

# Future of the Oahu Community Correctional Center

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## Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) envisions a future when all its facilities provide safe, secure, healthy, and humane environments for offenders and staff. A future based on better understanding the differing needs of offender populations, using therapeutic rather than punitive management techniques, ensuring racial equity, and by promoting positive change so that fewer individuals are incarcerated in Hawaii. However, aged and obsolete correctional facilities have undermined DCR's ability to deliver such a vision and improving some facilities and replacing others are high priorities. Chief among those priorities is development of a new Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) at the Animal Quarantine Station (AQS) in Aiea. Assisting DCR with OCCC planning and development is the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) and a team of experts and advisors (the "OCCC Team").

As with its predecessor, the DCR carries out orders from the state courts to confine individuals for a set period of time utilizing jails and prisons located within Hawaii, at the Federal Detention Center in Honolulu, and in private contracted facilities on the mainland. Jails, known in Hawaii as Community Correctional Centers (CCCs), are located on the islands of Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and Oahu and house pre-trial detainees, misdemeanor offenders, and others with a sentence of one year or less. CCCs also provide a pre-release transition function for prison inmates who reach less than a year until their scheduled release. While some offenders will remain confined for life, over 95 percent will serve their sentences and be released to the community.

## New Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua Kalaima a Ho'oponopono Ola)

During the 2022 session, the Legislature adopted and then Governor David Ige signed House Bill 2171 (Act 278) which set a goal of enhancing state corrections and law enforcement services. The Legislature and Governor Ige recognized that the goals and functions of law enforcement and corrections are different and distinct and should be separated among two agencies.

In accordance with the legislation, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) was established on January 1, 2024, with a focus of enhancing the capabilities of adult corrections, rehabilitation programs, and reentry services for the state's inmate populations. As the DCR, all agency personnel and resources will now be dedicated towards rehabilitative services. According to DCR Director Tommy Johnson, "We are responsible for providing educational opportunities, job training, and programs to help those in our custody successfully be reintegrated back into our community and end the cycle of reincarceration for the inmates and stop generational incarceration." With the new agency come a new mission, vision, values, goals, and responsibilities as described below:



**DCR Director Tommy Johnson**

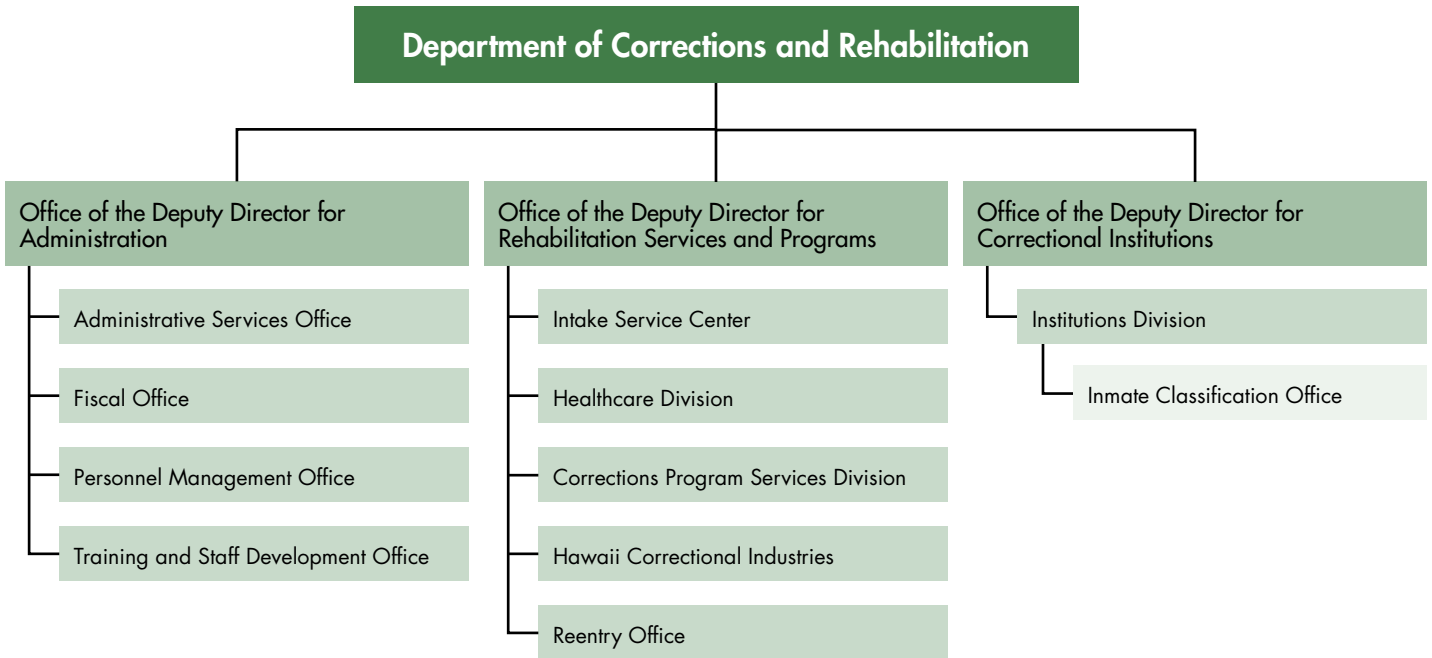
**DCR Mission** - Provide a secure correctional environment for comprehensive rehabilitative, holistic and wraparound re-entry services, including culturally based approaches, to persons sentenced to our custody and care with professionalism, integrity, respect, and fairness. Our goal is to reduce recidivism and enhance the safety and security of our communities.

**DCR Vision** - Transform Hawaii's unified correctional system, which has been historically perceived as a punitive model, into a rehabilitative, restorative, and reentry focused system, that reduces recidivism and promotes safer communities.

**DCR Values** - Rehabilitative sustainability through evidence-based programs, including culturally based approaches, to rebuild and restore lives and the community. Transparency and accountability will remain the hallmark of DCR to inspire trust in its employees, from those in our custody and care, and the community being served.

**DCR Goals** - To protect members of the community and their property from victimization, caused through criminal actions, by managing secure institutions to detain individuals ordered into our custody and care and provide a safe and humane correctional setting for employees and offenders. Also, to provide rehabilitative, holistic and reach-in wraparound re-entry services to reduce recidivism and achieve better outcomes for offenders. To reach these goals, the DCR will coordinate legislation as necessary to collaborate with community and cultural organizations and where appropriate, to compensate victims of crime.

**DCR Responsibilities** - Over 95% of those who enter Hawaii’s correctional facilities will eventually be released. Most have challenging backgrounds, but they all have great potential. DCR will strive to make the best use of the time we have with them and to see the possibilities for their lives. At first, these individuals may not see in themselves what we can see, but our hope is that each one makes that pivotal course correction, begins to turn their life around, and be ready to seize every opportunity to lift themselves to a new place, rejoin their families, and start their lives afresh. That’s why we assess each individual in our care, devise personalized plans, and provide holistic support services, all to ensure a successful re-entry into the community. We offer a spectrum of services and opportunities, and with ongoing support from the state, we can continue to invest in their lives. Better physical facilities, expanded programs, and additional supportive services are all important to create an optimal environment to help them flourish. The following chart depicts the organization of the new DCR.



## New Department of Law Enforcement



The Legislature also realized that law enforcement services in Hawaii could be provided more effectively by consolidating all state law enforcement responsibilities from across multiple departments and agencies under a single new entity, the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE). DLE includes the former Department of Public Safety’s Law Enforcement Division and Internal Affairs Office; the Department of Transportation’s criminal law enforcement functions; the Department of the Attorney General’s Criminal Investigative Division and other non-statutorily mandated investigative functions; and the Department of Defense’s Office of Homeland Security and the Hawaii State Fusion Center.

# Hawaii Legislature Supporting Relocation of Kauai CCC

DCR operates the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC) located along the Kuhio Highway, in Lihue. KCCC acts as the local detention center for the Fifth Circuit Court, housing male and female inmates on pretrial, sentenced, and community release status. In addition to its jail functions, KCCC offers education, substance abuse treatment, religious counseling, cultural arts, and work furlough programs.

Established in 1977 with 16 beds, KCCC currently has an operational capacity of 135 beds. Much of the additional bed space came in the form of temporary dormitory structures that were used by displaced residents of Hurricane Iniki and are still being used for correctional housing. The original design and incremental additions made since 1977 have resulted in a patchwork of obsolete buildings that are inefficient and costly to operate. In addition to persistent crowding, the DCR's 10-Year Corrections Master Plan (1991) and 10-Year Corrections Master Plan Update (2003) found all buildings are in need replacement and/or major renovation or repair.

The role and mission of KCCC is an important one, providing a county-based jail, community corrections and offender reintegration, which needs to continue on Kauai. However, KCCC is located in area that is subjected to regular flooding which at times has encompassed the entire property. In addition, the Hawaii Department of Transportation is planning improvements to the Kuhio Highway that require a large portion of the KCCC property. Further compounding conditions is KCCC's location within the Extreme Tsunami Evacuation Zone which requires evacuation following an extreme tsunami warning.



**Kauai Community Correctional Center**

DCR has long sought to replace KCCC with a modern facility designed and built to contemporary standards and in a location more suited to its long-term functioning. With that, the Legislature appropriated \$3 million in FY 2023-2024 and additional \$2 million in FY 2024-2025 (Act 164, SLH 2023) to begin planning for the eventual relocation and development of a new KCCC.

Among DCR's objectives for a new KCCC would be to provide adequate space and improved living conditions for male and female offenders; create an environment where the focus can be on better preparing inmates for successful reintegration into the community and reduce recidivism; provide a safer and more efficient work environment for corrections staff; and enhance opportunities for addressing inmates with special needs. A new KCCC will also allow the DCR to uphold justice and public safety, meet the needs of current and future jail populations, and provide for the continued safety and security of inmates, staff and island communities.





**Representative views of KCCC**



## Improvements Continue at Women's CCC

Progress continues at constructing a new Administration Building, Housing Unit, and Visitation/Intake Building the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). Once completed, the women held at OCCC will be relocated to WCCC which will also perform intake for all women. Doing so will also make available an entire housing module at OCCC.



**Representative views of construction progress at WCCC**

**Renderings by CGL**



**Photo credit: Rider Levett Bucknall, December 2023**



*Photo credit: Rider Levett Bucknall, December 2023*

## We Want to Hear From You

DCR continually seeks input from community leaders and members about plans for the new OCCC and in response OCCC team representatives attend meetings of the Aiea Neighborhood Board #20, the Aiea Community Association, and the Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission (HCSOC) in addition to engaging with state and local officials, the media, and others. In addition reporting on progress and accomplishments in advancing plans for the new OCCC, these forums are opportunities for the OCCC Team to seek input, advice and guidance from officials, stakeholders and the public. Contact the City and County of Honolulu, Neighborhood Commission Office for information about how to participate at an upcoming Aiea Neighborhood Board meeting (Tel: 808-768-3710/email: [nco@honolulu.gov](mailto:nco@honolulu.gov)); do the same for information about upcoming meeting of the Aiea Community Association and how to participate (<http://www.aieacommunity.org>).

Members of the OCCC team also attend monthly meetings of the HCSOC which was established by the Legislature to facilitate a transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system model. Contact the Commission's Coordinator, Christin M. Johnson ([christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov](mailto:christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov)) for information about how to participate at an upcoming HCSOC meeting.

In addition to distributing OCCC Newsletters to over 1,500 elected and appointed officials, government agencies, media outlets, volunteer groups, and members of the public among others, DCR maintains the OCCC Future Plans a website dedicated to planning the new OCCC. This website provides access to project-related materials, documents outreach efforts, and facilitates the public's ability to offer ideas and suggestions or ask questions: <https://dcr.hawaii.gov>. Interested parties can also request to receive (via email) future announcements and notifications by submitting your contact information (name, affiliation if any, and email address) to: [robert.nardi@wsp.com](mailto:robert.nardi@wsp.com).



**Celebrating Indigenous People's Day in Hawaii**

## Upcoming Activities

The following activities are anticipated in the months ahead.

<b>January 2024</b>	<p>New Departments of Law Enforcement and Corrections and Rehabilitation begin operations.</p> <p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Neighborhood Board, Aiea Community Association, and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p>
<b>February 2024</b>	<p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Community Association and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p>
<b>March 2024</b>	<p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Community Association and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p>

## Join OCCC Email List

Add your name to the OCCC email list to receive announcements, newsletters, and other project-related materials by sending your name, affiliation (if any), and email address to: [robert.nardi@wsp.com](mailto:robert.nardi@wsp.com).

## Interested in Learning More?

For more information, visit <https://dcr.hawaii.gov> or contact:

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