

**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

Thursday, October 24, 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	for the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS)
Ms. Anamarie Piloton	for Homeless Programs Office of DHS
Mr. Kenneth Fink	Director of the Department of Health (DOH)
Mr. David Rodriguez	for Director of the Department of Labor & Industrial Relations (DLIR)
Mr. Tommy Johnson	for Director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR)
Ms. Cynthia Rezentes	for Director of the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL)
Mr. Bruce Oliveira	for Adjutant General of the Department of Defense (DOD)
Mr. Kū'ikeokalani Kamakea-Ōhelo	for Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)
Ms. Lila King	for the Department of the Attorney General (AG)
Ms. Jenna Takenouchi	Hawaii State House of Representatives
Mr. Hakim Ouansafi	Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA)
Mr. Anton Krucky	for Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu
Ms. Farah Aquino	for Mayor of the County of Kauai
Ms. Laura Thielen	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu
Ms. Makana Kamibayashi	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Mr. Arthur Minor	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Ms. Stephanie Kaimana	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
Ms. Amy Wake	Governor's Faith-Based Representative

Absent:

Department of Business, Economic Development and
Tourism (DBEDT)
Department of Education (DOE)
Hawaii State Senate
Mayor of the County of Hawaii
Mayor of the County of Maui
Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Continuum of Care for the County of Maui
Business Community Representative (VACANT)

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, Determination of Quorum [00:07:33]

Chair John Mizuno called the meeting of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness to order at 10:07am and began by asking Mr. Brandon Mitsuda to take the roll call, explaining that members participating virtually via Microsoft Teams must also indicate whether they are alone in their physical meeting space or with another person.

Mr. Brandon Mitsuda confirmed that a quorum was established with 19 out of 27 members present. The Chair then reviewed several general housekeeping items and noted the presence of Deputy Attorney General Lili Young to provide counsel.

II. Overview and Approval of October 24, 2024, Agenda (Vote) [00:16:16]

The Chair presented the agenda which included updates on the Kauhale initiative as presented by the Chair; a presentation by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Med-QUEST Division on the Medicaid 1115 Waiver program as relevant to homelessness; a keynote presentation by Dr. Michael Champion on the importance of diversionary and re-entry programs in relation to homelessness; and a presentation by Mr. Christopher Vidalgo, a Harvard undergraduate intern at SOHHS, on his experience working on the Kauhale initiative in the Governor's office.

The Chair then asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Member Rezentes moved, seconded by Member Krucky. The Chair called the question and the motion passed with none abstaining, no nay votes, or further discussion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting on March 15, 2024, Agenda (Vote) [00:18:06]

The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes for the March 15, 2024, meeting draft that was included in the board packets.

Upon asking for corrections, Member Taum-Deenik pointed out a few name misspellings which the Chair acknowledged. No further corrections were raised.

A member of the council moved, and Member Krucky seconded. The Chair called the question and the motion passed with none abstaining, no nay votes, or further discussion. The minutes, as amended, were approved unanimously.

IV. Public Testimony [00:19:26]

The Chair opened up the floor to public testimony. Testifiers discussed their frustrations and

experiences undergoing the section 8 housing process; comments on their positive outlooks for the work of HICH; the importance of the state addressing the issue of alzheimer's disease as it relates to homelessness shelter and services; increasing attention to veterans as it relates to legislation on homelessness; and addressing and servicing developmental and mental illnesses in the homelessness population.

V. New Business [00:28:16]

The Chair started off by welcoming and thanking all members and participants of the meeting. He then proceeded to go into the first presentation.

- a. **Presentation on Governor's Kauhale initiative updates by Chair John Mizuno** – Chair noted that there aren't any substantive updates and reviewed the existing and upcoming Kauhale projects.

Chair Mizuno introduced the next keynote presentation speaker Mr. Christopher Vidalgo.

- b. **Presentation on working in SOHHS as a summer intern by Chris Vidalgo** – Mr. Vidalgo detailed his experience working as an intern at SOHHS over the summer and shared his ideas of educational pipelines as it relates to homelessness policy.

Mr. Brandon Mitsuda shared a few words acknowledging and thanking Mr. Vidalgo for his work at SOHHS. The Chair then introduced the next presentation by the Med-QUEST Team.

- c. **Presentation by the Department of Human Services, Med-QUEST Division on updates to the Medicaid 1115 Waiver Programs as it relates to Homelessness by Dr. Judy Mohr Peterson** – Dr. Peterson reviewed the work of the Med-QUEST Division and progress on implementing the waiver program.

The Chair opened up the floor for questions on Dr. Peterson's presentation. Member Krucky asked if he could obtain a copy of the presentation slides. Questions and discussions centered on whether Med-QUEST benefits for housing assistance helped pay fees associated with their stays at Kauhales; assessment tools for people transitioning out of CIS; and frustrations from a public testifier with Med-QUEST.

The Chair noted that himself and Member Johnson hosted a delegation of wardens and correctional facility directors from the Philippines to study Hawaii's Kauhale and diversionary programs. He introduced the last speaker Dr. Michael Champion.

- d. **Presentation on the Importance of Diversionary and Re-entry Programs and Strategic Plan by Dr. Michael Champion**

The Chair opened up the floor to members for questions. Members and public attendees ask about the current status of state hospitals in terms of capacity and the specific number of beds available in state hospitals.

Other comments and questions were discussed on the Diversionary Program such as the city's experience with using employment as a tool of diversion; current efforts to implement

diversion into the Kauhale initiatives; and how training and education would be implemented in the diversionary program efforts.

Additionally, comments were made about the success of similar projects like Kauhale in Japan that incorporated mini dorm-style housing and "micro-factory" employment.

VI. Member Updates [02:00:19]

Chair Mizuno opened up the floor for members to share any updates. No members had any updates to share.

VII. Topics for Upcoming Meetings [2:00:42]

The Chair started off the discussion by suggesting First Lady Jaime Green to be a presenter at the next HICH Meeting about her interest and work in reducing youth homelessness through a Youth Kauhale project.

The Chair opened up the floor for public testimony on Agenda Items VI and VII. The public testified about incorporating employment opportunities and workforce development into the Kauhale system; addressing cases of Kauhale tenants refusing services; and discussions on diversionary programs in Kauhale.

The Chair also suggested bringing representatives from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to discuss the department's potential role in assisting with the diversionary program Kauhales at the next HICH meeting.

Member Thielen suggested to discuss the long-term funding sources for Kauhales, especially after the emergency proclamations end, as an upcoming topic. The member then made an announcement about the upcoming Statewide Annual Conference on Homeless Solutions and Programs on November 14 and 15, 2024 hosted by Partners in Care.

The Chair addressed Member Rezentes about upcoming Kauhale projects on the west side of Oahu. The Chair asked members and the public if there were any other matters to discuss and found none.

VIII. Adjourn [02:10:00]

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Member Krucky moved, and Member Thielen seconded. The Chair asked if there were any further discussions and found none. A voice vote was taken with no nay votes or abstaining. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Minutes prepared by:



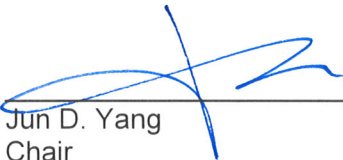
So Myung Kim
Administrative Assistant to the Homelessness
Coordinator
Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing
Solutions

9/16/25

Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at its regular meeting on September 16, 2025.

☒ As Presented ☐ As Amended



Jun D. Yang
Chair

9/16/25

Date