

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH HAWAII STATE
LEGISLATURE 2014**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF
ACT 222, PART VII, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2013**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division
December 2013**

INTERIM REPORT OF THE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE WORKING GROUP PURSUANT TO ACT 222, PART VII, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2013

Act 222, Part VII, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2013, establishes a homeless assistance working group in the Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify, plan, and implement housing options for homeless persons in local communities by December 31, 2013, that reflect shared responsibility for addressing homelessness in Hawaii.

The working group is tasked to:

- (1) Work within each local neighborhood in each county to identify various private and public properties whose owners are interested in partnering with the local neighborhood and government to provide land or structures that can be used to provide temporary homes for homeless persons, including people who are living in their motor vehicles;
- (2) Coordinate with the State's homeless programs office and continuum of care providers to match homeless persons in every community with appropriate care and housing;
- (3) Work with non-profit organizations, businesses, and government agencies that may be willing to offer their property for homeless persons living in their motor vehicles and coordinate voluntary participation and support to homeless persons;
- (4) Create, develop, and support the housing options within each local community; and
- (5) Communicate and coordinate with the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness on meeting their goals.

The working group is required to submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations, including the progress made to provide housing and support services, as appropriate, for homeless persons and any innovative temporary housing solutions.

The Homeless Assistance Working Group was convened and the meetings were facilitated by Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland. The Working Group defined its mission as finding temporary and permanent housing for as many people who are homeless by December 31, 2013, and create affordable housing prototypes for people.

The following are the strategies and activities undertaken by the Working Group to date.

Implementation Strategy

July 2013:

- Organize grassroots block captain and teams for each zip code area throughout the State. The block captains and team members in each community work with their community resources and people who are homeless to develop community-based plans to help people who are homeless in their areas. Block captains are caring individuals willing to serve as a facilitator of other members of the neighborhood who want to assist homeless providers in helping homeless people find temporary or permanent housing and supportive services, if appropriate.
- The Homeless Assistance Working Group will support the block captains and their teams to make connections with appropriate organizations and resources as they identify

the need for assistance.

- Housing options and prototype housing will be explored, such as shipping containers, the housing proposals from the University of Hawaii's School of Architecture students, agricultural partners, the Honolulu Community College construction trades students and faculty, Hawaiian and housing advocates interested in the Hawaiian kauhale concept, community and faith-based organizations initiatives, including but not limited to the Mustard Seed Foundation and Catholic Charities Housing Partnership, civic-minded property owners, non-profit and profit making housing organizations, etc.

August 2013:

- Block captains report on who will be serving on their team, what their initial strategy for their community will be, and any budgetary requirements they may have to implement their strategy.
- Community meeting places will be identified where social service, health, housing, and other support organizations can be available on a regular basis in each community. Exploring partnerships with already established food distribution sites like the Hawaii Food Bank and other organizations may be a logical list of sites to co-locate other service providers.
- Training of the block captains and team members on how to best carry out their roles in a safe and efficient manner were held on August 14, 2013 from 5:00pm-7:00pm in State Capitol Conference Room 329 and August 29, 2013 from 5:00pm-9:00pm in State Capitol Conference Room 329.
- Housing options and prototype housing proposals will be presented.
- Exploration of potential affordable housing sites by the State, City and community partners will take place.
- A budget to utilize the \$100,000 appropriated to the Working Group will be developed and worked on with staff from the Department of Human Services. This will be based on the presentations by the block captains and coordinators of the various housing option proposals.
- The DHS will determine the best funding mechanisms to fund the proposed budget and begin allocating the funds.

September 2013:

- Block captains and their teams work hand-in-hand with the homeless provider agencies, Lori Tshako and her staff from the State Homeless Programs Office, Colin Kippen from the Governor's Office and the Hawaii Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness and the Mayors and the departments of the various counties that have housing and homeless related responsibilities to help as many people who are homeless to obtain permanent housing.

October 2013 - December 2013:

- Block captains and housing options coordinators report on their progress.
- Homeless Assistance Working Group supports the block captains and housing options coordinators in their work

November 2013:

- Interim report to the Legislature is prepared and submitted to the Senate President and Speaker of the House.

December 2013:

- The Homeless Assistance Working Group assesses their progress in helping homeless people, determines if they want to continue their voluntary work or not, and submits their final report with recommendations to the Legislature.

Other strategies to reduce the number of people who are currently homeless or potentially would become homeless without prevention and early intervention efforts

1) Youth

- a) Help to identify potential homeless former foster youth and aging out foster youth who are interested in participating in the voluntary foster care extending to age 21 once the law is effective on July 1, 2014.
- b) Work with existing youth service organizations to support young people who are currently homeless.
- c) Continue to advocate for more housing units and independent living housing options for youth.
- d) Continue to design, train and implement a Safe Places for Youth Program in Hawaii.
- e) Continue to support the Office of Youth Services and Judiciary's work to establish a civil citation process and the use of \$400,000 to establish a youth assessment center to reduce criminalizing youth and truly obtaining help for them in addressing the circumstances that they are faced with.

2) Veterans

- a) Work with the Department of Defense and the Veteran's Administration, existing homeless providers, and community service organizations whose mission is to help veterans by identifying homeless veterans and other military members and assisting them to obtain permanent housing.
- b) Continue to support the federal government in their efforts to build more housing for active military members and veterans.

3) Elders

- a) Work with the existing homeless providers, senior housing management companies and community service organizations that support seniors to identify homeless elders and assist them in obtaining permanent housing.

b) Continue to advocate for more funding senior housing projects as well as intergenerational housing projects that will allow grandparents to care for grandchildren.

4) Persons with Mental Illness

a) Work with private homeless providers and the Departments of Health and Human Services to accelerate efforts that will provide more treatment and supportive living and employment options for persons with mental illness.

b) Prepare for the assisted community treatment law, Act 221, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, that will become effective on January 1, 2014 for private organizations and July 1, 2014 for the Department of Health to get better care for people with mental illness, many of whom are homeless due to their mental health condition.

c) Continue to support housing options for people with mental illness.

d) Continue to support the efforts of the Department of Human Services/Med-QUEST Division in their 1115 waiver request to add effective behavioral health services to the array of Medicaid covered services.

e) Continue to support the Department of Health's efforts to improve the overall mental health system of care in Hawaii.

f) Continue to support Housing First and Shelter Plus Care funding in the State Budget and Act 222, SLH 2013.

5) Persons with Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse Issues

a) Continue to support statewide funding for residential treatment and other effective substance abuse treatment programs allocated in the State Budget to the Department of Health as well as the use of the clean and sober funds allocated in Act 222.

b) Continue to support the statewide efforts of the Department of Human Services/Med-QUEST Division in their 1115 waiver request to add effective substance use disorder treatment, especially residential and intensive outpatient to the array of Medicaid covered services.

c) Support homeless people who are in clean and sober homes to eventually obtain permanent housing throughout the State.

6) Families

a) Work with child and family serving organizations, school principals, churches and other community service groups to assist families who are homeless.

b) Continue to support funding for affordable housing renovation and development, rental and for sale.

c) Continue to support rapid re-housing and shallow subsidy funding.

d) Continue to support the recently passed law that removes the asset limit for people on TANF and TAONF assistance, Act 18, SLH 2013, so that they can begin meaningfully saving money to afford housing options in the community, education, and employment training opportunities that are available.

e) Continue to support the recently passed law that expands the use of Hula Mae funding, including mortgage down payments.

f) Continue to support funding for community-based programs, like Family Promise,

Neighborhood Programs, Family Centers, Healthy Start, Partners in Care, and Neighbor Island continuum of care organizations, etc. in the State Budget.

g) Support the DHHL in their efforts to build more housing for native Hawaiian people.

h) Support the funding of the Rental Housing Trust Fund and the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund in the production of more affordable housing.

i) Support the funding of the HCDA for the production of more affordable housing.

j) Support the efforts described in SCR137, adopted by the 2013 Hawaii State Legislature, that urges the development of kauhale-style housing projects.

7) People with Other Health Issues (brain and other trauma, chronic illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure, developmental disabilities, deafness, blindness, physical disabilities)

a) Support primary health care centers and other health facilities and services to care for homeless people with health-related issues and work with adult residential care homes and other residential settings to care.

8) Native Hawaiians and Others

a) Support the recommendations of the SCR137 Working Group (Kauhale Model).

9) 100K Homes Campaign

a) Support the Partners in Care, 100K homes initiative to specifically address the most vulnerable population of homeless people in Waianae, Chinatown/Downtown and Waikiki areas.

10) Utilization of Properties across the State that have Brownfields-Related Issues

a) Support Federal, State, County and private sector initiatives to remediate contaminated parcels in areas ideal for affordable housing.

11) Develop Permanent System of Affordable Housing Construction that serves households of 60% of Area Median Income for Sale and Rental Housing Options

a) Support efforts of the Homeless Assistance Working Group, State, County, the UH and Community College System, unions and private sector partners to identify appropriate land and housing prototypes that fill an unmet need for housing for people with household incomes of 60% A M I or below in Hawaii.

Budget for the Homeless Assistance Working Group

1) Total Amount Allocated to the Homeless Assistance Working Group = \$100,000

2) Funds for the construction and demonstration of innovative temporary housing solutions as they relate to the working group's findings and recommendations.

Innovative Housing Prototypes

- 1) Honolulu Community College's Construction Management Program

A contract has been executed. (DHS-14-HPO-1046)

Location for Construction: To Be Determined

Coordinator: Norman T. Takeya, Assistant Professor

Construction Management: Honolulu Community College

874 Dillingham Boulevard Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-4598

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- 2 & 3) University of Hawaii's School of Architecture

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MOU's are being discussed and formulated

Location for Construction: To Be Determined

Coordinators:

MaRy Kim-Johnson, RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects)

Associate Professor and Director of Professional Studios

University of Hawaii/School of Architecture

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- 4) An RFP for construction is being proposed. A local architect with experience in designing innovative and affordable housing is working with the Homeless Assistance Working Group.

Location: To Be Determined

- 5) Location: To Be Determined