

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

<http://www.hawaii.gov/dhs>

The Department of Human Services, established under section 26-14 and specifically provided for in chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is headed by the Director of Human Services. The Department's mission is to direct its resources toward protecting and helping those least able to care for themselves and to provide services designed toward achieving self-sufficiency for clients as quickly as possible. The Department is committed to maintaining a high level of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in its services.

Departmental staff strive to provide timely, efficient, and effective programs, services, and benefits that empower clients. Doing so expands the clients' capacity for self-sufficiency, healthy choices, independence, self-determination, quality of life, and personal dignity.

Administration

The Office of the Director has the primary responsibility for the daily operations of the Department of Human Services (DHS). The Director is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, and is assisted by the Deputy Director.

Five Staff Offices support the DHS Administration, operating divisions, and attached agencies.

The Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) provides administrative due process hearings in contested cases for three departmental divisions--Benefit Employment and Support Services, Med-QUEST, and Social Services. It has contracts with fifteen attorneys in private practice to conduct hearings through appointment by the Director under section 346-12, Hawaii Revised Statutes. AAO receives approximately 1,500 administrative hearing requests and referrals annually and issues about 700 administrative hearing decisions each year. AAO also serves as the rules coordinator for the Department and reviews administrative proceedings for the adoption, modification, or repeal of departmental rules. AAO is also responsible for establishing a mediation process for the Department.

The Fiscal Management Office (FMO) provides staff assistance and advisory services for the administrative functions of fiscal management and housekeeping services. FMO formulates policies and procedures and administers the Department's central accounting, funds management, client and vendor payment, employee payroll, inventory management, contracting, purchasing, records management, office space allocation, and central mail distribution functions. FMO also provides consultative and technical advisory services in these functional areas.

The Management Services Office (MSO) provides research, budget, quality assurance, program and financial evaluation, and assessment capabilities to enable DHS to oversee its programs and to make effective decisions concerning those programs. MSO conducts studies, analyses, evaluations, and reviews to ensure regulatory compliance, achievement of stated goals

and objectives, and effective and efficient departmental programs and services and use of resources.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is responsible for the overall administration, planning, direction, management, development, implementation, and maintenance of all information technology (IT) and information systems processing for the Department statewide. OIT, with approximately sixty employees, provides project planning and management, business application systems development and maintenance, systems software and hardware management, telecommunications and network management and support, and technical training, and operates the Data Center including computing facilities management, data control, and technical help desk functions. OIT also oversees the administration of the dedicated DHS mainframe system complex and all hardware peripherals located at the Department of Accounting and General Services, Information and Communication Services Division, separate from the State's mainframe system. Additionally, OIT directs and coordinates all IT matters within and between DHS and other state and county agencies, federal agencies, and commercial hardware and software vendors including private consultants.

The Personnel Office oversees the personnel programs of the Department, including recruitment, examination and placement, position description, classification and pricing analysis, labor relations, civil rights, employee safety and relations, employee training and development, personnel transactions, and maintenance of personnel records.

Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division

The Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division provides monthly benefits to assist eligible clients with such essentials as food, clothing, shelter, emergency assistance, child care, and work supports, as well as employment and training to help families attain self-sufficiency. Cash benefits are provided to individuals and families through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Temporary Assistance to Other Needy Families, General Assistance, and Assistance to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled programs, as well as the Low Income Home Energy Program and Child Care Connection Hawaii. The Food Stamp program helps to ensure that no one goes hungry. The First-To-Work, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Upfront Universal Engagement Grant Diversion, and Supporting Employment Empowerment Hawaii Work programs provide job readiness, job development, job placement, case management, and other supportive services to ensure that families on public welfare are adequately prepared to end dependency, as well as providing a variety of at-risk youth and family strengthening programs to prevent family dependence.

Med-QUEST Division

The Med-QUEST Division administers the State's Medicaid program through which healthcare is provided to the low-income population. The Medicaid program is jointly financed by the State of Hawaii and the federal government. The Division develops and maintains working relationships with health plans, providers, federal and state authorities, community

agencies, client advocacy groups, and others. Healthcare coverage is provided through either fee-for-service payments to healthcare providers or contracts with managed care health plans. The State's Children Health Insurance Program was established to expand health coverage to more children whose families may be working but do not earn enough to pay for health coverage for their children. The Division monitors services to ensure appropriate and quality care.

Social Services Division

The Social Services Division provides social services programs to ensure the health and safety of those least able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect. The Child Welfare Services (CWS) program provides services to ensure the safety and permanency of children in their own homes or, when necessary, in out-of-home placements. The program is community-based and neighbor-focused with many partnerships and collaborations with the private and public sectors. Services are focused on empowering families and building upon family strengths. When children cannot be safely returned to the family, the CWS program proceeds with permanent placement through adoption, legal guardianship, or other substitute long-term care, including independent living. The program also licenses foster families, boarding homes, group homes, and child-placing organizations.

The Adult Protective Services program provides crisis intervention, including investigation and emergency services, to dependent adults who are reported to be abused, neglected, or financially exploited by others or seriously endangered due to self-neglect.

The Home and Community-Based Services program provides comprehensive home and community-based services to disabled adults and children to enable them to live in their homes or in the community as long as possible to prevent premature institutionalization.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division administers programs that provide rehabilitation services to assist eligible persons with disabilities to secure employment and to lead full and independent lives. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program offers vocational evaluation, planning, counseling, treatment, training, job placement, and follow-up services to persons with physical or mental disabilities to enable them to become employed. The economic benefits of the VR program include increased earnings and purchasing power, increased tax revenues, and decreased dependency on public assistance.

The Services to the Blind program, called Ho'opono, enables visually impaired adults to attain maximum vocational functional independence by providing varied services including vocational, counseling, assistive technology, and social and independent living skills training. Persons with visual impairment are also assisted in establishing and operating vending facilities.

The Disability Determination program determines eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income benefits under the federal Social Security program.

ATTACHED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES

Office of Youth Services

The Office of Youth Services (OYS), under chapter 352D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, develops and provides a continuum of services for youth at risk to prevent delinquency and to reduce recidivism through prevention, rehabilitation, and treatment services. Youth's needs, from prevention to incarceration to aftercare, are addressed through programs such as the Youth Service Centers, the Youth Gang Response System, and Ho'okala Adolescent Diversion as alternatives to incarceration through immediate intervention services; non-residential and in-community aftercare services to prevent further incarceration; and community-based residential services as an alternative to incarceration. OYS also manages and operates the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) to provide safe and secure housing for the most violent and dangerous juvenile offenders. Although a core responsibility of OYS is to manage and operate HYCF, the agency places great emphasis on providing and supporting "front end" prevention, diversion, and intervention services. Incarcerated youth are provided counseling, treatment, and educational services for redirection and rehabilitation.

Hawaii Public Housing Authority

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), under chapter 356D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, provides Hawaii residents with safe, decent, and affordable housing. HPHA focuses on providing housing and rental subsidies for low-income persons and families and ensuring more homeless persons and families are being served and transitioned into permanent housing. Housing programs include public housing and other subsidized housing, and rental subsidy and homeless assistance programs.

Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, under chapter 367, Hawaii Revised Statutes, ensures equality for women and girls in the State by acting as a catalyst for positive change through advocacy, education, collaboration, and program development. The Commission acts as a central clearinghouse and coordinating body for governmental and nongovernmental activities and information relating to the status of women and creates public awareness and understanding of the responsibilities, needs, potential, and contributions of women and their roles in a changing society. The Commission recommends legislative and administrative action on equal treatment and opportunities for women and encourages a long-range program of education of women in their political rights and responsibilities.

Hawaii Commission on Fatherhood

The Hawaii Commission on Fatherhood, established by Act 156, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, and made permanent by Act 190, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007, promotes healthy family relationships between parents and children by emphasizing the important role fathers play in the lives of their children. The Commission identifies promising best practices that support and engage fathers in the emotional and financial support of their children. The Commission promotes, fosters, encourages, and financially supports programs designed to educate and train men who are both current and future fathers in effective parenting skills, behaviors, and attitudes, strategies for overcoming personal challenges, and opportunities to be productive responsible contributors to their family. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to state agencies and makes recommendations on programs, services, contracts, policies, and laws relating to children and families.

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