

**HAWAII COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATE REPORT
(August – November 2020) TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, November 12, 2020**

Please summarize the overall impact that the COVID pandemic has had on the operations of the WDB and American Job Center.

All HCWDB meetings have gone virtual and communication is provided in writing or phone calls.

The AJCH continues to service most of their clientele remotely. Programs collocated in the AJCH set up appointments for enrollments, support services as needed.

Adult and Dislocated Worker program case managers are working on the remote signature piece of HireNet to make virtual assistance easier for those who need assistance for enrollment or support services.

Workforce Development Division (WDD) are taking statewide Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant calls. The UI claimants are appreciative that someone is responsive to their calls and questions. HireNet virtual assistance for UI calls includes but is not limited to updating resumes, job searches are handled over the phone along with some data entry handled by AJCH support staff.

WDD also continues to provide basic career services for UI claimants and persons with disabilities remotely and in person – by appointment only.

Please explain how services are being delivered at the American Job Center. What is the staffing level, hours of operation, accommodations made for COVID?

The AJCH is open M-F 7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. All staff report to work daily.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) is still being conducted bi-weekly, SCSEP is still working with their program participants on a regular basis assisting with employment opportunities.

WIOA sets appointments for their clients and have digitized their intake packets to make remote access and outreach to potential participants easier for the case managers and clients to access and assist.

Rapid Response is working on WARN letters received and providing follow up via email and phone calls. They are also working on a power point presentation for on-

demand Rapid Response information including WIOA, UI and other program information for employers and employees.

What actions have been and/or being planned to overcome the challenges/barriers as a result of COVID?

We continue to gear up in order to anticipate the elimination of UI stipends and dislocated workers, low income adults and youth who will need assistance with employment and occupational training as jobs are eliminated due to COVID-19. We will reopen our doors and enforce COVID-19 protocol to protect those visiting the American Job Center as soon as UI reopens their doors.

Please provide updates on the status of the following:

1. New Local Plan - Approved by the Workforce Development Board on Friday, November 6, 2020. Circulating to Mayor for signature to meet the November 30, 2020 deadline.
2. Certification of the American Job Center – Approved at the HCWDB meeting held Friday, 11/6/2020. Mailing hard copy into to WDC.
3. WDB membership and list vacancies and recruitment – we have one vacancy and are looking to fill it with the transition of the next administration – which goes into effect 12/7/2020. The new administration may want to review current board members but that remains to be seen.
4. Projects and activities of board committees –
 - Oversight Committee will be reviewing the local area monitoring that occurred early in the year.
 - Business Development and Engagement Committee is working with the AJCH partners to line up potential employers for the upcoming National Dislocated Worker Grants.

Please share accomplishments of the WDB and American Job Center.

- PY 2020 Grant Agreements and Annual Plan
- Local Area Plan Approval
- AJCH Certification covered at an open board meeting
- By-Laws adopted as governing of the HCWDB

Senior Community Service Employment Program – Had 2 participants gain employment and exit the program. The program has 28 participants and usually carries up to 30 - additional participants are pulled from a waitlist.

AJCH staff participated in ADA staff development training put on by County of Hawaii's ADA and EEOC officer Tasha Hoggatt.

The AJCH receptionist is provided by Alu Like, the WIOA Section 166 Native American, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiian program, from October – December 2020. By having the program offer their participant work experience this aids in offsetting costs for the AJCH and its Partners.

The next AJCH Partner meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2020 and Business Engagement and Rapid Response training is scheduled for December 10, 2020 with USDOL.

AJCH program Staff attended HireNet training in anticipation of the upgrade slated for December.

Department of Human Services and the WIOA A&DW Program Coordinator met over issues with customers being unable to get in touch with their Case Managers at DHS concerning school. It was beneficial to both DHS and AJCH staff to get to know more about the current programs and how things are going due to COVID.

The WIOA A&DW Program Coordinator met with Hawaii First Federal Credit Union, HOPE Services and EPIC Ohana with the goal of creating WIOA awareness and highlight program opportunities for their clients. HFFCU's target market is moderate to low income Hawaii Residents and is addressing financial barriers, HOPE Services addresses housing and homelessness issues and EPIC Ohana, Inc. who works with youth in the foster care system and those whom have aged out. All of which are a part of the populations with barriers to employment WIOA serves.

WIOA is working on business engagement with employers and participants for possible seasonal hires, including KTA, Big Island Candies, Target and other retailers. The case managers continue to send out weekly employment prospects to participants.