

Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission

Monthly Oversight Coordinator Report – October 2026

Contents

Introduction 3
Death in Custody 3
Events Attended 3
Complaints Received by the Commission 9
Findings on Lack of Movement Throughout the Prison System 12
Past Meetings 14
Expenses for the Preceding Month – October 15
General Office Information 15
Monthly Meetings 15

Introduction

In accordance with Chapter §353L-6, the Oversight Coordinator shall submit a monthly report to the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken by the Commission and expenses for the preceding month. In addition to the mandated parties this report must be shared with, the Oversight Coordinator publicly posts the monthly report to increase transparency and accountability. This report will also be shared with each individual who has the responsibility of appointing members of the Commission. This includes:

1) Governor of Hawaii
2) President of the Hawaii Senate
3) Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives
4) Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice
5) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

The Oversight Coordinator monthly reports are released on the first Friday of each month, covering the previous month, and will be discussed on the second Thursday of each month at the monthly Commission meetings.

Death in Custody

On Thursday, October 8, 2026, at approximately 8:00am, a Hawaiian male in custody, 82 years old, was found lying on the floor, lethargic, and slow to respond to verbal commands in a medical cell at Saguaro Correctional Center in Arizona. Medical staff contacted 911 at approximately 8:30am. At 8:40am, Emergency Medical Services arrived on-site and began evaluating the individual. At 9:15am, EMS transported him off-site to a local hospital. At 3:30pm, the individual was transferred to a second local hospital for further care. On Friday, October 9, 2026, at approximately 4:30am, the decedent was pronounced deceased at the second hospital. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

On Saturday, October 24, 2026, at approximately 2:45pm, a Tongan male in custody, 29 years old, was found unresponsive in his cell at Oahu Community Correctional Center. Medical staff arrived at approximately 2:50pm and started performing chest compressions and administered Narcan. At approximately 3:23pm, the Honolulu Fire Department arrived and continued administering emergency medical procedures. At approximately 3:25pm, Emergency Medical Services arrived and transported the decedent to a local emergency room. At approximately 4:08pm, security was notified that the decedent was pronounced deceased. An autopsy will determine the official cause of death.

Events Attended

Basic Corrections Recruit Class Graduation for Class 26-04

On Friday, October 2, 2026, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation welcomed a new class of eleven adult corrections officers (ACO) at a graduation ceremony. The graduates from Basic Corrections Recruit Class (BCRC) 26-04 completed rigorous training and will begin their careers as Adult Corrections Officers at facilities across Hawai‘i. This class is the fourth graduating class of the year. Recruit training comprises more than 300

hours of classroom instruction and physical training. Recruits learn a variety of subjects that include standards of conduct, ethics and professionalism, report writing, interpersonal communications, maintaining security, crisis intervention, security threat groups (gangs), mental health, first aid, use of firearms, and self-defense tactics.

During the final weeks of training, they go into the facility where they begin their jobs with guidance from their training sergeants. The eleven graduates have been assigned to the following correctional facilities:

- Halawa Correctional Facility – 5
- Maui Community Correctional Center – 1
- O‘ahu Community Correctional Center – 4
- Women’s Community Correctional Center – 1



Photo courtesy of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation



Photo courtesy of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

The Commission sends a warm congratulations to all graduates and appreciates the invitation to graduation ceremonies.

Presentation of Oversight to DePaul University Students

On Wednesday, October 7, 2026, the Oversight Coordinator presented to a class of criminal justice students at DePaul University regarding the importance of effective oversight. The invitation to speak to the class stemmed from the John Howard Association which oversees all prisons and juvenile facilities in the state of Illinois. The Commission always appreciated the opportunity to share its work with engaged students and thanks the John Howard Association and DePaul University for the invitation to present.

Tour of the Women's Community Correctional Center with Legislature

On Friday, October 9, 2026, the Oversight Coordinator joined a tour of the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) with DCR Director Tommy Johnson and various interested legislators. The tour encompassed the intake area, visitation, and the new housing unit for the prison population (Pakui). Legislators took the opportunity to ask great questions and learn more of the programing offered to the women. The Commission thanks Representative Michael Lee who spearheaded the planning of the tour.

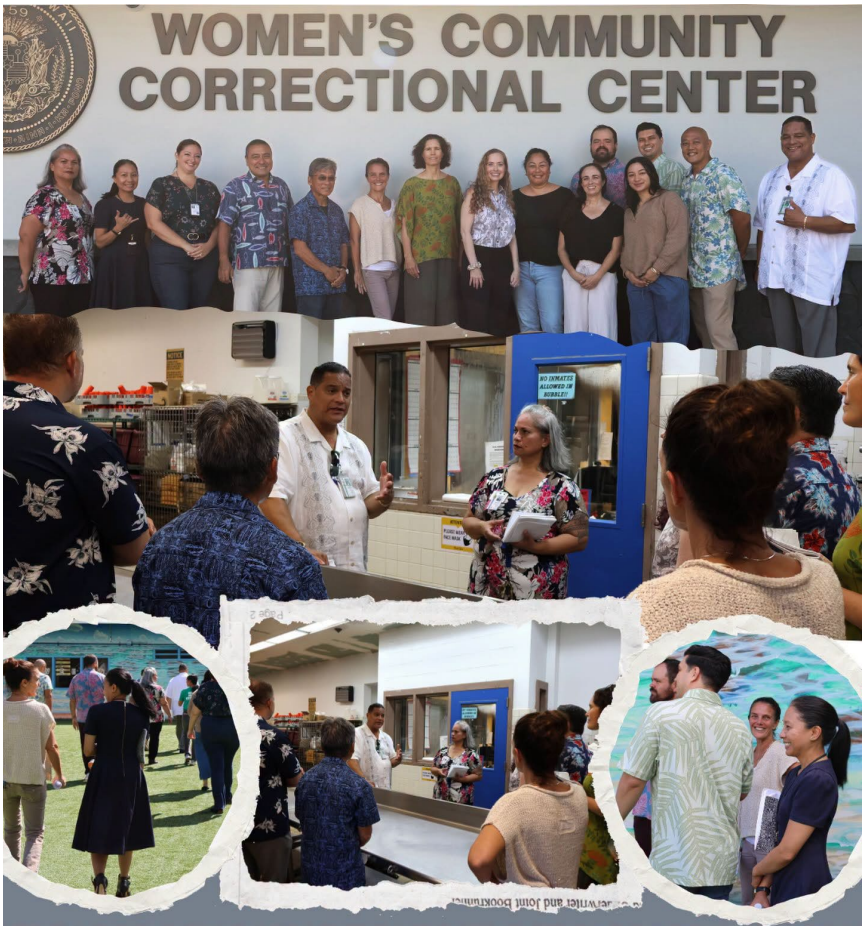


Photo courtesy of Representative Amy Perruso

House Public Safety Committee Presentation on SCR60

On Tuesday, October 20, 2026, the Oversight Coordinator presented during an informational briefing focused on Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 60. SCR60 requires consistent reporting from DCR regarding the incorporation of the recommendations from the University of Hawai‘i Community Design Center’s “Breaking Cycle; Alternative Models of Rehabilitation and Restoration Justice on O‘ahu” study into the planning, design, and proposed operations of the replacement O‘ahu Community Correctional Center.

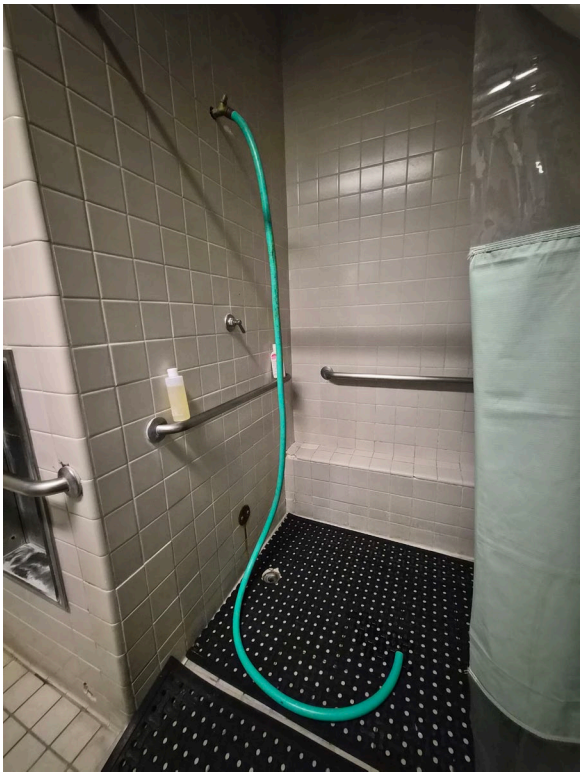
Invitees were asked to include in their update’s discussion on implementation of mental health and substance use treatment, education, cultural practices, community-based reentry supports, and opportunities for input from incarcerated individuals, families, correctional staff, affected communities, and other stakeholders. The Oversight Coordinator briefly covered the work revolving the Senate Concurrent Resolution 89 advisory committee whereas the Department presented during the vast majority of the hearing. The recording of the briefing can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6YAxJy9dCE

Tour of HCF Infirmary and Hospice Room with FAMM

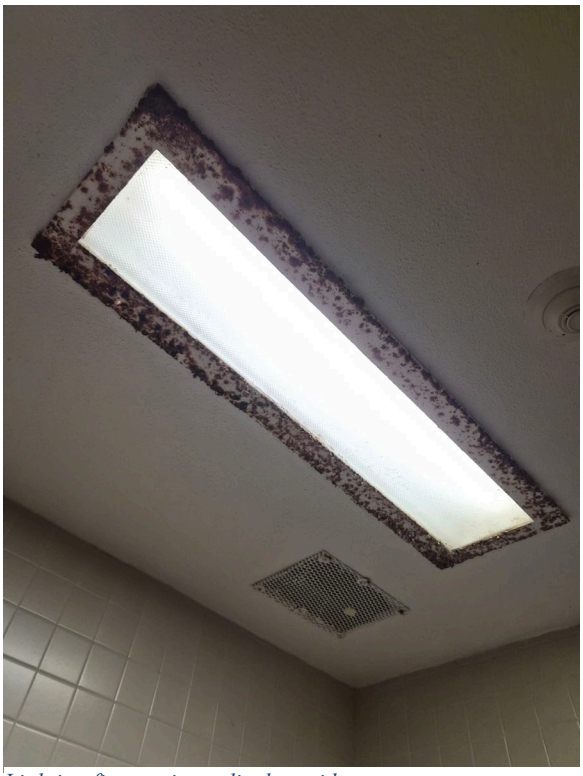
On Tuesday, October 20, 2026, the Oversight Coordinator conducted a tour of the Halawa Correctional Facility infirmary and hospice room on behalf of representatives from FAMM, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), and the Correctional Reform Working Group. The purpose of the tour was to highlight the importance of compassionate release for those who are terminally ill. Below are some photos taken by the Oversight Coordinator from the tour:



Tub and shower room in infirmary



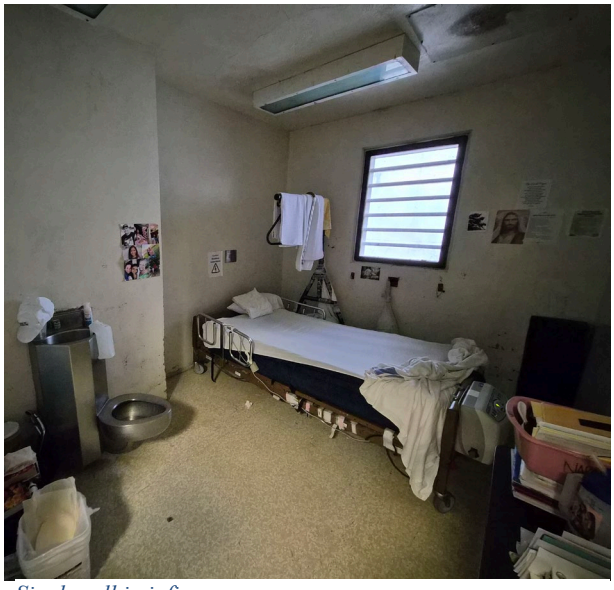
Tub and shower room with hose for shower in infirmary



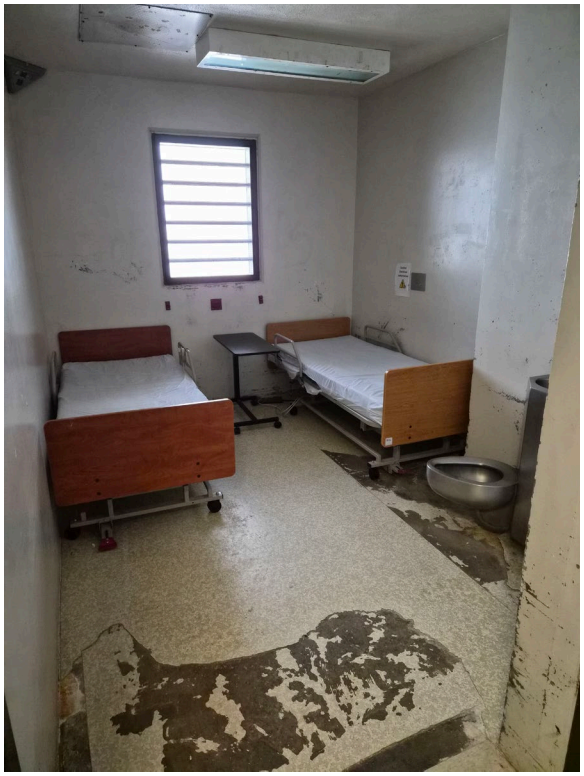
Lighting fixtures in medical corridor



Ceiling tiles in medical corridor



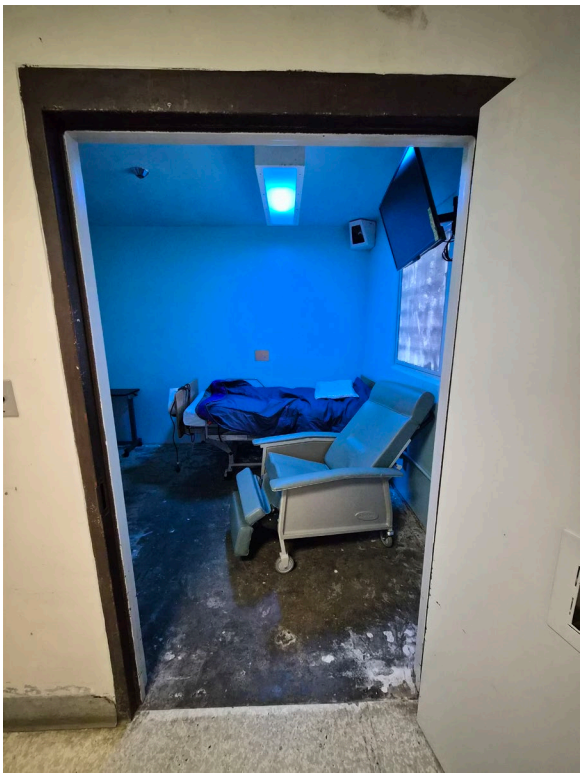
Single cell in infirmary



Double-bunked cell in infirmary



Hospice room



Hospice room



Recreation yard for infirmary



Recreation yard for infirmary

House Public Safety Committee Presentation Compassionate Release

On Wednesday, October 22, 2026, the Oversight Coordinator attended and participated in an informational briefing regarding compassionate release. The purpose of the informational briefing was to inform and educate the Committee about compassionate release as a policy tool for addressing the needs of incarcerated people with terminal illnesses or severe medical conditions. Representatives from FAMM presented their work in this policy area and shared approaches from other jurisdictions. After the presentation, there was a discussion of Hawai‘i’s current process, local conditions, and policy considerations for legislative action. The informational briefing can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42OxY4mqq_Y

Medicaid Reentry Program Webinar

On Thursday, October 15, 2026, staff attended the Medicaid Reentry Program Webinar, which reportedly drew more than 125 participants and featured key speakers Edie Mayeshiro, Acting Deputy Medicaid Director; Puanani Crabbe Parker, MQD Health Care Outreach Branch Manager; Terrance Cheung, DCR Operations Manager; Kelcie Mkaike, DCR Acting Administrator, Intake Service Centers; and Matelina (Mata) Auvala, HYCF Youth Facility Administrator. The webinar provided an overview of Hawaii’s implementation of the Medicaid Reentry Program under the Section 1115 waiver and highlighted ongoing planning efforts to expand access to health care services for justice-involved individuals prior to their release.

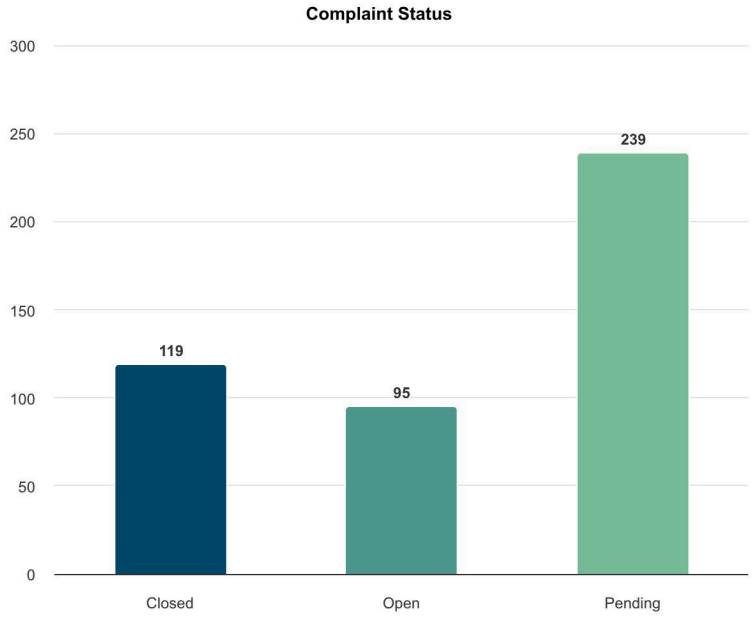
One notable topic was the Facility Readiness Assessment process, through which Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) leadership evaluates whether facilities meet eligibility requirements to participate in the waiver program. This discussion suggested a potential future role for oversight in reviewing how eligibility determinations align with federal waiver requirements. Another key takeaway was DCR’s exploration of Reentry Targeted Case Management (RTCM) as a strategy to support successful program implementation. Options under consideration include contracting with third-party case management providers or reorganizing existing resources to establish dedicated reentry-focused case management services. Overall, the webinar provided valuable insight into the operational, policy, and organizational considerations involved in implementing Hawaii’s Medicaid Reentry Program and the opportunities it presents to strengthen reentry planning and continuity of care.

Complaints Received by the Commission

Below is a breakdown of the office’s current status of complaints including open complaints, pending complaints, closed complaints. Additionally, there is a breakdown of how many complaints the Commission has received from each correctional facility.

Complaint Status

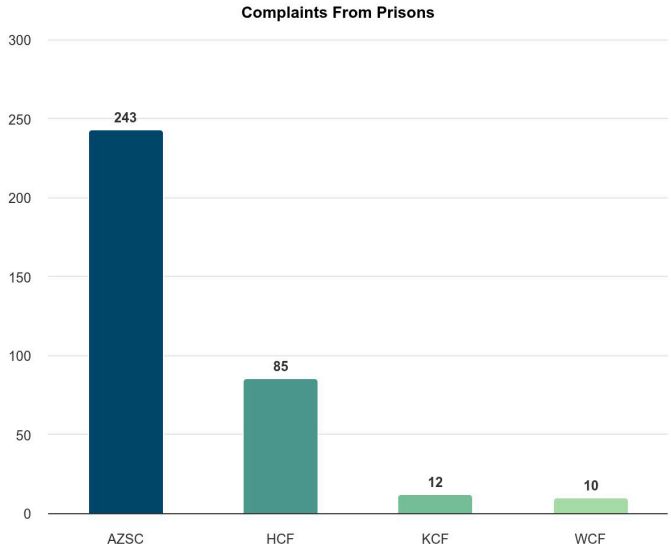
As of October 28, 2026, the Commission had 119 closed complaints and 239 complaints pending waiting for review and potential investigation. The Jail and Prison Oversight Specialists currently have 95 complaints that are open and being actively investigated.



***Note**: number of incoming complaints is subject to change as some letters may contain multiple complaints*

Complaints from Prison System

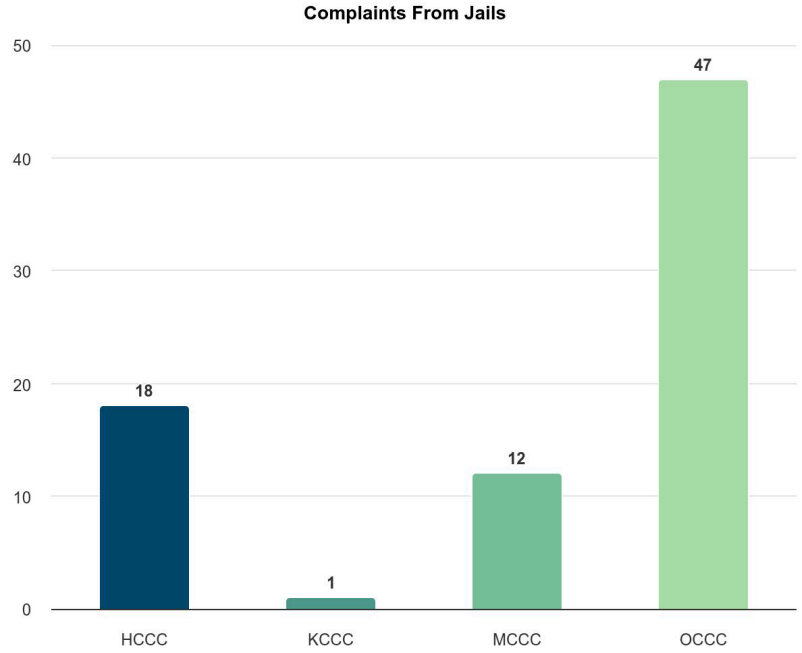
The Commission received a total of 351 complaints from the prison system (not including the Women's facility which is detailed below). A total of 243 complaints came from Saguaro Correctional Center (AZSC), a privately run facility in Arizona, 85 complaints from Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), 12 complaints from Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF), and 10 complaints from the Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF).



***Note**: number of incoming complaints is subject to change as some letters may contain multiple complaints.*

Complaints from Jail System

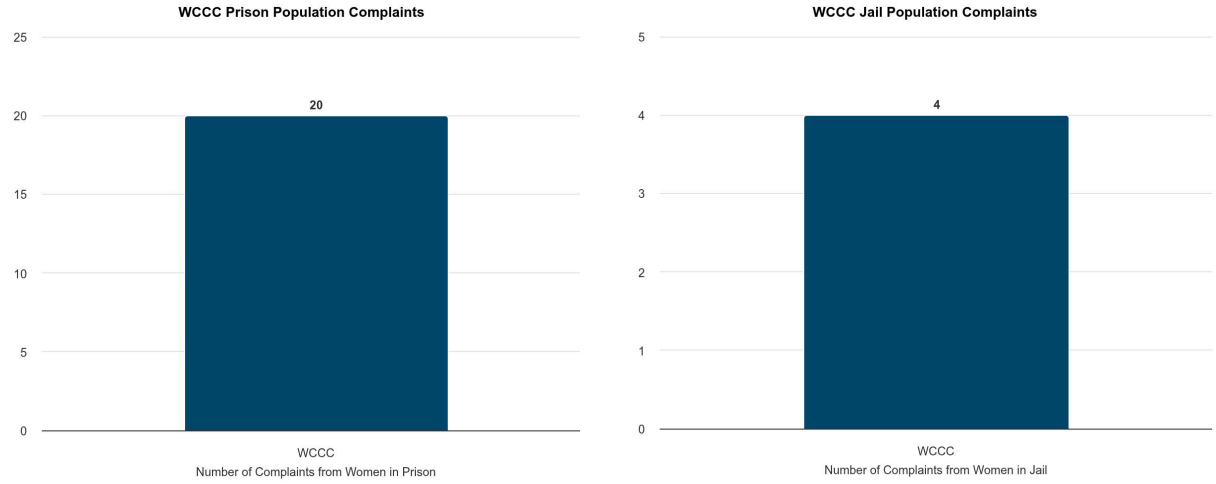
The Commission has received a total of 78 complaints from the jails (not including the Women's facility which is detailed below). A total of 18 complaints came from the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC), one complaint from the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC), 12 complaints from the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC), and 47 complaints from the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC).



***Note**: number of incoming complaints is subject to change as some letters may contain multiple complaints.*

Complaints from Women's Hybrid System

The Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) functions as the State's only hybrid facility housing the jail and prison population of women. The Commission has received 20 complaints from the prison side of WCCC, and four complaints from the jail side of WCCC.



***Note**: number of incoming complaints is subject to change as some letters may contain multiple complaints.*

The Commission will continue to report on complaints on a monthly basis based on feedback from the Commissioners and public on what statistics are best to make available. If you have feedback you would like to share regarding complaint information you would like to see, please email us at hcsoc@hawaii.gov.

Findings on Lack of Movement Throughout the Prison System

Concerns Regarding Lack of Bed Utilization at Minimum Custody Facilities

The Commission has consistently reported on concerns regarding a lack of bed utilization at minimum custody facilities. Hawaii has two minimum custody prisons for men - Kulani Correctional Facility (KCF) and Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF). These facilities are designed for people who pose low public safety risk and are eligible for rehabilitation-focused programming. WCF can hold 334 individuals, and KCF can hold 160 individuals. Despite this:

- Both facilities are less full now than they were in 2023 (WCF is at 50% capacity, KCF is at 48% capacity).
- At the same time, **hundreds of people who qualify for minimum custody** remain housed in Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) (a higher-security prison), or Saguaro Correctional Center in Arizona (AZSC) (higher security, out-of-state prison).

The Commission has found that minimum custody beds are sitting empty while eligible individuals are housed in more expensive, more restrictive, and less rehabilitative settings.

	2023 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	53	455	369	--	--	877
HCF	4	183	435	187	2	11	822
WCF	27	154	--	--	--	--	181
KCF	24	61	--	--	--	--	85

Source: Hawaii Department of Public Safety Roster, Dated Nov. 13, 2023

	2024 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	77	506	411	--	--	994
HCF	6	179	306	204	6	5	706
WCF	23	113	--	--	--	--	136 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	13	65	--	--	--	--	78 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Oct. 14, 2024

	2025 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	67	409	340	--	--	816
HCF	4	173	351	271	5	8	812
WCF	17	148	--	--	--	--	165 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**
KCF	23	62	1	--	--	--	86 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated Nov. 17, 2025

	2026 Hawaii Male Prison Security Classifications						
Male Prison	*Community*	*Minimum*	*Medium*	*Close*	*Maximum*	*Unclassified*	**Total Population**
AZSC	--	40	396	362	--		798
MSTC	--	--	13	25	--	--	38–NEW CONTRACTED FACILITY
HCF	1	125	357	229	7	16	735
WCF	27	161	--	--	--	--	188
KCF	19	48	--	--	--	--	67 - **DECREASE FROM 2023**

Source: Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Roster, Dated August 31, 2026

The above charts highlight that since 2023, between 160–260 people classified as *minimum custody or below* have remained in Halawa or Saguaro. Meanwhile, Waiawa's population dropped from 181 (2023) to 136 (2024) to 165 (2025). In recent months, Waiawa's population has increased to 188. Kulani's population dropped from 85 (2023) to 78 (2024) to 86 (2025) and 71 (2026). The Commission believes that this is not a year-by-year fluctuation, but a sustained pattern.

The Commission will continue tracking the population figures for the new CoreCivic contracted facility: Tallahatchie County Correctional Facility, Mississippi (MSTC). **The Commission was not formally notified by the Department of its intention to expand its usage of contracted facilities under CoreCivic.** This is a developing issue and the second HCSOC monthly report to track statistics of this new facility.

What the Commission Has Recommended (and Why)

Since 2023, the Commission has recommended transferring eligible minimum custody individuals from Halawa and Saguaro and fully utilizing Kulani and Waiawa. This recommendation aligns custody level with actual risk, maximizes rehabilitative impact, improves reentry outcomes, and uses state facilities as intended. However, the

recommendation has **not been implemented**. The same underutilization continues into 2026.

Although the Commission understands that not all Minimums will be eligible to be in a Minimum facility (based on factors such as finishing programming, waiting for and passing medical clearance, pending misconduct adjudication, etc.), the Commission is still concerned regarding the high number of lower-level classifications in higher level facilities. Leaving minimum custody facilities 50% underused while eligible individuals sit in higher custody settings undermines rehabilitation, public safety, and responsible stewardship of state resources. The Commission will continue to report on this issue until it has been appropriately addressed.

Past Meetings

Monthly Commission Meeting

On Thursday, October 8, 2026, the Commission hosted its monthly public meeting. All past meeting agendas, video recordings, meeting minutes, and testimonies can be found on our website here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/2026-meetings. All meetings are live streamed on our Facebook and YouTube channel.

Expenses for the Preceding Month – October

Item	Cost	Qty	Total	Description
Operating Expenses			**$76.77**	
MEDICAL EXAMINER REPORT	$25.59	3	$76.77	AUTOPSY REPORT REQUEST
Inter-Island Travel			**$156.81**	
AIRFARE-RI	$156.81	1	$156.81	10/08 - ALASKA
Mainland Travel			**$2,459.72**	
AIRFARE-CMA	$785.80	1	$785.80	11/06 - UNITED
AIRFARE-MKP	$778.12	1	$778.12	11/06 - UNITED
ARIFARE-CMJ	$895.80	1	$895.80	11/05 - UNITED
Conferences			**$2,340.00**	
2026 NACOLE CONFERENCE - Louisville, KY	$585.00	4	$2,340.00	NACOLE REGISTRATION
		TOTAL	**$5,033.30**	

** All expenses reflect posted transactions procured*

General Office Information

Mailing Address: Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Website: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov

Submit Testimony: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/submit-testimony

Email: hcsoc@hawaii.gov

Social Media: YouTube
LinkedIn
Facebook
Instagram

Monthly Meetings

This report will be discussed at the monthly Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission meeting on November 19, 2026. The next monthly meeting is scheduled to occur on December 4, 2026, at the Hawai‘i Community College, 1175 Manono Street, Room: 388-101, Hilo, Hawaii, 96720, or online via teleconference. More information can be found on the Commission’s webpage here: https://hcsoc.hawaii.gov/information.