

HAWAI'I STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH (SCMH)
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
January 13, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Via Zoom with in-person location at
Hale F Conference Room, 2201 Waimano Home Road, Pearl City, 96782

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

Members Excused: Tianna Celis-Webster, Jon Fujii, Forrest Wells

Members Absent: Asianna Zaragosa-Torres

Staff Present: Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand (AMHD), Stacy Molina (AMHD)

Guests Present: Judi Steinmann, Raelyn Reyno Yeoman

I. Call to Order, Roll Call

Chairperson Katherine Aumer called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Quorum was established at 9:41 a.m.

II. Announcements

- In case of audiovisual communication breakdown that could not be solved within 30 minutes, the Council meeting will recess and resume on January 20, 2026.
- YouthLine Hawaii based on Maui will have a soft opening at the end of January and grand opening in February. It will be accepting calls across the nation.
- The opening day of the 2026 Hawaii State Legislature will be on January 21 at 10 am. It is a good time for the public, including Council members, to visit and greet legislators.
- The Mental Health Task Force meetings, coordinated by Bryan Talisayan, Executive Director of Mental Health America of Hawaii, will meet every third Friday of the month at 12pm starting January 16 via Zoom.
- Congratulations to Danielle Bergan for her appointment to the Council effective December 18, 2025.
- There are still five Council vacancies -Housing, Kauai Service Area Board, Maui Service Area Board, and non-government workers preferably a provider and a consumer advocate/youth/family member. Staff will follow up with applications.
- The local service area boards also have vacancies – Oahu has 3, Maui 5, Kauai 9, and Big Island 5. Staff will follow up on an application for Maui Service Area Board.

- Val Yin, CAMHD Planner, has accepted a new position. Val was thanked for her time and support of the Council and legislative matters.
- Ex-Officio Message. Dr. Chad Koyanagi and Dr. Courtenay Matsu, had the following messages on behalf of the Council's ex-officio member:
 - The State received a mental health block supplementary grant from the Federal Department of Human Services for \$117,000. Hawaii plans to use its supplementary grant for training on Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) or Assisted Community Treatment (ACT) as known in Hawaii. The Plan is to implement training across the four major islands and Hawaii will be seeking SAMHSA technical assistance to organize the training. Model jurisdictions have AOT judges, AOT support, and AOT treatment teams who know about mental illness and how to work with seriously mentally ill individuals.

The Council gave the feedback that training is much needed. It has received feedback about the lack of understanding or transparency of the ACT process. Also, the need for a guide for the public and those helping the public.

- For 2026 Legislation, understanding the State's fiscal situation, the DOH BHA have only 2 major requests. These are Hawaii State Hospital Related- one for overtime cost and another for additional funds for psychiatric facilities that will, among others, support decompressing the HSH. There can be other bills that will come up. One is for the establishment of Community Behavioral Health Clinic certifying office. Another for ACT 26 patients and how to get them more stable treatment and services to prevent further criminal involvement and shorter stay at the HSH. The Attorney General's Office has a bill on treatment over objections which seeks to support also the private hospitals over quicker filing of order to treat petition (MH6).

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The following were approved unanimously.

- October 14, 2025, Meeting Minutes – Mary Pat Waterhouse motioned for approval, and Christine Montague-Hicks seconded.
- November 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Heidi Ilyavi motioned for approval, and Lea Dias seconded.
- December 9, 2025, Meeting Minutes. H. Ilyavi motioned for approval and M.P. Waterhouse seconded.

IV. Community Input

The Council did not receive any written testimony. Oral testimony was received from Raelyn Reyno Yeoman, who reiterated attention to the State removing guaranteed legal counsel for those undergoing forced treatment under assisted community treatment orders and the State reducing administrative panel from three to one individual deciding forced treatment for those at state hospital and those under custody of department of health. She expressed the need to be concerned about due process and civil rights violations even for those who are houseless and have mental illness. She expressed concern about HIPPA violations that might be occurring with oversharing information amongst the houseless population. She asserts that protecting people's rights, HIPPA, due process, civil rights, strengthen the system and force more resources to go into the system of service provided. She brought attention to SB1322 from the last legislative session. It requires the Department of Health to submit annual reports to the legislature on emergency transportation and assisted community treatments petitions and orders based on information provided by service providers and the department of the attorney general. The information should be provided to the legislature within 30 days before legislature opening. So, it should already have been provided.

V. New Business

A. Past Presentations and Training -Thank you letters.

- The following letters were approved unanimously:
 - Dr. Lewin for his presentation on Transforming Hawai'i's Health Care System: -Grounded Approaches for Better Mental Health Outcomes. John Betlach motioned for the approval of the drafted letter and seconded by D. Bergan.
 - Ms. Garton and Mr. Raker for their presentation on -Rejoyn – Transforming Major Depressive Disorder Symptom Treatment with Digital Therapeutic. M.P. Waterhouse motioned for approval of the drafted letter and seconded by H. Ilyavi.
- All letters for December 9 presenters were not available and will be reviewed in the future.

B. Presentation

- Prescriptive Authority for Psychologists: What are we waiting for? By Judi Steinmann, Ph.D. from Alliant International University. (Please see attached PowerPoint slides)

- First state in country to introduce prescriptive authority during 1984-1985 legislation. Though Hawaii has not been able to move this forward for 42 years, seven other states have, and they have reduced suicide risk in their state by 5%-7%. Currently, Oahu has 5 prescribing psychologists, and they are all federally employed. Each state has different requirements for certifying a prescribing psychologist. To receive prescriptive authority for psychologists, the Hawaii Bill requires 800 additional hours to include working with different populations such as geriatric and pediatrics.
- Requesting support for SB708 and SB847
 - SB708 Authorizes and appropriates moneys for the Board of Psychology to grant prescriptive authority to clinical psychologists who meet specific education, training, and registration requirements. Requires the Board of Psychology to accept applications for prescriptive authority privilege beginning 7/1/2026. Requires the Board of Psychology to report to the Legislature.
 - SB847 Allows qualified psychologists limited authority to prescribe psychotropic medications to patients under the care of the psychologist in certain circumstances. Requires the Board of Psychology to adopt rules.

C. Rapid Assessment of the December 9 Mini-Retreat

- Everything was well done. The parking validation, and waiver of fees, continues to be an area for improvement.
- No one commented on the need for formal evaluation or assessment. K. Aumer offered to help if this is needed.

VI. Old Business

A. Election of Officers

K. Aumer thanked those who were nominated and accepted, and those who served in the past year. The following were elected as officers for 2026:

- Chairperson – Katherine Aumer
- 1st Vice Chairperson – Kathleen Merriam
- 2nd Vice Chairperson – Forrest Wells
- Secretary – Mary Pat Waterhouse

B. Approval of Legislative Advocacy Themes

- The proposed themes for legislative advocacy include:

Workforce
Family, Children and Youth
Telehealth
Housing, Homelessness
Crisis Services
Forensic related
Mental Health Task Force themes
Employment of clients as part of recovery services
General Policy (e.g., Sunshine Law, Council membership)
CAMHD and AMHD bills
Disaster-related
Mental health code and other themes from previous years
Insurance, Care coordination
Suicide prevention and Suicide Prevention Task Force Plan
Statewide outreach, including rural areas
Membership -County Service Area boards, State Council

M.P. Waterhouse moved for the approval of the above theme areas. H. Ilyavi seconded. The list was unanimously approved.

- Establishment of a Legislative Committee and Negotiating Permitted Interaction Group
 - M.P. Waterhouse motions for the creation of the Legislative Committee, and J. Jackson seconded. The Committee creation was unanimously approved.
 - The following agreed to be members: M.P. Waterhouse, K. Aumer, J. Jackson, K. Merriam, H. Ilyavi, L. Dias, and K. Will.
 - M.P. Waterhouse motions for the creation of the Negotiating Permitted Interaction Group, and H. Ilyavi seconded. The Committee creation was unanimously approved.
 - The following agreed to be members: M.P. Waterhouse, K. Aumer, J. Jackson, K. Merriam, H. Ilyavi, L. Dias, and K. Will.
- Discussion
 - Controversial topics will be considered on a case-to-case basis.
 - The Council position on a bill should really be more authoritative, and decisions or positions that are not consensus can be problematic. Testimonies need to reflect the number of votes in case there is no consensus.

- Last year’s SCR 67 should be elevated into a bill or law so it will have more “teeth”. The Council has not heard any report or progress.
 - M.P. Waterhouse motions to support move of resolution to a bill. H. Ilyavi seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Presentation of December 9 Meeting Results 2026 –Guiding Values, Goals and Actions for Next Meeting Vote. This was tabled for a future meeting.

VII. Informational Reports by Council Members

Tabled due to time constraints.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12 pm.