

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-NINTH HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE 2018**

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

**Child Welfare Services Branch, Social Services Division  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
December 2017**

## 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 (HRS). 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 the amount allocated to SCASA adding revenues from increased fees for certified copies of birth and death certificates and marriage licenses.

Act 177 of the Twenty-First Legislature, 2002, further increased the amount allocated to SCASA 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). DHS is required to submit an annual report to the Legislature, providing an accounting of the receipts and expenditures from the account.

**II. State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017 BUDGET**

A. Balance on 7/1/16	\$315,041.61
B. SFY 2017 REVENUE	
Fees for certified copies of health statistics records	
Miscellaneous	
Fees for non-business licenses, permits and marriage licenses	
Subtotal Revenue	\$595,015.17
Total Revenue	\$910,056.78
C. SFY 2017 EXPENDITURES / ENCUMBERENCES	
1. Medically Fragile Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Catholic Charities Hawaii	\$56,347.04
2. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.	\$257,614.75
3. Transitional Housing for Spouse Abuse Survivors and their Children	\$80,000.00
4. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel	\$4,794.98
5. CWS Management Leadership Team	\$41,839.09
6. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide	\$23,832.96
7. CWS Continuous Quality Improvement	\$189,993.42
8. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center	\$88,088.55
9. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$34,000.00
Total Expenditures/Encumbrances	\$776,510.79
Carry-over to SFY 2018	\$133,545.99

**III. SFY 2018 BUDGET**

E. Balance on 7/1/17	\$133,546
F. SFY 2018 PROJECTED REVENUE Projected Revenue all sources	\$520,454
Total Projected Revenue	\$654,000
G. PLANNED EXPENDITURES for SFY 2018	
1. Medically Fragile Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Catholic Charities Hawaii	\$100,000
2. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.	\$100,000
3. Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services	\$100,000
4. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center	\$100,000
5. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide	\$40,000
6. Hawaii State Citizen’s Review Panel	\$40,000
7. CWS Management Leadership Team	\$40,000
8. DAGS Special Fund Assessment	\$34,000
9. Action Strategy: Framework Institute	\$15,000
10. DV Training and DV Fatality Review	\$25,000
11. Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC)	\$30,000
Total Planned Expenditures	\$624,000
Projected Balance	\$30,000

#### **IV. SFY 2017 Outcomes**

##### **1. Medically Fragile Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Catholic Charities Hawaii**

CWS used 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.

In SFY 2017, 18 young children and their families benefited from this program. Without it, these children would have remained in hospitals or other institutional settings, decreasing the likelihood of returning home to their family.

##### **2. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.**

Family Wrap Hawaii Services are provided to families with children in foster care. The children may be able to be reunified with their family, however, the family needs assistance and support to achieve this goal. The families involved in this program are engaged with multiple agencies which help serve their complex issues. Some parents struggle with stable housing, domestic violence, mental health issues, and/or substance use; others have children with behavioral challenges and physical and/or intellectual disabilities. Most of the children in these families are healing from physical and emotional trauma, and additionally have learning differences that are difficult to address. Family Wrap Hawaii Services brings all these agencies together to collaborate and overcome systemic barriers. It coordinates services with the providers and the family to develop creative ways to remove the barriers to reunification. CWS works with DOE, DOH, Family Court, service providers, and others to "wrap" the family in supportive services, strengthening the family and enabling the children to return to their family.

As a result of Family Wrap Hawaii Services in SFY 2017, 26 children in foster care were able to safely reunify with their families. Families expressed feeling profoundly supported by the Family Wrap Hawaii Services, and that the services felt more respectful and empowering than other services they had previously received.

##### **3. Transitional Housing for Spouse Abuse Survivors and their Children**

CWS used SCASA funds in SFY 2017 to help 13 families, who were survivors of domestic violence, with transitional housing needs. Without this support, these families may have been forced to live on the street or in a homeless shelter due to their lack of resources and support.

#### **4. Hawaii State Citizen Review Panel**

DHS used SCASA funds to financially support the Citizen Review Panel (CRP) which is 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 provides airfare for neighbor island CPR members to attend bi-monthly meetings and participate in the National CRP Conference. This allows the CRP to carry out its mandate of examining the Child Welfare Services (CWS) systems and making recommendations for improvements.

In SFY 2017, Hawaii's CRP focused on 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 for the child's wellbeing and increase the rate of reunification.

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.

#### **5. CWS Management Leadership Team**

SCASA funds were also used to fund the CWS Management Leadership Team (MLT) initiative which brings together CWS Section Administrators and Supervisors statewide, once a quarter. 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 local data and its implications for improving practice; and 3) reviews changes in federal and State law, governing rules, and procedures, and the impact on CWS practice.

In SFY 2017 the MLT focused on improving statewide performance on the standard national CWS data measures. These criteria delineate three primary areas within CWS – Safety, Permanency, and Wellbeing – into 18 measurable objectives. The planned effort and collaboration with the statewide CWS leadership will lead to improved practice and services which will ultimately benefit the children and families CWS serves.

## **6. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide**

In collaboration with the Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma, Hawaii hosts an 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. The contribution of CWS to the conference funding also allowed nearly 25% of CWS staff to attend this learning opportunity. The support of CWS 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, especially since CWS staff and community providers cannot easily attend mainland conferences. Increasing our staff's knowledge and experience enables them to better serve our children and families.

## **7. CWS Continuous Quality Improvement**

In order for CWS to ensure the quality of its services to families, and continue to keep children safe, CWS contracts with the University of Hawaii, Maui College to run statewide quality improvement activities. In SFY 2017, this project completed a statewide case review of 99 sampled cases, in addition to seven targeted reviews on case management issues, such as potential causes for delays in adoption and the consistency of criminal background checks for resource caregivers. The data from these reviews has proven invaluable as CWS works to improve its practices.

## **8. Sex Trafficking Services to Minors – Susannah Wesley Community Center**

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

These contracted services supported 22 trafficking victims in SFY 2017. Without these supportive services, the trafficked individuals would likely suffer significantly more emotional and physical trauma, as many would return to their traffickers.

## **9. DAGS Special Fund Assessment**

DHS paid \$34,000 to the Department of Accounting and General Accounting for the Special Fund Assessment as required by statute.

## **V. Planned Use of Funds for SFY 2018**

### **1. Medically Fragile Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Catholic Charities Hawaii**

Please see Section IV.1 above for program description. In SFY 2018, CWS plans to serve approximately 20 infants and toddlers and their families.

### **2. Family Wrap Hawaii – EPIC `Ohana, Inc.**

Please see Section IV.2 above for program description. In SFY 2018, CWS plans to serve an additional 30 children.

### **3. Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services**

Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services 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. 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 – Susannah Wesley Community Center**

Please see Section IV.8 above for program description. CWS plans to serve approximately 25 minor trafficking victims through this contracted service in SFY 2018.

### **5. Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Training Statewide**

Please see Section IV.6 above for program description. CWS plans to continue to contribute to the funding of this annual conference, including the attendance of a significant portion of CWS direct-service staff.

### **6. Hawaii State Citizen's Review Panel**

Please see Section IV.4 above for program description. DHS plans to continue its federal obligation to fund this Citizen's Review Panel.

In SFY 2018, the Citizen's Review Panel plans to embark on public awareness campaigns on the issues of minor sex trafficking and substance-exposed children.



## **7. CWS Management Leadership Team**

Please see Section IV.5 above which outlines the purpose of CWS Management Leadership Team. In SFY 2018, CWS continues its work in its Management Leadership Team of focusing on national measures and standards as CWS is entering its third federally-mandated Program Improvement Plan, based on a thorough statewide assessment of cases and systemic factors.

## **8. DAGS Special Fund Assessment**

In order to remain current with its fiscal obligation to the DAGS, DHS plans to pay \$34,000 to the DAGS for the required Special Fund Assessment.

## **9. Action Strategy: FrameWorks Institute**

DHS is currently working on a private public partnership to develop a strategic action plan and public outreach campaign to end family violence in order to best serve the community and support our staff. The FrameWorks Institute has expertise in this area and will provide strategic guidance and professional growth to the Branch and community providers.

## **10. DV Training and DV Fatality Review**

In SFY 2018, CWS is collaborating with other agencies and community providers to develop and implement a statewide training on working with families who are experiencing domestic violence. Approximately 20% - 30% of the families involved in child welfare are also struggling with domestic violence.

## **11. Hawaii Interagency State Youth Network of Care (HISYNC)**

CWS is part of a statewide multidisciplinary group of professionals, largely from other State agencies, who work with children and their families. This group is working to break down systemic barriers so that collaboration across agencies occurs smoothly. CWS and the other member agencies contribute funds to this collaborative in order to ensure its continuation and to help families with needed services.