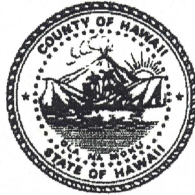


C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Rossella Guardascione
Chair

Tricia Buskirk
Vice-Chair

Dawn Hao-DeMotta
Vice-Chair

County of Hawai'i
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1301
Hilo, HI 96720
V/TT (808) 961-8366 • FAX (808) 935-1205

MEETING NOTICE

Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) Meeting

DATE: Day, May 14, 2026

TIME: 09:00 AM – 11:00 AM

IN-PERSON: County of Hawai'i – American Job Center Hawai'i
88 Kanoelehua Avenue, Suite A-204
American Job Center Conference Room
Hilo, HI 96720

ONLINE VIA ZOOM:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1657792488>

Meeting ID: 165 779 2488

PHONE:

+16699006833, +17193594580 (to join the meeting, enter the meeting ID, see above)

2026 MAY -7 AM 9:57
COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF HAWAII

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that in accordance with Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapters 91 and 92, the following matters will be considered by Hawai'i County's Workforce Development Board (HCWDB).

Meeting Access: This meeting will be conducted via interactive conference technology, with an in-person location available to the public. The HCWDB meeting can be viewed live on Zoom, attended in person at the location listed above, or accessed by telephone. HCWDB board members will participate either via the Zoom interactive video conference platform or in person.

NOTE: The in person location for this meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. If you require an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, please contact Addy Atalig at aatalig@hawaiicounty.gov or (808) 961-8366 as soon as possible, preferably no later than 9:00am, Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Requests made as early as possible will allow adequate time to fulfill your request. Upon request, this notice is available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

Oral Public Testimony: The public may provide oral testimony at the meeting by calling into the Zoom meeting, attending the meeting in person, or viewing the meeting online via the Zoom link. Pursuant to

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program: The meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons who need special accommodations for this meeting should call 961-8366 a minimum of 48 hours prior to the meeting.

HRS §92-3, interested people who want to provide oral testimony may do so either at the time the Board takes public statements on items on the agenda, or at the time the specific agenda item is called, prior to any Board action being taken. To register to testify, please contact Addy Atalig at aatalig@hawaiiicounty.gov, preferably no later than 9:00am on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Public attendees may present written testimony at the meeting without prior registration.

Written Public Testimony: The Board encourages the public to submit thoughts, comments, and input via written testimony. The Board requests that written testimony be submitted by 9:00am on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, to ensure timely delivery to the Board members prior to the meeting time. Testimony may be submitted by (1) mail to: County of Hawai'i, Department of Research and Development, 25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 or (2) by email to aatalig@hawaiiicounty.gov. Please submit separate testimony for each item. Copies will be distributed by the board secretary at the meeting. All oral and written testimony will be recorded publicly. Public attendees may present written testimony at the meeting without prior registration.

Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board

May 14, 2026

09:00AM – 11:00AM

In-Person and Virtual Public Meeting via Zoom

AGENDA

1. Call to order *Chair Rossella Guardascione*

2. Welcome and introductions

3. Call for public testimony or comments on agenda items

4. Approval of minutes for board meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2025

5. New Business

- a) Recommendation to the Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) for approval of extension for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs for Program Year 2024

b) **Executive Director's Update**

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, contracts, and dashboard for Program Year 2024 and 2025
- Youth employment and workforce needs:
 - DOE legislative funding for internships
 - Hele Imua Summer Youth Internship Program
 - WIOA Year-Round Community Work Experience (ages 14-24) through Goodwill and Alu Like
 - County of Hawai'i internship positions
 - Ongoing islandwide high school outreach and initiatives
- Participation by the Executive Director, WIOA Service Provider Staff, and One-Stop partners in recent resource and job fairs, hiring events, summits, and career expos. Those events include:
 - Spring Career Expo (Grades 5-8 islandwide)
 - Kea'au High School Spring College and Career Fair
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 - Job Challenge Academy Job Fair
 - Hawai'i Community College Day
 - 2026 Hawai'i Internship Summit
- Hawai'i Island Project Pilina 2026 Workforce Summit
- Eligible Training Provider List update on new and existing training programs – Hawaii Community College
- Resources and Opportunities for students and alumni - University of Hawai'i at Hilo

6. Partner Updates

- a) American Job Center Hawai'i
- b) WIOA Title I partner organizations
- c) Additional partner organizations

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- d) Open discussion from board members about their organization opportunities and resources, as well as workforce development challenges

7. Announcements

- a) Attendance of board members and term limits

8. Adjournment

NOTE on ICT: A meeting held by Interactive Conference Technology shall be automatically recessed for up to 30 minutes to restore communication when audiovisual communication cannot be maintained with all members participating in the meeting or with the "in person" location identified in this agenda. The meeting may reconvene when either audiovisual communication is restored, or audio-only communication is established after an unsuccessful attempt to restore audiovisual communication. If it is not possible to reconvene the meeting as provided in this subsection within 30 minutes after an interruption to communication, then the meeting shall be automatically terminated.

Notice to Lobbyists: If you are a lobbyist, you must register with the Hawaii County Clerk within five days of becoming a lobbyist [Article 15, Section 2-91.3(b), Hawaii County Code]. A lobbyist means, "any individual engaged for pay or other consideration who spends more than five hours in any month or \$25 in any six-month period for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action by communicating or urging others to communicate with public officials." [Article 15, Section 2-91.3(a) (6), Hawaii County Code] Registration forms and expenditure report documents are available at the Office of the County Clerk, 25 Aupuni Street, Room 1402, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720.

Board Packet: Pursuant to HRS §92-7.5, the board packet provided to members of this board for this meeting is available for public inspection forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting date, during regular business hours at 25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720.

1. Call to Order

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**3. Call for public testimony or
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**4. Approval of minutes for board
meeting on Wednesday, November 12,
2025**

Minutes of the Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) Meeting

Date: Wednesday, November 12th, 2025

Time: 9:07 am

Location: Interactive Conference Technology (Zoom/In-person combination)

Chair: Rossella Guardascione

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 am

New Board Members/Guests Welcomed:

- Jodie Sumera was welcomed as a new board member, replacing Brian Penner. Ms. Sumera is the Hawaii Island Division Chief with HGEA.
- Sylvia Wan (Corporation Counsel) was welcomed, offering legal guidance throughout the meeting.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

- Roll call was conducted. Board members were reminded that cameras must be on to constitute presence for the purposes of quorum.
- Attendees Present (10 members): Austen Drake, Dawn Hao-De Motta, Denise Pacheco, Jeracah Lawless, Jodie Sumera, Juanita Reyher-Colon, Les Estrella, Rossella Guardascione, Susan Kazama, Trisha Buskirk.
 - Attendees Excused: Chad Okinaka, David Deluz Jr, Kehau Costa.
 - Quorum Status: Quorum was achieved with 10 board members present.

3. Call for Public Comments on Agenda Items

- No public testimony or comments were presented for items on the agenda.

4. Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and discussed the minutes from the last meeting held on Thursday, March 27th.
 - Motion to Approve: Denise Pacheco.
 - Second: Juanita Reyher-Colon
 - Discussion: None noted.
 - Voting Procedure: Corporation Counsel (Sylvia) advised that because the item concerned minutes and was expected to be unanimous, the Board could take a verbal vote, adhering to Robert's Rules interpretations.
 - Vote Result: Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote ("I" by all in favor; no nays).

5. Introduction of Changemakers Community Economic Development Corporation (One-Stop Operator - OSO)

- Christian McAdams, Executive Director of Changemakers Community Economic Development Corporation, provided an introduction. Changemakers was selected as the one-stop shop operator (OSO) for the American Job Center Hawaii (AJCH).
 - Background: The organization was founded in 2021 with a focus on increasing economic equity and justice in Hawai'i through education programs.
 - Designation: Changemakers is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), which allows them to make loans. The OSO role marks a new focus on workforce development.
 - Implementation: Changemakers won the RFP and began work in early October.

6. New Business

- 6A. Recommendation for approval of extension for the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program for Program Year 2024
 - The item was presented by Denise Pacheco (Chair of the Oversight Committee).
 - Oversight Committee Review: The Committee met on June 12th, reviewed provider performance, monitoring evaluations, outreach efforts, and unanimously recommended approval for the extension of the adult, dislocated, and youth programs for the next year. Goodwill Industries provided specific reports detailing steps and strategies moving forward.
 - Sunshine Law/Robert's Rules Guidance (Action Deferred): Corporation Counsel (Sylvia) advised the Board that while the County had already renewed the contract with Goodwill (effective 7/1/25 for PY 24), the Board itself must vote on the recommendation on a separate day. This delay is required under Sunshine Law to ensure all members have sufficient time with the recommendations and make an informed decision. If the Board decides against approval, corrective actions and reasons must be provided.
- **6B. Executive Director's Update (Clinton Mercado)**
 - One-Stop Operator Status: The selection of Changemakers resolves a potential firewall violation by removing the County (R&D) from the operational role while still maintaining oversight, potentially making

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- 6B. Executive Director's Update (Clinton Mercado)
 - One-Stop Operator Status: The selection of Changemakers resolves a potential firewall violation by removing the County (R&D) from the operational role while still maintaining oversight, potentially making

the HCWDB the first in the state to have a non-government one-stop operator.

- WIOA Funding Update (PY 25: 7/1/26 - 6/30/27): Due to federal uncertainty, the initial allocation of \$1,229,687 was revised down to only 46%, totaling \$652,448. This leaves a shortfall of \$777,239.
- Fiscal Measures: The County proactively initiated a B-52 appropriation of \$1.4 million with the County Council to minimize contract delays when the rest of the funds are released.
- Program Outlook: Although money was returned in PY 23, the high demand for services in PY 24 is anticipated to cause the adult program to run into a negative balance soon. Goodwill's current funds extend through 6/30/26.
- County Hiring Policy: The Mayor supports removing the minimum one-year qualification requirement for many entry-level county jobs to allow Hawai'i County to provide this experience to local residents.
- Outreach: Staff has engaged in community events, including a youth job challenge academy, the Hilo senior resource fair (for kūpuna), the Hawaii Island Sustainability Fair, and the early childhood education fair.

7. Motion (Amended Agenda Item): A motion was proposed to amend the agenda to include an item tasking the Business and Engagement Committee with duties and issuing a call for new members.

- Motion to Amend: Denise Pacheco.
- Second to Amend: Juanita Reyher-Colon.
- Vote on Amendment: Passed unanimously by verbal vote ("Eyes have it").
 - Result: 10 to 0. Motion approved.
 - Volunteer: Trisha volunteered for the Business Engagement Committee.

8. Partner Updates

- 7A/B. American Job Center Hawaii (AJCH) Update (Jeracah Lawless)
 - Visitors: The AJCH recorded a total of 1,698 visitors during the previous two quarters (April through September).
 - Customer Complaint: The main complaint is that the center is difficult to locate because it is situated on the second floor. Staff is working to secure better, road-facing signage.
 - Technology: The AJCH recently upgraded its copper phone lines to a VOIP system.

- Industry Collaboration: Jodie Sumera volunteered to invite the HCWDB to attend the Big Island Labor Alliance meetings to discuss industry matters with union representatives.
- Updates from Additional Partners
 - Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Workforce Development Division (Denise Pacheco): Highlighted the successful Helmo program, which provided statewide summer internships at a livable wage (\$20 per hour). DLIR serves recent graduates (high school through college) with the goal of retaining them on island. The AJCH serves various populations, including kūpuna (older Americans), youth, under/unemployed, veterans, and justice-impacted individuals.
 - Economic Updates (Benson Medina, Director of Research and Development): The ongoing cesspool mitigation effort represents an estimated \$2 billion industry on the island (50,000 cesspools need mitigation) and requires training in trades like backhoe operation. International tourism trends suggest growing interest from Korea, with potential planning for a direct flight from Incheon, Seoul to Kona. Discussions are also underway with Southwest Airlines to pitch a non-stop daily flight from Hilo to Las Vegas. The aquaculture industry (with NELHA noted as the "Silicon Valley of aquaculture") shows high potential for workforce development. Film production has surged, with Netflix planning to film a series (Untamed) at Hawai'i National Park starting in February.
 - Goodwill Industries of Hawaii (Emily Lau, VP Mission Services): Announced that the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) clinic has received confirmation that its federal funding will continue for the following year, and put out a call for volunteers.

9. Adjournment

- Clinton Mercado offered thanks for the collective hard work throughout 2025 and wished everyone a joyous holiday season.

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b. Executive Director's Update

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WIOA FINANCIAL REPORT

Local Area: Hawaii County

Date: As of 05/11/2026

PY24	Expenditure	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY
Allocation	3/31/2026	3/31/2026	3/31/2026	Participants
Adult Program:	550,121.00	184,667.76	66%	254
DW Program:	252,020.00	127,414.75	49%	48
LAC*	140,931.00	90,574.80	36%	
Youth Program:	466,233.00	203,508.09	56%	92
Rapid Response				
TOTAL	1,409,305.00	803,139.60	57%	394

*Local Administrative Cost Pool

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