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Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC)
September 2026 Site Tour Observations
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On Thursday, September 10, 2026, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission, HCSOC) toured the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) collectively as a group. The tour included three of the five Commissioners – Chair Mark Patterson, Retired Judge Robert Browning, and Martha Torney in addition to the Oversight Coordinator and staff. The Commission had unfettered access to staff and the facility.

Olomana Cottage

Olomana Cottage has a total capacity for 72 people between four dorms (Dorms A, B, C, and D) and primarily house people with a range of mental health issues. Last year the Commission was concerned to hear from individuals with mental health issues that out-of-cell time was limited to one hour a day. This year, WCCC Administration presented a schedule that indicated all Olomana housing units (A, B, and C), receive at least 1.5 hours of recreation a day.

Olomana A

On the day of the visit, the census for Olomana A was 39 with a rated capacity for 22 and a 172% occupancy. It should be noted that the space did not feel overcrowded. Olomana A is a dormitory setting divided into cubicles separated by half walls with three to five individuals assigned to each cubicle. The jail population who are designated as low to medium acuity (primarily Level 2, some Level 1) occupy Dorm A.

An issue that was reported last year that was reported again this year is that hot water was not always available. Administrative staff explained that the hot water heater has recently undergone maintenance to address disruptions in hot water output.

People in custody reported that one of the phones located in the central courtyard area near the control room is inoperable. Upon picking up the receiver, HCSOC staff found that there was no dial tone or prerecorded prompt to choose a language or dial out, leading to the conclusion that the phone was inoperable as reported. HCSOC staff immediately brought this to Administration's attention who made note of the issue.

Olomana B

On the day of the visit, the census for Olomana B was 17, with a rated capacity for 12 and a 141% occupancy. Olomana B is made up of cells, all but two single celled. People in custody designated as medium to high mental health acuity occupy Dorm B.

Olomana C

On the day of the visit, the census for Olomana C was 18, with a rated capacity for 22 and a 81% occupancy. Olomana C houses people with high mental health acuity in single cells and is the disciplinary unit for the Cottage.

Attached to Olomana C is a small recreational yard. During prior visits, HCSOC staff had observed that this small recreational space had two walls that were very dirty and heavily graffitied, not suitable for rehabilitation. This year the walls appeared to be painted in an effort to make the space more rehabilitative. Additionally, two sides of the space are secured by fencing which allows access to fresh air, natural light, and views of the surrounding vegetation outside of the fencing. Staff reported that custodies are allowed to take tablets to recreation space. During the visit, the space was in use.

Olomana Indoor Recreation Area

Administrative staff presented an indoor recreation area where acute and maximum security custodies can watch television while shackled to rings on the floor to maintain security protocols. Staff explained that custodies typically use the room one at a time to prevent conflicts between custodies. The area included four “Pillar,” booths that facilitate telehealth visits and telecommunications.

Pakui Cottage

Pakui Cottage has three dorms (Dorm A, B, and C) and houses the prison population. Pakui has a total capacity of 176. Pakui A and Pakui B are both dormitory settings, each dorm featuring eight pods, four pods upstairs and four pods downstairs. Each pod is furnished with four bunk beds, two beds per bunk, equaling 8 beds per pod. Each pod is also furnished with lockers, which are secured by padlocks. Each dorm has a small outdoor recreation area, roughly the size of a racquetball court with limited views of surrounding vegetation.

Pakui A and Pakui B each have a 64-bed capacity. Pakui C has 24 cells, each with a capacity for two people. Pakui C is a disciplinary housing unit.

All bunks in Pakui A, B, and C are constructed with a teal plastic material, diverting from the typical metal frames that are found in Olomana and Ka‘ala, which tend to rust and create hazards over time as they deteriorate. The hard plastic frames appear to be more durable and create a visual aesthetic that is more rehabilitative.

Pakui A

Pakui A's census was 48 with a 75% occupancy. Pakui A is two stories and divided into pods with floor-to-ceiling side walls separating each pod and an open entrance. The bottom floor opens into the dayroom, the upper floor is an open hallway overlooking the dayroom.

The most common complaint was lack of airflow in the cubicle, resulting in hot conditions that were obvious during our tour. The windows, while providing adequate daylight, have small louvers on the top that open. Plug-in fans were assigned to each cubicle but did not provide enough air flow to reduce the heat. Due to the heat and lack of opportunity to go outside, people housed in Pakui reported that they would prefer to be housed in the older, dilapidated buildings, where the jail population is currently housed, because the older building designs include larger, open areas for outdoor recreation.

Pakui B

Pakui B's census was 41 with a 64% occupancy. Pakui B, the same layout as Dorm A, is designated the Honor Dorm with individuals having more freedom of movement and access to classes outside the living unit. The Commission did not have time to tour Pakui B.

Pakui C

Pakui C's census was 10 with a 20% occupancy. Pakui C is two stories with 12 cells on each floor. People in custody assigned to Dorm C include those classified as Maximum custody, Protective Custody or housed in disciplinary segregation as a result of a misconduct. The space is used judiciously, with only 10 people in custody occupying the 24 cells available. People in custody are given one hour per day out of cell, during which time they have access to phones or tablets for contacting their families or participating in programming available on the tablet. One person was in one of the outdoor recreation yards, but is surrounded by high walls with no fences, allowing only partial views of the sky.

Pakui C has a total of four showers, two upstairs and two downstairs. Staff reported that water recently stopped flowing from the two upstairs showers, leaving the two downstairs showers as the only operational showers.

Staff reported that Pakui C's population generally does not exceed 12 to 17 people at any given time. Staff also reported that 6 of the 24 cells were downed cells because the glass windows in the doors were cracked, reportedly damaged by people in custody. Staff explained that they cannot use the cells because the cracked glass creates the potential for damage to grow and for injuries to occur.

Maunawili Cottage

Maunawili Cottage is where the library, education services, medical and infirmary, and the kitchen are located. No people in custody are housed in Maunawili Cottage.

Education

Due to the Commission touring the facility late in the day, the Education building was closed for the day and therefore not toured.

Library

Due to the Commission touring the facility late in the day, the library was closed for the day and therefore not toured. The Commission was not able to verify whether its public reports were in the library, which have been provided for distribution to all facilities in Hawaii for people in custody to access.

Medical

The Commission was informed that the infirmary was unsafe to enter because it had been closed for mold cleaning following a report identifying elevated and unsafe levels of mold spores in heavily trafficked areas of the infirmary.

WCCC leadership explained that the facility started experiencing electrical issues in November 2025 that were linked to storms that had occurred at the time. Efforts to make needed repairs were delayed by supply chain issues. Electrical issues continued to degrade while the facility was waiting on contractors to secure needed supplies, ultimately resulting in the infirmary's central air conditioning unit (AC) being turned off from December 2025 to June 2026 due to a series of electrical surges and failures.

The infirmary closed for patient care in April 2026 out of concern of the health risks associated with rising heat levels. Without alternative options for an adequate nursing and work station, medical staff continued to work in the infirmary's deteriorating conditions, caused by ongoing electrical issues, until the electrical issues were repaired in June 2026.

Impacts and disruptions to patient care include:

- Depleted capacity for refrigerated medications
- Temporarily housing people on suicide watch in cells that do not meet safety standards for suicide watch
 - The only cells that meet safety standards for suicide watch are located in the infirmary
- Growing backlogs for dental and mental health visits, visits that are normally facilitated by exam rooms located in the infirmary
 - The only dental chair in the facility is located in the infirmary
 - Buildings that house the jail population have deteriorated exam rooms that need renovating or replacing
 - Pakui, which houses the prison population, has adequate exam rooms, but has limited space for a pharmacy
- Disruptions to coordinating continuity of care with community providers

- Infirmarary populations cannot be tracked and managed with DCR's Offender Management System while temporarily housed in other units

Medical staff reported that they were not always informed of efforts to repair electrical issues and schedule mold inspections and cleanings, which sometimes impacted their ability to effectively manage healthcare. Staff reported that the lack of communication at times made them feel as though serious issues developing from the electrical failures were not being prioritized.

Facility administration reported that, after mold inspections and cleanings are complete, there are plans to expand the infirmarary to areas of Maunawili that are adjacent to the current infirmarary, but there is currently not a timeline for the reported expansion.

Kitchen

The kitchen was busy preparing for dinner, but it was clean and in good order, especially for being 60 years old. Kitchen staff reported that serving warm meals is often a challenge because of the time that is needed to load and transport meals. The distances between WCCC's kitchen and housing units requires most meals to be loaded onto vehicles before being transported to housing units.

Two of the housing units, Olomana and Ka'ala, have kitchens, but the kitchens have not been outfitted to prepare and serve meals.

DCR reports that a current project schedule anticipates starting the construction of a new kitchen in April 2027 and completing the new kitchen in November 2028. The total project budget is reportedly \$24.9 million and will include a new access road and the capacity to prepare 1,400 meals daily (exceeding the minimum capacity of approximately 900 meals daily) and a 60-day emergency food storage capacity (https://dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Hawaii-OCCC_newsletter_Vol64.pdf). It is not yet clear if plans for the new kitchen include operational capabilities that support keeping meals warm until they get to housing units.

Some people in custody reported that the same meals are served, daily, however staff provided a daily menu, modified by handwriting, that indicates that meals change daily and throughout each day.

Ho'okipa Cottage

Ho'okipa has an unrated capacity of 58, with 41 occupants, with a 71% occupancy. Ho'okipa Makai Cottage serves as a restorative-focused housing unit designed to support rehabilitation and successful community reentry. The cottage and its adjacent support building provide a normalized environment emphasizing safety, privacy, comfort, and sustainability. The 6,300-square-foot cottage includes shared living areas, a shaded outdoor lanai, and dormitory-style and double-occupancy rooms for sixty-four residents, while the 1,600-square-foot support building

houses dining space, a kitchen, laundry services, and flexible rooms for educational and vocational programming. Both structures incorporate passive ventilation, natural daylighting, acoustic enhancements, and slatted-wood elements designed to increase comfort and reduce institutional feel, with solar panels generating 16 kW of renewable energy. Residents participating in work furlough, community custody, or workline assignments experience increased autonomy and accountability, often forming cohesive support networks that reinforce positive behavior and community standards. Overall, the Ho'okipa Makai Cottage reflects an effort to create a more supportive and restorative environment that promotes skill-building, stability, and readiness for reentry.

For more information about Ho'okipa's groundbreaking rehabilitative design, and to why structures like it need to become the norm for setting rehabilitative standards, you can visit: <https://www.dlrgroup.com/work/hookipa-cottage-renovation/>.