

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH
HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE
2016**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF
SECTION 346-7.5, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES,
ON THE SPOUSE AND CHILD ABUSE SPECIAL ACCOUNT**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Social Services Division
Child Welfare Services Branch
December 2015**

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I. Background

Act 232 of the Seventeenth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, 1994, established the Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account (SCASA) in the Department of Human Services (DHS), codified as Section 346-7.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Act 232 specified *"the proceeds of the account shall be reserved for use by the department of human services for staff programs and grants or purchases of service . . . that support or provide spouse or child abuse intervention or prevention as authorized by law."* The funds originally came from fees for marriage licenses.

Act 216 of the Nineteenth Legislature, 1997, increased DHS’s Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account by adding revenues from increased fees for certified copies of birth and death certificates and marriage licenses.

Act 177 of the Twenty-First Legislature, 2002, increased DHS's Spouse and Child Abuse Special Account by raising the funding ceiling from \$300,000 to \$450,000 to allow DHS to fund additional program needs. The ceiling was further raised to \$610,000 per Act 158, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2008.

The SCASA funds are administered by DHS Social Services Division, Child Welfare Services Branch (CWS). The Department is required to submit an annual report to the Legislature, providing an accounting of the receipts and expenditures from the account.

II. Budget for SFY 2015

SFY 2015	
A. Balance on 7/1/14	\$ 760,855
B. SFY 2015 REVENUE	
Fees for certified copies of health statistics records	\$ 346,258
Miscellaneous	\$ 34,117
Fees for non-business licenses, permits and marriage licenses	\$ 110,763
Total Revenue	\$ 491,138
Total Funds	\$ 1,251,993
C. SFY 2015 EXPENDITURES / ENCUMBERENCES	
1. Intensive Home-Based Services	\$ 265,908
2. Wrap Around Services	\$ 2,487
3. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel / CWS Management Leadership Team	\$ 85,098
4. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$ 22,658
D. Total SFY 2015 Expenditures:	\$ 376,151
Carry over to 7/1/15	\$ 875,842

III. Budget for SFY 2016

SFY 2016	
E. Balance on 7/1/15 (A + B - D)	\$ 875,842
F. Anticipated Revenue SFY 2016	\$ 450,000
Projected Total	\$ 1,325,842
G. PLANNED EXPENDITURES for SFY 2016	
1. Transitional Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors and Children	\$ 200,000
2. Intensive Home Based Services for Families	\$ 100,000
3. Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services	\$ 100,000
4. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors	\$ 200,000
5. Medically Fragile Infants & Toddlers in Foster Care	\$ 100,000
6. Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma Training	\$ 25,000
7. Hawaii Family Support Institute	\$ 25,000
8. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel Support	\$ 30,000
9. CWS Management Leadership Team Meetings	\$ 50,000
10. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$ 23,000
H. Total Planned Expenditures for SFY 2016	\$ 853,000
I. Estimated Balance 7/1/16 (E + F - H)	\$ 472,842

IV. Outcomes on Use of Funds for SFY 2015

1. Intensive Home Based Services

In February 2015, CWS began Intensive Home Based Services (IHBS) on Oahu and expanded the service to Hawaii Island in October 2015. IHBS are offered to families whose children would have entered foster care without the intervention. The specially-trained IHBS therapist works in the family home directly with the parents and children for approximately 10-15 hours per week for 4-6 weeks. Services include crisis intervention, hands-on discipline and parenting skills training, behavioral management, conflict resolution skill-building, and psychoeducation.

Since implementation, preliminary data are promising. Although the number of participating families in the IHBS program is small (23 families to date), approximately 90% of those families were able to keep their children at home with their parents; the children did not enter foster care.

2. Wrap Around Services

Wrap Around Services are provided to families with children in foster care. The children may be reunified in the family home, but the families need assistance and support to achieve this goal. The families involved in this program are engaged with multiple agencies to help serve their complex issues. For example, some parents struggle with stable housing, mental health issues, and/or substance use. Other families have children with behavioral challenges, physical and/or intellectual disabilities. Most of the children in these families are healing from physical and emotional trauma and have learning differences that are difficult to address. Wrap Around Services coordinates all services and collaborates with the providers and the family in coming up with creative ways to remove barriers to reunification. The Departments of Health, Education, Human Services, the Judiciary, service providers, and others come together to wrap the family in support.

As a result of Wrap Around Services in SFY 2015, two children in foster care were able to reunify with their families. Families expressed feeling profoundly supported by the Wrap Around Services process, more respected and more empowered than they had felt in other service encounters.

3. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel /CWS Management Leadership Team

The Department financially supported the Citizen Review Panel (CRP), required by the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). The purpose of the CRP is to evaluate the extent to which the State is fulfilling its child protection responsibilities by (1) examining the policies, procedures and practices of the State, and (2) reviewing specific cases, where appropriate. Funding provided airfare for neighbor island CPR members to attend bi-monthly meetings and participate in the National CRP Conference. This allowed the CRP to carry out its mandate of

examining CWS systems and making recommendations for improvements, in the form of an annual report.

Among other accomplishments, the CRP completed an evaluation of CWS' intake process. CWS implemented the CRP's recommendations which enhanced the accuracy of intake assessments.

These funds also support the CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) initiative which brings together CWS Section Administrators and Supervisors statewide, quarterly. At these meetings, CWS leadership: 1) identifies, discusses, and develops plans to enhance services to CWS children and families; 2) shares local strategies to reach desired casework outcomes, and reviews statewide and section data, and its implications for practice improvements; and 3) reviews changes in federal and State law, governing rules, and procedures, and the impact on CWS practice.

One important outcome of these MLT meetings is the CWS Supervisor Training Program. Ground work for the training program was laid out during MLT meetings of SFY 2015 and the training program began in SFY 2016. The CWS-tailored training program is divided into nine modules, which are trained over a 9-month period. Supervisor training topics include: strengths-based approach to supervision, crisis management, motivational interviewing, evidence-based practices, use of data, change management, communication styles and skills, and performance evaluation. CWS is optimistic that enhancing the skills of supervisors will result in increased monitoring of case work and improved outcomes for children by achieving permanency in less time. More responsive and supportive supervision will increase employee retention.

4. DAGS Special Fund Assessment

The plan for SFY 2015 ensured no delinquent payments for the Department of Accounting and General Services' (DAGS) Special Assessment Fee. This obligation was four years in arrears due to the State's financial crisis requiring DHS to prioritize the use of the SCASA fund for services to ensure the health and safety of child and spouse abuse victims. In SFY 2015, DHS paid \$22,657.96 to DAGS for the required Special Fund Assessment. With this payment, the Department is current with this obligation.

V. Planned Use of Funds for SFY 2016

1. Transitional Housing for Spouse Abuse Survivors and their Children

National statistics suggest that domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness. Escaping abusive situations means leaving the residence where the abuse is occurring, and sometimes victims are unable to find shelter through family, friends, or available community resources.

Approximately 50% of all women who are homeless report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness. Source: "*Pressing Issues Facing Families Who Are Homeless.*" The National Center on Family Homelessness. (2013)

Eighty-four percent of homeless women have experienced severe physical or sexual abuse at some point in their lives. Source: "*Responding to the Needs of Low Income and Homeless Women Who are Survivors of Family Violence.*" Journal of American Medical Women's Association.

On Oahu, 27% of the adults in shelters are homeless due to domestic violence. On the Neighbor Islands it is higher: 39% of adults are in shelters because of domestic violence. These statistics are just a fraction of the number of survivors who find themselves homeless and in shelters because they are escaping abusers. It does not account for the greater number of homeless survivors who are not in shelters but are living on the streets. Source: State of Hawaii Department of Human Services; Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division, Homeless Programs, *2015 Statewide Point-In-Time (PIT) Count*, April 2015.

The Department has provided emergency shelter and support services for victims of spouse abuse since 2010. However, there remains an unmet need for transitional housing services. In SFY 2015, approximately 72% of the 760 survivors in shelters statewide received housing advocacy services. Transitional housing services will provide a critical bridge from immediate safety toward increased skills and resources that promote self-sufficiency, economic security, stable housing, and the opportunity to break the cycle of violence.

Transitional housing services for domestic violence survivors will benefit Hawaii in numerous ways. When these survivors and their families are safe, healthy and independent, they are more able to properly attend to the needs of their children. CWS anticipates that this investment in transitional housing services will have a positive impact on both the entry and the re-entry rates of children into foster care, since stable and safe housing is a protective factor that will lower the risk of abuse or neglect of children.

2. Intensive Home-Based Services (IHBS) for Families

Please see Section IV. 2 above program description and last year's usage.

Given the initial success of IHBS, CWS is focused on continuing the services and potentially expand the eligibility criteria so that more families and children may benefit from these services.

3. Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services

Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services (CCSS) is a core service that CWS provides to families who have children in foster care. These services help the families

acquire the skills and information they need in order to have their children returned to their care. The array of services provided is broad and includes: assessment, individualized program planning, parenting education, crisis intervention, counseling, supervised visitation, budgeting, practical life skills enhancement, nutritional assistance, transportation, advocacy, resource development, family management skills development, and clinical therapy. In SFY 2015, 972 families received CCSS services statewide. Unfortunately, there are often waitlists for these crucial services. With more funding for these contracted services, waitlists will be reduced, families will receive the necessary services sooner, and children in foster care will be reunified with their parents at a faster rate.

4. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors

The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (2014) (PSTSFA), Public Law 113-183, requires Child Welfare Services in all states to provide support services to minor victims of sex trafficking. Unfortunately, no federal funds accompanied the PSTSFA. CWS plans to use these funds to offer counseling, advocacy and support to trafficked children throughout the State by trained and experienced professionals working with this specialized population.

These services are needed, as seven (7) trafficking victims were identified by Hawaii CWS staff within the first two months following their Sex Trafficking Awareness trainings held in August and September 2015. Without the trainings and supportive services, the trafficked minors would likely suffer significantly more emotional and physical trauma, as many would return to their traffickers.

5. Medically Fragile Infants & Toddlers in Foster Care

CWS plans to use funds to support specialized services for medically fragile infants and toddlers in foster care. The program works with birth parents and resource caregivers to transition the care of the infant or toddler to a more permanent setting. Specially-trained caregivers work with the child's doctors, teach and train birth parents or other caregivers the specialized care the child requires, and supports the parent/caregiver in daily care of the child.

Each year approximately 20 young children and their families benefit from this program. Without it, these children would remain in hospitals or other institutional settings decreasing the likelihood of returning to their family homes.

6. Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma Training

In collaboration with the Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma, Hawaii hosts this annual conference which features national and local experts presenting on a wide range of CWS-relevant topics, such as teen dating violence, commercial sexual exploitation of minors, evidence-based practices in child welfare, culturally-informed service-delivery, and the use of psychotropic medication with foster youth. CWS' contribution to the

conference funding also allows nearly 25% of CWS' staff to attend this learning opportunity. CWS' support to bring this conference to its staff and the community is essential to keep Hawaii at the forefront of development and research in child welfare practice. Because Hawaii is geographically isolated and CWS staff and community providers cannot easily attend mainland conferences, supporting this conference improves community knowledge and capacity in the community that would be otherwise be difficult to achieve. Increasing our staff's knowledge and experience will enable them to better serve our children and families.

7. Hawaii Family Support Institute

The Department plans to partner with the Hawaii Family Support Institute to work on a public awareness campaign and community call-to-action outreach effort regarding the prevention of child abuse and neglect and Hawaii's CWS' programs. The anticipated outcome is greater community involvement in child abuse prevention activities, and increased awareness and understanding of CWS' work.

8. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel Support

Please see Section IV.5 above for explanation of use and historical usage.

In SFY 2016, Hawaii's CRP plans to focus on the improving CWS' engagement of fathers and enhancing the frequency, quality, and documentation of CWS workers' monthly visits with children in foster care. Improved engagement of fathers will result in positive outcomes of child wellbeing and increased rate of reunification.

The CWS will consider the findings of the Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood's study "The State of Fathers in the State of Hawaii," presented in July 2015, in further developing CWS' model to engage fathers. See Lewin-Bizan, S., (2015). *The State of Fathers in the State of Hawai'i*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i, Center on the Family.

National research indicates that enhancing social workers' visits with children has innumerable positive benefits, including: reduced incidents of harm to children while they are in foster care; improved child wellbeing; decreased time to family reunification or adoption; increased identification and addressing of children's physical, emotional, academic, and health needs; and increased parent and sibling contact.

9. CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) Meetings

Please see Section IV.5 above for explanation of use and last year's usage.

One topic that CWS plans to focus on in MLT meetings in SFY 2016 is improving statewide performance on the standard national CWS data measures. These criteria delineate the three primary areas of focus in CWS: Safety, Permanency, and Wellbeing, into 18 measurable items. The planned effort and collaboration among the entire

statewide CWS leadership will improve practice and services, and benefit the children and families CWS serves.

10. DAGS Special Fund Assessment

Please see Section IV.6 above for explanation of use and historical usage.

In order to remain current with its fiscal obligation to the DAGS, DHS plans to pay \$23,000 to the DAGS for the required Special Fund Assessment.