



HAWAII STATE - COMMISSION ON FATHERHOOD (HS-COF)

MEETING AGENDA

Friday, September 20, 2024

Time: 10:00 pm



Location: Queen Liliuokalani Building, 1390 Miller St, Conference Room **2F**, Honolulu

Virtual access to meeting via **Zoom** - Meeting ID #**876 5720 3038** / Password: **Fathers**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87657203038?pwd=MIZOejU3VS9iRWVwNG1ZRWhLM1ZpQT09>

Zoom waiting room will be open 5-15 minutes prior to meeting start time.

Call to Order <Hit Record>

MISSION Statement

[From [Chapter 577E](#), Hawaii Revised Statutes] **The mission of the Hawaii State - Commission on Fatherhood (HS-COF) is to promote healthy family relationships by emphasizing the importance of fathers in the lives of their children. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to state agencies and makes recommendations on programs, services, contracts, policies and laws relating to children and families.**

I. Introductions and Roll Call

(per [Haw. Rev. Stat §92-3.7\(a\)](#), state name of anyone present at nonpublic location)

- a. Chair – Introductory Comments and Conduct Reminder
- b. Fatherhood Commissioners (voting members, by seniority)
 - i. Alan Sunio (Hawai'i Coalition for Dads)
 - ii. Allen Cardines (O'ahu)
 - iii. Brian Alston (Kauai)
 - iv. Marty Oliphant, Vice Chair (O'ahu)
- c. Ex-Officio(s) or their designees (non-voting members)
 - i. Director of Human Services
 - ii. Superintendent of Education
 - iii. Director of Health
 - iv. Attorney General
 - v. Director of Public Safety
 - vi. Executive Director Office of Youth Services
- d. Attorney General's office Sunshine Law monitors
- e. Guests

II. Community shares or concerns:

- a. Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
Public comments must address items listed on the published agenda

III. Member Updates

- a. Community shares or concerns - Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
- b. Commissioners Updates
 - i. Allen Cardines – Recent Violence on Waianae Coast
- c. Ex-officio Updates
 - i. Director of Health
 - ii. Office of Youth Services

IV. Ongoing Business and Updates

- a. Community shares or concerns - Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
- b. Commissioner position update
- c. 0.5 FTE Admin Position update
- d. Periodic Newsletter – pending admin hire

V. Current Fiscal Year Initiatives (Vote)

- a. Strategic Plan and objectives for current 2024-2025 fiscal year (all Commissioner discussion)
 - i. Commissioner Alston
- b. Annual Awards – General discussion for current fiscal year
 - i. Aloha Father of the Year Awards
 - ii. Parent-Friendly Business of the Year Award
 - iii. Sponsorship Awards
- c. Outreach Events
 - i. Aloha Week Parade (September 28, 2024)
 - ii. Children and Youth Day (October 2024)
 - iii. Fatherhood Commission Luncheon
- d. Budget Review
 - i. Prior Fiscal Year – Waiting for final budget office determinations
 - ii. New Fiscal year – on hold pending new Commissioners
- e. Officer nominations and elections – on hold pending new Commissioners

VI. Legislative Update

- a. Community shares or concerns - Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
- b. [Act 156 Task Force on Parentage Laws](#)
 - i. Update on status of Task Force by Commissioner Esmond

VII. Professional Development

- a. Community shares or concerns - Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
- b. Opportunities – discussion and brainstorming

VIII. Upcoming Meetings (generally 3rd Friday each month 10:00)

- a. Community shares or concerns - Public Testimony (allow 1 minute)
- b. Next Meetings
 - i. October 18, 2024
 - ii. November 15, 2024
 - iii. December 20, 2024

IX. Conclusion (Vote)

- a. Final Thoughts
- b. Vote to Adjourn

<Stop Recording>

ATTACHMENTS (Agenda item indicated):

V.a 2024-2025 Strategic Plan (draft)

If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, contact the Commission at fatherhoodcommission.hi@gmail.com (or current Chair, Jeff Esmond, at 808-550-0080) as soon as possible. Requests made as early as possible have a greater likelihood of being fulfilled. Upon request, this notice is available in alternate/accessible formats. Testimony can be submitted via e-mail to fatherhoodcommission.hi@gmail.com marked TESTIMONY in the title, or mailed to Hawaii State – Commission on Fatherhood, c/o DHS – Office of Fiscal Management, 1390 Miller Street, Honolulu, HI 96813. Captioning may be available with advanced request.

Meeting Conduct Agreement & reminder – please act appropriately, contribute and respect everyone.

Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood (COF)

2024-2025 Strategic Plan (DRAFT)

Executive Summary

The **2024-2025 Strategic Plan for the Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood (COF)** outlines an ambitious yet practical approach to addressing the challenges fathers face across the state of Hawaii. This strategic plan was designed with a deep understanding of the multifaceted roles that fathers play in the family unit and the broader community. By focusing on key areas such as education, mental health, and economic stability, the plan aims to provide fathers with the necessary tools to thrive in their roles. Recognizing that fathers play a pivotal role in the well-being of children, families, and society, this plan is rooted in culturally relevant and evidence-based practices to create a lasting impact.

COF has considered the diverse cultural landscape of Hawaii, where fathers from various backgrounds face unique challenges that require tailored solutions. The Commission acknowledges that Hawaii's high cost of living, economic pressures, and cultural diversity often place additional burdens on fathers, making it harder for them to be fully engaged in their children's lives. Therefore, the plan includes actionable solutions that are not only sensitive to these challenges but also practical in their application. By sharing programs and resources designed to address these specific needs, COF seeks to promote the overall health and wellness of fathers, their families, and their communities.

Health and wellness lie at the heart of the Commission's vision for fatherhood in Hawaii. This holistic understanding of fatherhood encompasses physical, emotional, mental, financial and spiritual well-being, viewing these dimensions as integral to a father's ability to fulfill his responsibilities effectively. The strategic plan emphasizes the need for fathers to be equipped with the knowledge and resources that will allow them to thrive as caregivers, role models, and community leaders.

Furthermore, the COF recognizes that fostering an environment where fathers are celebrated and supported is essential to achieving long-term social stability and prosperity across the state.

Collaboration between various stakeholders—including government agencies, nonprofits, private-sector partners, and community groups—is identified as a critical factor in the success of this strategic plan. COF emphasizes the importance of pooling resources, knowledge, and expertise to create comprehensive support systems that address the unique challenges fathers face. By working together, these stakeholders can maximize the

impact of initiatives that promote fatherhood, ensuring that programs are culturally competent and responsive to Hawaii's specific socio-economic realities.

Finally, the strategic plan is designed with sustainability in mind. While the immediate objectives focus on short-term (1-3 years) solutions to improve fatherhood engagement, the plan may also include long-term goals (5-10 years) that aim to create systemic and lasting changes. These goals may include policy advocacy for parental leave, equitable family court treatment, and improved mental health support for fathers. COF's broader vision is to cultivate a societal environment where fatherhood is not just supported but actively celebrated, fostering positive change for generations to come.

Vision and Mission

The vision of the **Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood (COF)** is to cultivate a society in which fatherhood is recognized as essential to the nurturing and development of children, the stability of families, and the overall well-being of communities. COF envisions a future where fathers are empowered to be actively engaged in their children's lives, supported by a societal structure that values their contributions. This vision reflects an understanding of the critical role that fathers play in shaping not only their families but also the broader community by raising responsible, confident, and emotionally healthy children.

Aligned with this vision, COF's mission focuses on supporting fathers in their diverse roles—whether as caregivers, financial providers, or emotional anchors within their families.

COF aims to empower fathers with the resources, knowledge, and tools necessary to navigate the challenges they face at various stages of parenthood. The Commission also advocates for a societal shift that recognizes fatherhood as equally important as motherhood, fostering a culture where fathers are valued and encouraged to be fully present in their children's lives.

Education is a cornerstone of COF's mission. By offering workshops, seminars, and online resources, COF aims to equip fathers with parenting skills, financial literacy, and knowledge about physical and mental health. These educational resources are designed to be accessible and relevant to fathers from all walks of life, recognizing the unique challenges that fathers from diverse cultural backgrounds may face in Hawaii. Culturally tailored programs that address the needs of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and immigrant fathers are an integral part of this mission, ensuring that no community is left behind.

Policy advocacy is another critical aspect of COF's mission. The Commission is committed to advocating for policies that support father involvement in parenting, including parental

leave, workplace flexibility, and reforms in family law that promote equitable treatment of fathers.

These policy changes are essential to creating an environment where fathers are empowered to participate fully in their children's lives. COF collaborates with lawmakers, advocacy groups, and community leaders to influence policy decisions that benefit fathers, families, and communities across Hawaii.

At the heart of COF's mission is the belief that fathers play a crucial role in the overall health and prosperity of society. By fostering a supportive environment for fathers—one that includes educational resources, legal advocacy, and community engagement—COF seeks to create lasting change. Fathers who are engaged and supported contribute to the well-being of their children, which in turn strengthens families and communities. The success of this mission depends on a collaborative effort that brings together all sectors of society to recognize and celebrate the vital role fathers play.

Goals and Strategic Priorities (1-3 Year Plan)

1. Promote Healthy Families

Promoting healthy family dynamics is a top priority for the Hawaii Commission on Fatherhood.

Research has consistently shown that children who grow up with engaged and supportive fathers are more likely to succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. To support this, COF will focus on empowering fathers with the skills and resources they need to foster strong, positive relationships with their children. The Commission will share information on educational workshops that provide fathers with practical parenting skills, such as effective communication, conflict resolution, and emotional bonding.

Public awareness campaigns can play a significant role in challenging traditional stereotypes of fatherhood. These campaigns can focus on highlighting the positive impact that active father involvement has on children's development. By using social media, local media outlets, and community events, COF aims to reach a broad audience and foster a cultural shift in how society views fatherhood. These efforts may be supplemented by supporting organized events, such as Father's Day celebrations, that recognize and celebrate the contributions of fathers in their communities.

COF is committed to participating in local support networks for fathers across Hawaii. These networks will provide fathers with a platform to share their experiences, seek advice, and access resources.

The support networks will focus on building a community of fathers who can rely on one another for emotional and practical support, helping to reduce feelings of isolation that some fathers may experience. By participating in these spaces for connection, COF aims to promote not only the well-being of fathers but also the overall stability of their families.

Timeline:

Year 1: Identify and support educational resources, fatherhood awareness campaigns, and support networks.

Year 2: Expand the reach of educational workshops and public campaigns, increase fatherhood support networks, and encourage community engagement events.

Year 3: Evaluate the impact of these initiatives, refine reach based on feedback, and continue to expand outreach to underserved communities.

KPI Monitoring:

Track the number of fathers attending workshops and support groups.

Measure public awareness campaign reach through social media engagement and surveys.

Collect feedback on the effectiveness of support networks from organizations and their participants.

2. Support Fathers as Caregivers and Role Models

A central goal of COF is to support fathers in their diverse roles, providing them with the resources they need to be effective caregivers and role models for their children. COF recognizes that fathers often face unique challenges, such as navigating legal systems, dealing with mental health issues, or balancing work and family life. To address these challenges, the Commission may support a range of programs and services that are tailored to fathers at different stages of their parenting journey.

Legal support services may be made available to help fathers navigate issues such as custody disputes, child support, and family court processes. These services are especially crucial for fathers who may feel disadvantaged or overwhelmed by the complexities of the legal system.

COF may share information on legal experts to ensure that fathers have access to the information and representation they need to advocate for their rights and responsibilities.

Mental health support is another key area of focus for COF. Fathers often face significant emotional and psychological pressures, and the stigma around seeking mental health

support can prevent many from accessing the help they need. The Commission will collaborate with mental health professionals to share services for counseling and support services that are specifically tailored to fathers, helping them address issues such as stress, depression, and anxiety. By sharing these services, COF aims to support fathers in their emotional well-being, which in turn strengthens their ability to be present and engaged in their children's lives.

In recognition of Hawaii's cultural diversity, COF may support programs that are culturally competent and responsive to the unique needs of different communities. Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and immigrant fathers often face distinct challenges that require tailored solutions. HCF will work with community organizations to develop programs that respect and honor cultural traditions while providing the support these fathers need to succeed. By fostering a culturally inclusive approach, COF aims to ensure that all fathers in Hawaii feel valued and supported.

Timeline:

Year 1: Collaborate with legal experts and mental health professionals to develop father-specific services.

Year 2: Expand access to legal and mental health services for fathers across the state.

Year 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of these services and programs based on feedback.

KPI Monitoring:

Increase in the number of fathers accessing legal and mental health services.

Feedback on service effectiveness from fathers who have used the resources.

Measurement of the reach and impact of culturally tailored programs.

Advocate for Supportive Policies

Advocating for policies that support fathers and families is a central component of COF's strategic plan. Fathers often face barriers in the workplace and legal system that make it difficult for them to be fully involved in their children's lives. To address this, COF will actively advocate for policies that promote work-life balance, equitable treatment in family courts, and increased parental leave options. These policy changes are crucial to creating an environment where fathers can thrive both personally and professionally.

One of the key policy areas COF will focus on is advocating for state-level parental leave policies. Currently, many fathers face significant challenges in balancing work and family

responsibilities, particularly in cases where workplace policies do not support paternity leave.

COF will work with policymakers and employers to push for policies that allow fathers to take time off work to care for their children without fear of job loss or financial insecurity. By advocating for parental leave, COF aims to ensure that fathers can be present during critical moments in their children's early development.

In addition to advocating for parental leave, COF will focus on promoting flexible workplace policies that allow fathers to balance their professional and family responsibilities. Many fathers face challenges in finding time to participate in their children's lives due to rigid work schedules.

COF will work with employers to encourage the adoption of father-friendly workplace practices, such as remote work options, flexible hours, and family-supportive benefits. These policies are essential for enabling fathers to be more involved in their children's upbringing while maintaining financial stability.

Family court reforms are another critical area of policy advocacy for COF. Many fathers report feeling disadvantaged in family court cases, particularly in custody disputes. COF will advocate for reforms that ensure equitable treatment of fathers in family courts, recognizing their role as active and engaged parents. This includes advocating for policies that prioritize shared custody arrangements and provide fathers with information to the legal support they need to navigate complex family court processes. By advocating for these changes, COF aims to create a legal system that supports fathers in fulfilling their parental responsibilities.

Timeline:

Year 1: Initiate discussions with policymakers on parental leave and flexible workplace policies.

Year 2: Work with lawmakers to draft and introduce legislation supporting these policies.

Year 3: Collaborate with employers to implement father-friendly workplace practices across Hawaii.

KPI Monitoring:

Track the number of employers adopting flexible work policies for fathers.

Monitor the progress of parental leave legislation at the state level.

Collect data on the outcomes of family court cases involving fathers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Commissioners:

Commissioners play a vital role in the execution of COF's strategic plan. Each Commissioner brings a unique set of skills and expertise to the table, contributing to the development, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives designed to support fathers in Hawaii.

Commissioners are responsible for participating in public awareness campaigns, identifying and sharing educational programs, and advocating for policy changes that support father involvement. They are also tasked with fostering partnerships with key stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community groups, to ensure that COF's initiatives are comprehensive and effective.

Each Commissioner may be assigned specific areas of focus, such as education, community engagement, or policy advocacy, to ensure that every aspect of the strategic plan is effectively implemented. Commissioners will also be responsible for monitoring the progress of these initiatives and providing regular updates to the Commission. This accountability ensures that the strategic plan remains on track and that any challenges or obstacles are promptly addressed.

Ex-officio Members:

Ex-officio members, including representatives from government agencies and community organizations, play an essential role in supporting COF's initiatives. These members provide valuable expertise and insights that help inform the development of programs and policies aimed at supporting fathers. Ex-officio members act as liaisons between the Commission and their respective organizations, facilitating collaboration and resource sharing. By working closely with Commissioners, ex-officio members ensure that COF's initiatives are aligned with broader community goals and that resources are effectively utilized.

Regular communication and collaboration between Commissioners and ex-officio members are critical to the success of the strategic plan. Joint task forces and working groups may be established to address specific challenges and opportunities, ensuring that all stakeholders are actively engaged in the implementation process. This collaborative approach will help COF maximize its impact and reach, providing fathers with the support they need to thrive.

Implementation and Monitoring – KPI's

The success of the **Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood (COF) 2024-2025 Strategic Plan** will depend on a robust implementation and monitoring framework. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed to track the progress of each initiative outlined in the plan, ensuring that the Commission remains on track to achieve its goals. These KPIs will provide quantifiable data on the effectiveness of COF's programs and policies, allowing for continuous evaluation and improvement.

To ensure accountability, regular progress reports should be generated based on the KPIs. These reports will be reviewed by Commissioners and ex-officio members during quarterly meetings, where the Commission will assess the impact of its initiatives and identify areas for improvement. This ongoing evaluation process is essential for maintaining the momentum of the strategic plan and ensuring that COF's efforts are yielding the desired outcomes.

One of the primary KPIs will be the number of fathers who participate in COF shared programs, such as educational workshops, support groups, and mental health services. By tracking participation rates, COF can assess the reach of these initiatives and identify any barriers that may be preventing fathers from accessing these resources. Another important KPI will be the public's awareness of the importance of fatherhood, which may be measured through surveys and social media engagement metrics.

In addition to tracking program participation and public awareness, COF will monitor the impact of its policy advocacy efforts. This will include tracking the number of employers who adopt father-friendly workplace policies, as well as the progress of parental leave legislation at the state level. By measuring these outcomes, COF can assess the effectiveness of its advocacy efforts and make necessary adjustments to its strategies.

Ultimately, the implementation and monitoring phase will ensure that COF's strategic plan is not just a vision but a reality. Through careful planning, regular evaluation, and a commitment to continuous improvement, COF will create lasting change for fathers, families, and communities across Hawaii.

Conclusion

The **Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood (COF) 2024-2025 Strategic Plan** is a comprehensive and action-oriented framework that aims to address the unique challenges fathers face across the state. By focusing on education, advocacy, and community engagement, COF is committed to empowering fathers with the resources they need to be effective caregivers and role models. The plan outlines clear goals and actionable steps that will be implemented over the next three years, with a focus on creating lasting, systemic change that benefits fathers, families, and communities.

Through the collaborative efforts of Commissioners, ex-officio members, government agencies, and community organizations, COF will work to create a society where fatherhood is recognized, supported, and celebrated. The plan's emphasis on cultural competence ensures that the diverse needs of Hawaii's fathers are met, while its focus on policy advocacy seeks to create a more equitable legal and workplace environment for fathers.

The implementation and monitoring framework will ensure that COF's initiatives are effective, measurable, and responsive to the needs of fathers across Hawaii. By setting clear KPIs and regularly evaluating progress, COF will continuously improve its programs and policies to better serve fathers. This commitment to continuous improvement will ensure that the positive impact of COF's work is felt for generations to come.

As COF moves forward with the implementation of its strategic plan, it calls upon all stakeholders—fathers, families, community leaders, and policymakers—to join in this vital effort. Together, we can create a future where every father in Hawaii has the support, resources, and opportunities they need to be fully engaged in their children's lives, fostering healthier families and stronger communities.