

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)  
Joint In-Person and Microsoft Team Virtual  
Teleconference

at the  
Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, Conference,  
Room 3

300 Rodgers Blvd. #12 Honolulu, HI 96819

Wednesday, March 15, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Council Attendees:

Mr. John M. Mizuno,	Chair, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness
Ms. Malia Taum-Deenik (DHS)	for/ the Director of the Department of Human Services
Mr. Harold Brackeen III	Homeless Programs Office of DHS
Ms. Marian Tsuji	for/ Director of the Department of Health (DOH)
Mr. David Rodriguez	for/ Director of the Department of Labor & Industrial Relations (DLIR)
Ms. Monica Lortz	for/ Director of the Department of Public Safety (PSD)
Mr. Kalani Fronda	for/ Director of the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL)
Mr. Bruce Oliveira	for/ Adjutant General of the Department of Defense (DOD)
Mr. Grant Nakaya	for/ Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Ms. Lila King	for/ the Department of the Attorney General
Ms. Debbie Portner	for/the Department of Education
Mr. Baron Sekiya	for (Sen. San Buenaventura) Hawaii State Senate
Mr. Hakim Ouansafi	Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Mr. Anton Krucky	for/ Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu
Ms. Sharon Hirota	for/ Mayor of the County of Hawaii
Ms. Naomi Crozier	for/ Mayor of the County of Maui
Ms. Farah Aquino	for/ Mayor of the County of Kauai
Ms. Laura Thielen,	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu
Ms. Brandee Menino	Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Ms. Makana Kamibayashi	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Ms. Maude Cumming	Continuum of Care for the County of Maui
Mr. Arthur Minor,	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Mr. Mark Chandler,	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

Absent:

Department of Business, Economic Development and  
Tourism (DBEDT)  
House of Representatives  
Faith-Based Representative

Business Community Representative

Staff:

Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions  
(SOHHS) Staff: Mr. Brandon Mitsuda, Ms. Christine Fehn,  
Ms. Sarielyn Curtis, Ms. Vanessa Khachik, and Mr. Eric  
Ford.  
Ms. Lili Young, Deputy Attorney General

I. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll**

Chair John Mizuno called the meeting of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness to order, greet and welcome everyone. He introduced himself as the Chair of the Council while also serving as the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness with the Department of Human Services.

The Chair announced that the meeting will be held in Conference Room 3 at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, which will be accessible virtually through Microsoft Teams.

The Chair began by taking the roll call and explained that members physically present in the conference room must respond with either "present" or "Aye" when their names are called. Additionally, members participating virtually via Microsoft Teams must also indicate their location and state whether they are working alone in their offices or with another person.

After the call, the Chair addressed Mr. Brandon Mitsuda, who confirmed that a quorum was established with 23 out of 27 members present.

The Chair reviewed several general housekeeping items relating to the meeting packet/handout, parking validation, the virtual teleconference platforms, and the public testimony limit.

■ **Meeting Packets/Handouts:** The Chair reminded members that the electronic PDF packet for today's meeting had been emailed to them and encouraged them to review it via an electronic device or raise their hands for the staff to provide a hard copy if needed. Furthermore, the Chair announced that members participating in person at the physical location here at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport Conference Room 3 who wish to receive an electronic copy of the packet via email, please provide us your email information on the request form located at the table outside Conference Room 3 and an electronic packet will be emailed to them following the meeting.

■ **Parking Validation:** Parking validation will also be available at the table in front of the conference room, priced at \$3.50 with validation. You can park here for 8 hours.

■ **Virtual Meeting:** Members attending via Microsoft Teams were asked to keep their cameras on for the entire meeting duration. If they need to step out of the meeting, they should notify the chat when leaving. All members were given Ms. Sarielyn Curtis's number at (808) 208-3712 to contact should they lose connection or experience technical difficulties.

■ **Public Testimony one (1) minute limit per testifier**

Chair Mizuno reminded members that the Chair would accept public testimony for each agenda item but would limit testimony to one minute per testifier. The Chair also noted

that the Council received testimonies via email from the public regarding a potential Kauhale in Hilo. The Chair stated further that the potential Kauhale in Hilo is not on this meeting's agenda item; therefore, it is not an item for discussion by the board at this meeting, as doing so would violate Hawaii's Sunshine Law.

■ **Deputy Attorney General (AG)**

The Chair reminded members that general housekeeping items on the agenda are required to comply with Hawaii's Sunshine Law. It noted the presence of Deputy Attorney General Lili Young to provide counsel.

II. **Overview and Approval of the Agenda of the March 15, 2024**

The Chair presented the agenda, which included two items: first, the Keynote Address by the Honorable Josh Green, Governor of the State of Hawaii, and Second, a Presentation by the Department of Human Services, Med-QUEST Division.

■ Keynote by the Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor of the State of Hawaii, on **The State of Hawaii's Response to Homelessness, The Importance of Collaborations, and the Kauhale Initiative**

■ Presentation by Jon Fujii, Alana Souza, and Catherine Makishima – **Department of Human Services (DHS) Med-QUEST Division on the Medicaid Community Integration Services (CIS) Program and the 1115 Waiver**

After both presentations by Governor Josh Green and the Med-QUEST team, the Chair asks for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Hakim Ouansafi moved, seconded by (inaudible). The Chair then called the question, and members in favor signified by saying Aye, all those opposing No. There was no further discussion, no abstaining; the motion passed, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. **Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting on October 26, 2023**

■ Approval of minutes for the October 26, 2023, meeting of the Council. The Chair provided a draft of the meeting minutes to all Council members in their board packet, adding that it is also available electronically.

Chair Mizuno requested a motion to approve the minutes. (inaudible) moved, and Mr. Hakim Ouansafi seconded. The Chair called the question, and members in favor signified by saying "Aye"; all those opposing signified by saying "No." There was no further discussion, no abstaining; the motion passed, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. **New Business**

■ **Welcome and Introduction by Chair John M. Mizuno**

John M. Mizuno introduced himself and thanked Governor Green for allowing him to serve as the new Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness and Chair of this Council. He also thanked the members and the public for welcoming him to his new position and looks forward to working with everyone to solve homelessness.

Chair Mizuno welcomed and introduced Governor Josh Green, who served as keynote speaker and spoke virtually during the council meeting.

■ **The State of Hawaii's Response to Homelessness, The Importance of Collaborations and the Kauhale Initiative**

**By: The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor, State of Hawaii**

After the presentation, the Chair thanked the Governor for his thoughts and for taking the time to join in this meeting. Chair Mizuno shared further that he agreed with the Governor's assertion that collaboration is vital in addressing the state's homelessness crisis and looks forward to collaborating with everyone.

■ **Presentation by the Department of Human Services, Med-QUEST Division, John Fujii, Alana Souza, Catherine Makishima – The Medicaid Community Integration Services (CIS) Program and the 1115 Waiver**

Chair Mizuno thanked the Med-QUEST team of John Fujii, Administrator of the Health Care Services Branch; Alana Souza and Catherine Makishima, from the Contracts Monitoring and Compliance Section; Vic Tolentino, Acting Administrator of Quality and Member Relations Improvement Section, and Douglas Forsell, Project Manager, for their presentation on the Medicaid Community Integration Services Program and the Medicaid 1115 Waiver Program.

The Chair opened the floor for members to ask questions or give comments.

■ Laura Thielen of Partners in Care, Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu, thanked the Med-QUEST team, commending them for listening to providers and making it easier for them to participate in the CIS Program.

As there were no other questions or comments, the Chair moved on to the next phase of the agenda.

V. **Public Testimony for the New Business Item**

The Chair opened the floor to public testimony, reminding attendees that testimony is limited to one minute and must be related to the Governor's or Med-QUEST presentation.

■ **Mr. Brian Sanders**

Mr. Brian Sanders spoke and said he wanted to submit a public comment. The Chair acknowledged Mr. Sanders. Mr. Sanders commented on the Kauhale Initiative and

Governor Green's keynote speech, emphasizing the vital work the board is doing. Mr. Sander spoke about the specific location of a potential kauhale in Hilo by the state house. At this point, the Chair reminded Mr. Sanders of the one-minute time limit and that he had exceeded it. Mr. Sanders agreed and stopped his testimony.

■ Mike Peacock, Hawaii Vet 2 Vet

Mr. Mike Peacock stated that he was present today to advocate for Peer Recovery Support Services. Mr. Peacock shared that he is a post-Vietnam pre-9-11 veteran and had to become homeless before he could get the services he needed. He found that peer recovery support services are very challenging the way they are right now and do not allow or offer many opportunities. Mr. Peacock strongly believes that the State must adequately integrate peer recovery support services into the workforce in the future. It would help people entering the Kauhale system establish a new path to success and have a positive impact on the community.

VI. **Member Updates**

■ Malia Taum-Deenik, from the Department of Human Services (DHS) Director Cathy Betts' Office, reported that on the Supplemental Executive Budget HB1800, the House Finance Committee (FIN) inserted a \$1 amount as a placeholder for HPO's request to increase the budget. Ms. Taum-Deenik stated a \$1.32 million increase in the budget for HPO services and requested support when the budget bill crosses over to the Senate Ways and Means Committee (WAM).

■ Kalani Fronda spoke on behalf of the Director of the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL), deferring to Cynthia Rezentes, DHHL NAHASDA Program Specialist, for an update on the status of the Yorktown project in Kalaeloa.

Ms. Rezentes reported on the status of the Yorktown project in Kalaeloa: Construction is expected to start at the end of April or the beginning of May, with a completion date scheduled for 1Q2025. The project will comprise 18 studio-style units, each equipped with a bathroom and shower, a hot plate, a microwave, and a small refrigerator. Two (2) units will be ADA-compliant.

Additionally, Ms. Rezentes noted that there will be one unit for the management team operating the facility on DHHL's behalf and one for a laundry facility with washers and dryers.

Moreover, they will install a Photovoltaic system on the roof covering the parking area to supplement the energy requirements of the entire facility.

■ Laura Thielen, Partners in Care, and the Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu projected their 2024 point-in-time count on January 23, 2024, reflecting where people were residing on the night of January 22, 2024. The report is due to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by the end of April 2024.

Ms. Thielen also reported that the Community Report, which will exceed the requirements of HUD, is expected to be released by May 15, 2024. Furthermore, Ms. Thielen announced a virtual open press conference to discuss the report on May 15, 2024 — the public is encouraged to participate.

Chair Mizuno asked for further updates, comments, and thoughts. There were none.

VII. **Future Topics for Upcoming Meetings**

Chair Mizuno opened the floor for future topics.

■ Brandee Menino, Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii - Ms. Menino wanted to bring forward again the suggested future topics from the October 26, 2023, meeting, as noted in the minutes. Ms. Menino clarified further and stressed the need for presentations or updates on opportunities and projects that State Departments or agencies are working on.

Chair Mizuno thanked Brandee for her comments and questions and called for Dr. Michael Champion, the Governor's Senior Advisor on Mental Health and the Justice System, to convey Ms. Menino's question – whether State Departments, for example, the Judiciary, Public Safety, the Department of Health, or the Department of Human Services are collaborating on future kauhales, and whether this could be put on the agenda as a follow up on the next meeting and if Dr. Champion would be willing to participate and address this issue at the next meeting. Dr. Champion nodded in agreement and replied, "Yes."

Chair Mizuno thanked Ms. Menino and Dr. Champion.

■ Grant Nakaya—Mr. Nakaya also referenced the minutes from the last meeting regarding the issue raised by Mr. James Pakele from Pu'u honua O Wai'anae on Mental Health Care Solutions. Mr. Nakaya felt this was a pertinent and essential topic. He asked to address it in future meetings.

Chair Mizuno thanked Grant Nakaya and the Med-QUEST team for an excellent and informative discussion on Medicaid payments for up to 6 months of rent and added it to the HICH's next meeting agenda for further discussion.

The Chair asked for any more suggestions or thoughts for future meetings. There were none.

VIII. **Adjourn**

Chair Mizuno entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by (inaudible) and seconded by Mr. Grant Nakaya. The Chair called the question. Members in favor signified by saying Aye, all those opposing No. There was no further discussion, no abstaining; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Christine Fehn

5/14/2024

---

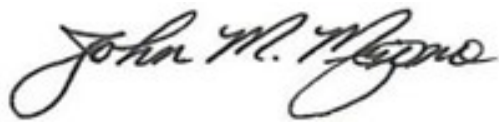
Christine Fehn  
Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions

---

Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at its regular meeting on October 24, 2024.

☐ As Presented      ☒ As Amended



10/24/2024

---

John M. Mizuno  
Chair

---

Date