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HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th Floor
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 587-4160

POSITION DESCRIPTION

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Title: Prison Oversight Specialist
Agency: Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission
Geographic Location: 235 S. Beretania Street Honolulu, HI 96813

Opening Date: July 7, 2025
Closing Date: August 18, 2025

Salary: \$ 96,376/year

To Apply: Please send cover letter and resume to Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator at hcsoc@hawaii.gov. Application can be found at: [State of Hawai'i Application for Non-Civil Service Appointment](#).

II. INTRODUCTION

Function of this organizational unit:

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission) as established in [Chapter 353L of Hawaii Revised Statutes](#), is charged with:

1. Overseeing the State's correctional system, investigating complaints at correctional facilities, and facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model;
2. Establishing maximum inmate population limits for each facility; formulating policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding capacity;
3. Ensuring that the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System under Chapter 353H, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is working properly through monitoring and reviewing elements of the program.

Purpose of the position:

This position oversees the following five prisons: [Halawa Correctional Facility](#), [Waiawa Correctional Facility](#), [Kulani Correctional Facility](#), [Women's Community Correctional Center](#), and [Saguaro Correctional Center](#) (privately run facility in Arizona) managed by the [Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation](#) (DCR) and have jurisdiction over investigating complaints at each facility. Additionally, this position will help facilitate a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model.

III. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Administrative Duties

1. Work with the Oversight Coordinator and the Jail Oversight Specialist to create applicable internal policies, procedures, and an investigative manual to set the standard of effective oversight practices within the office of the HCSOC including the intake process of receiving complaints from the prisons.
2. Formulate studies to measure the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's compliance with Departmental policies and procedures, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, and other applicable rules. Formulate surveys, plans to effectively monitor standards, and investigative procedures to better conditions of confinement in the prisons.

B. Monthly Reports, Annual Reports

1. The Prison Oversight Specialist shall submit a monthly report to the Oversight Coordinator to be shared with the Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature. The monthly report shall include actions taken specific to prison oversight efforts for the preceding month.
2. The Commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature no less than twenty days before the convening of each regular session. The annual report shall include a full and complete statement of actions taken by the Commission for the preceding years, and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, that the Commission deems necessary or desirable. The Prison Oversight Specialist will assist with the annual report in ensuring actions taken specific to prison oversight efforts are included.

C. Investigation of Violations of State Law or Rules

1. Receive allegations of any violations pertaining to the correctional system from family members, people in custody, staff, legislators, and other affected parties. Investigate wrongdoing specific to prisons per the policies and procedures set in the DCR and the HCSOC.
2. Have jurisdiction over investigating complaints within the prisons in the State of Hawai'i and any contracted facilities. Travel to each prison as often as necessary to ensure up-to-date information on conditions of confinement and complaints received in each facility.

D. Studies and Investigations

1. The Prison Oversight Specialist shall work with the Jail Oversight Specialist in conducting an ongoing study and investigations of the operation and the administration of correctional system laws in effect in other states or countries, any literature on the subject that may be published or available, any federal laws that may affect the operation of the prison system, and the reaction of residents to existing and potential features of the prison system in order to recommend or effect changes.

2. Establish maximum inmate population limits for each prison and formulate policies and procedures to prevent the inmate population from exceeding the capacity of each prison.
3. Assist in facilitating a correctional system transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic model with information gathered from investigation of violations and research of other rehabilitative jurisdictions.

IV. RECOMMENDED QUALIFICATIONS

A. Knowledge/Abilities:

1. Investigative experience. Ability to plan, conduct and supervise complex and difficult investigations, including those involving serious allegations of misconduct (such as excessive use of force, or in-custody deaths), investigations involving a large number of complainants or witnesses, high-profile investigations and those involving multiple jails or prisons or significant policy issues.
2. Ability to implement investigative procedures and standards consistent with best practices for civilian oversight agencies.
3. Knowledge of the principles and practices of correctional systems, including reentry, parole, sentencing guidelines, and prisons.
4. Well-versed in criminal justice reform and committed to the transition to a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system model, as required by Chapter 353L.
5. Ability to perform research, manage and analyze a wide range of information, and to write and edit reports and other written materials for clarity and style.
6. Ability to effectively and respectfully communicate, both orally and in writing, with DCR staff, community members, government stakeholders, people in custody, and other members of the diverse communities served by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the HCSOC.

B. Education/Experience:

1. Graduation from an accredited college or university.
2. Five (5) years experience conducting civil, criminal or factual investigations that involved gathering, analyzing and evaluating evidence, conducting interviews with friendly and adverse witnesses and documenting information in written form. Applicable experience would include: criminal investigations conducted for an oversight, corrections, or a prosecuting agency; criminal defense investigations in the public or private sector; investigating allegations of misconduct or ethical violations (especially involving public officials or corrections); investigations

- conducted in connection with litigation or hearings conducted by a government agency; personnel investigations; civil rights investigations and investigations of human rights abuses; investigations and audits of fraud or abuse.
3. Knowledge of criminal justice procedures, investigative techniques and issues involving corrections and civilian oversight practices and community relations

C. Desired Qualities:

1. Systems-oriented thinking and an ability to understand, create and implement statewide complex processes.
2. Commitment to civilian oversight and ability to set an example of professionalism, ethical conduct and commitment to a quality work product.
3. Strong work ethic, a high degree of patience, adaptability, and an ability to remain poised under pressure.
4. Strong time and task management (i.e. ability to plan, schedule, and execute).
5. Sound judgment, initiative, and decision-making skills.
6. The ability to work within a team and to lead, coach, inspire, support, and motivate others.
7. Willingness to extend kindness, compassion and accountability to oneself and others.