025

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Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director
Behavioral Health Administration

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Dr. Ruben Juarez

Dr. Alike Maunakea

Dr. Christopher Knightsbridge

Maui Wildfire Exposure Study

College of Social Sciences and John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawaii

Via email

Dear Dr. Juarez, Dr. Maunakea, and Dr. Knightsbridge,

On behalf of the State Council on Mental Health, I extend our deepest gratitude for your powerful and informative presentation on the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study (MauiWES) during our August 12, 2025, meeting.

Your team's work in enrolling more than 2,000 participants—including 200 children—provides an essential foundation for understanding the wildfire's long-term impacts. The findings you shared regarding depression, anxiety, PTSD, and toxic exposure are sobering. Your commitment to addressing these challenges—through the registry, referrals to services, and culturally informed support—is both reassuring and necessary.

We are honored to send a letter of support for your grant-seeking efforts to continue and expand this important work. Your research advances knowledge and provides a pathway for healing, recovery, and long-term well-being in the community. We encourage more defined collaboration with partners, including Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, the Department of Education, Department of Human Services MedQUEST Division, and other health coverage providers.

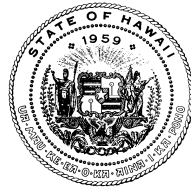
Page 2. SCMH September 9, 2025 Letter to Dr. Juarez, Dr. Maunakea, and Dr. Knightsbridge

Once again, thank you for your time, expertise, and unwavering dedication to the people of Maui and all others impacted by wildfire disasters. We are inspired by your leadership and look forward to witnessing the transformative impact of your work in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Katherine Aumer, Ph.D.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA
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September 9, 2025

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Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director
Behavioral Health Administration

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Dr. Jack Barile

Dr. Eva McKinsey

Dr. Kevin Thompson

Ms. Erica Yamauchi

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Health Policy Initiative
and The State Office of Wellness and Resilience
via email

Dear Dr. Barile, Dr. McKinsey, Dr. Thompson, and Ms. Yamauchi,

On behalf of the State Council on Mental Health, I would like to extend our appreciation for your return to present the results of the 2024 Statewide Wellness and Quality of Life survey for State workers and residents.

Your team's work in gathering over 10,000 responses statewide and developing a publicly accessible, interactive dashboard provides a critical tool for understanding challenges and strengths after the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. We especially appreciate your thoughtful analysis of mental health, workplace wellness, and social determinants of health. We are pleased with the dashboard's utility and design, as well as its growing application in shaping policy, supporting legislative testimony, guiding program planning, and more. It is well-done. We are heartened that the Office of Wellness and Resilience is presenting specific data to various State agencies to engage more wellness and resilience activities for their staff.

As established in Hawai'i Revised Statutes 334.10, the State Council on Mental Health advises the Department of Health, Governor, and Legislature on statewide mental health care needs and resources. Our vision is a Hawai'i where people of all ages with mental health challenges can achieve recovery and live full lives in the community of their choice.

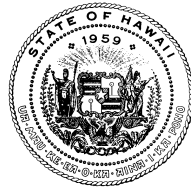
Page 2. September 9, 2025 Thank you letter to Dr. Barile, Dr. McKinsey, Dr. Thompson, and Ms. Yamauchi.

We look forward to exploring ways the Council can support future surveys and the advancement of trauma-informed care. Thank you again for your enlightening partnership in promoting wellness and mental health across our communities.

Sincerely,

Katherine Aumer, Ph.D.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
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DRAFT

August 12, 2025

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To Whom It May Concern:

Two years after the devastating Maui Wildfire Disaster, we join others in remembrance and reaffirm our commitment to supporting recovery and meeting community needs.

The Council commends the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study (MauiWES) for its rigorous, evidence-based work to understand the wildfires' health and social impacts. With accessible tools like the Maui dashboard and a service component that assesses survivors' needs and links them to mental health and related supports, MauiWES models trauma-informed best practices—ensuring survivors both contribute to research and receive timely help.

We support MauiWES' effort to seek grants and funding to continue research and services, but also urge stronger coordination with the Department of Health, its Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), Qualified Public Health Clinics (QPHCs), the Department of Education, the Department of Human Services, and other partners. All have also been on the ground, helping survivors and the island community. By seeking and threading resources together, we can ensure all survivors and affected parties—not only research participants—benefit from a seamless network of care.

Recognizing the Department of Health's broad responsibilities, we see MauiWES as a complementary resource that can strengthen existing programs. Partnerships and diverse funding can amplify the collective impact of our public health and community systems.

As established in HRS 334.10, the State Council on Mental Health advises the Department of Health, Governor, and Legislature on statewide mental health care needs and resources. Our vision is a Hawai'i where people of all ages with mental health challenges can achieve recovery and live full lives in the community of their choice.

Thank you. For more information, please contact us through our email,
doh.scmhchairperson@doh.hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Katherine Aumer, Ph.D.