

**KAUAI COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATE REPORT (November 2020 – February 2021) TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETINGS
February 5, 2021 and February 11, 2021**

1) Please explain how the American Job Center is operating and assisting job seekers and employers under challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The AJC is operating by appointment only to job seekers between 7:45am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. We are able to see a maximum of 5 clients at any given time due to the social distancing requirements. While assisting clients, a rolling partition is used between the client sitting at a computer and WDD Staff or OED Coordinator. Employers are assisted via telephone contact to the WDD Manager Adele Manera.

Since November, we have seen a 150% increase of participants (20/November-85/January) coming to the Job Center requesting services, seeking assistance with signing onto Hire-net, creating resumes and filling out job applications.

2) Please share new ideas, programs, procedures you have implemented that is working well (best practices) at the American Job Center and at the WDB.

Upon hiring an OED Coordinator at the AJC, we were able to clear outdated fliers, expired literature and create updated bulletin boards in the resource area. The phone system is receiving an upgrade, streamlining to a 1 system operation. The AJC had been using separate phone systems between the State and County. The OED Coordinator is now responsible to greet customers, update the schedule in the Resource room, sanitize stations, assist clients and provide support with daily operations.

3) What is the status of the Kauai WDB? How many vacancies still must be filled? When was the last time the board met and conducted business? If the board has not been meeting, what is the plan and timeline to having a compliant and certified board?

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| <i>The current KWDB is comprised of 12 members.</i> | <i>5-Business</i> | <i>(5 vacant)</i> |
| | <i>3-Workforce</i> | <i>(1 vacant)</i> |
| | <i>2-Government</i> | <i>(1 vacant)</i> |
| | <i>2-Education</i> | |

KWDB met on 11/29/2020 and plan to meet again the 1st week of March to begin regular quarterly meetings. In the last meeting, as has been the issue all year long, not all the members were available. Last minute work related issues prevented them from attending.

The Board discussed the need to find/recruit new members and make this another priority.

4) Since 2016 Kauai County has had an uneven record of procuring and retaining the youth services provider. The current provider has been on contract for over a year and to date there have been zero enrollment. What is the Kauai WDB and Administration's

plan to ensure that the youth provider abides by its contract, particularly with performance goals? Non-action may lead to disallowed costs.

We met with Hale Opio on 1/29 to ascertain what was happening with their program. Since the pandemic started they have had several shifts in personnel which caused for repeated training in use of the Hire-net system and time without movement. During our meeting on the 29th we found that they are very willing but much of the WIOA requirements, vocabulary and acronyms were unfamiliar to them. Their time has been spent in understanding the principals of WIOA and insuring they are on the correct path. They also have not yet reached out to partner services which could be instrumental to their success. We are now working to up train them thanks to the help of Jazon Hidalgo (Oahu AJC) who has graciously agreed to provide guidance. We are looking at in person training as soon as possible.

To address the uneven record of procuring a Youth Provider, the issue is that many who may or could provide Services, do not respond to the “RFP” when released. Through contacts in the community, some entities that provide WIOA Youth services on outer islands are not able/willing to do so on Kauai.

As an example, in the recent contracting of Hale Opio Inc., the County went from an RFP to a sole source contract when there were no applicants interested in the RFP to provide Youth Services.

5) What is the plan of action to improve the coordination, reporting and delivery of rapid response services and business outreach under WIOA?

Under the Office of Economic Development, our OED-AJC coordinator has partnered with the OED’s Business Innovation Coordinator and have reached out to over 100 businesses to assist our Adult and Dislocated Workers. Between July-Dec of 2020, they provided outreach and assisted in the hiring of approximately 285 persons.

The current contracted entity to provide RR services is the State WDD personnel at the AJC. OED, the AJC-OED coordinator and the State Rapid Response personnel will be teaming up for a new initiative to provide outreach.

6) What is the process for ensuring that program funds are not returned to WDC at the end of the 2-year performance period?

Much of the funding returned to WIOA has come from not having a Youth Services Provider. We are open to any ideas that the WDC could put forth to assist us in this matter. Some ideas we have are reallocating funds to provide more training through our Partner at Kauai Community College to Professional Development for our WDD and AJC staff.

7) Please share accomplishments and success stories of the WDB and American Job Center.

Through a \$20,000 Grant from the County of Kauai, utilizing CARES act funding, Kauai Community College and our Workforce Development Team, partnered up to provide Certificate courses and training for approximately 50 participants. The courses ranged from Accounting Skills for Supervisors, Skills for Admin. Assistants, Business writing, Leadership, Guard Card licensing and Heavy equipment operation.

The OED Coordinator was also able to assist with the 1st round of the Rise to Work program in a public relations capacity of story-telling to convey how impactful it was to the businesses and community of Kaua'i. Round 2 of the Rise to Work program is on the near horizon. With this role, the OED Coordinator was able to bring in clients/employers to sign up with Hire Net and meet with WDD Manager Adele Manera via email for available resources and training.