

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
No. 1 Capitol District | 250 South Hotel Street | Conference Room 410
Wednesday, September 10, 2025 | 12:00 p.m. (noon)

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Beverly Gotelli called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Appointed members present: Beverly Gotelli, William Kinaka, Stephen Lung, Sara Lenzer Medeiros, Shelly Ogata, Suzie Schulberg (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Barbara Service, Gary Simon, Lisa Spencer, Rick Tabor, Leslie Tanoue, and Raelene Tenno.

Appointed members excused and absent: Poki'i Balaz, Louise Johnson, and Marilyn Seely.

(A quorum was established as eleven members were present at roll call. This board requires eight members to be present in order to establish a quorum.)

Ex-officio members present: Paula Cerio, Department of Health (DOH); Jienelle Herndon, San Francisco Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; Kathy Ishihara, Department of Human Services (DHS); and Jordan Lewis, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center on Aging (COA).

Executive Office on Aging (EOA) staff and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) staff present: Derrick Ariyoshi, Candice Bryant, Rowena Dagdag-Andaya, Kauionalani Fukuda, Emily Ishida, Josephine Lum, John McDermott, Jan Mori, Candace Nakamoto, Deborah Niyongabo, Lani Sakamoto, Tani Salazar, Cristina Valenzuela, Jazlyn Wandasan, Jason Wong, and Jeffrey Woodland.

Beverly announced that EOA Director Caroline Cadirao will be absent from today's meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The draft minutes of the August 1, 2025 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting were approved as circulated.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING (EOA) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Attached is Caroline's report.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Beverly has been in touch with the Public Access Room regarding their presentation at the joint Committee meeting next month. Beverly has been in contact with Caroline regarding agenda items and speakers for future PABEA meetings.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Rick reported that the Committee met this morning. Senator Sharon Moriwaki and Representative Cory Chun joined the meeting. Senator Moriwaki distributed a list of 2025 legislative outcomes and future opportunities (attached). The Committee reviewed bills and assignments. The Committee is planning to have a speaker at each Legislative Committee meeting. All PABEA members are welcome to attend Committee meetings. Speaker presentations will focus on aging bills and issues.

PLANS AND PROJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

Lisa thanked Area Agencies on Aging for using PPRC's report template. Lisa appreciates that the AAAs are using bullets to highlight their work during the month. PPRC will be using the templates to determine how PPRC will proceed in 2025 – 2026. Please contact Lisa if you have questions or would like any revisions to the template.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (RAC)

Rick announced that the Committee will resume its monthly meetings on the Thursday before the monthly PABEA meeting. The next RAC meeting will be on November 6, 2025. Meetings will be held via Zoom from 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. using the same format begun by Kathy Wyatt to prepare and plan for the Older Americans Month celebration.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Review proposal on Homelessness and determine PABEA's role in this proposal. Consideration for an ad hoc committee or PPRC to explore this initiative further.

Sara provided a presentation, *Homeless/Unsheltered Action Proposals* (attached). Sara advocates for statewide funding for services to the homeless and people at risk of homelessness.

Derrick remarked that good systems to support the homeless exist in the counties but are not synergized well. He recommends improving the synergy, coordination, and partnership between service programs.

Beverly suggests that Sara contact Senator Moriwaki and Representative Chun, the co-conveners of the Kupuna Caucus, to let them know that the State's homeless and unsheltered are a concern of PABEA and to request that they draft legislation or a resolution in support of statewide funding for services to the homeless and unsheltered. Beverly suggests that the Legislative Committee also examine the issue.

Rick also suggested that Sara call Senator Moriwaki before the next Legislative Committee meeting as Senator Moriwaki frequently provides good suggestions on how to proceed.

Derrick commented that EOA provides little to no funding to the agencies servicing the homeless.

Rick suggested that Sara build her efforts on the strengths of existing programs and to ask agencies that serve the homeless what their needs are.

Beverly reported that the State's Homeless Czar or his/her designee will provide a presentation at the November PABEA meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE HAWAII COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING

Beverly introduced Kauionalani Fukuda, the new Executive of the Hawaii County Office of Aging.

Kauionalani shared that she was born and raised in Hilo, Hawaii. Her education background is in gerontology and psychology. She has a doctorate in psychology and a master's in clinical psychotherapy.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Discuss amendment of the Hawaii Revised Statutes 349-4 regarding PABEA.

Beverly reported that Caroline has received no feedback from Boards and Commissions. The item is deferred to next month's PABEA meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion on the abbreviated agenda for the December 5, 2025 meeting.

Beverly suggests abbreviating the agenda for the December 5, 2025 PABEA meeting to provide sufficient time for a Christmas luncheon celebration because the PABEA meeting begins at 12:00 noon and the Kupuna Caucus meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. With a normal, routine agenda, little to no time would be available for a Christmas luncheon celebration. The PABEA meeting cannot begin earlier as PABEA Committees meet in the morning and end their meetings at 11:00 a.m. Beginning the PABEA meeting at 11:00 a.m. might be unwise as those who arrive early for the PABEA meeting will interrupt the Legislative Committee meeting, while the Legislative Committee attendees will need the full hour and a half for its December meeting before the Legislative session begins in January 2026. The December reports would be deferred to the January 2026 PABEA meeting. A vote on abbreviating the December meeting will be placed on the October PABEA meeting agenda under Unfinished Business. On behalf of PABEA, Beverly invites Ex-Officio PABEA members to the Christmas luncheon celebration.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was offered.

APPOINTED MEMBERS' REPORTS

No further reports were offered beyond Sara's presentation on homeless/unsheltered action proposals provided earlier at this meeting.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS' REPORTS

The new Director of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center on Aging (COA), Jordan Lewis, introduced himself. Jordan shared that he moved to Honolulu almost two months from Fairbanks, Alaska. He is an Alaskan native. He is a gerontologist and social worker by training and has studied and worked within the field of indigenous healthy aging and dementia caregiver work throughout his career and in the social work realm of workforce and training.

Attached is Paula's report.

Jienelle provided updates from the CMS San Francisco Office:

- September is Emergency Preparedness Month. CMS has curated resources specific to its programs and initiatives. Jienelle will share the resources and links for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and their family members with PABEA via email. PABEA members are welcome to share the resources and links with their networks. Jienelle will include the CMS Regional Office email address to send any issues or concerns to CMS.
- Open enrollment for Medicare is from October 15, 2025 to December 7, 2025. Jienelle will share detailed messaging from CMS as open enrollment approaches.

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU ELDERLY AFFAIRS DIVISION (EAD)

Attached is Derrick's report.

Derrick reported that the City and County of Honolulu Managing Director approved EAD's reorganization plan. EAD has been working on the plan for almost two years, negotiating with the City and County of Honolulu Department of Human Resources and the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA). The plan significantly changes and upgrades EAD's positions so that EAD can meet community needs and expectations of its funders. Under the former organizational plan, approximately three-fourths of EAD's positions were customer service positions with minimum qualifications of customer service experience. These qualifications did not meet the needs of the community. The reorganization plan elevates a substantial number of EAD's positions to professional social work dispositions in order that EAD can excel with outreach to Kupuna and their caregivers. The reorganization provides EAD a foundation to build on now and in the future.

An opportunity for improvement arising from the tsunami alert is for EAD to build resiliency in the community and with kupuna by encouraging them to advocate for disaster preparedness and by educating them to prepare their own personal disaster plan.

Derrick reported that the City and County of Honolulu is negotiating to acquire a building on School Street. If the property is acquired, three divisions within the Department of Community Services will relocate to the building. EAD might be one of these divisions that relocates. EAD has \$2.5 million in earmarked Federal funding which can be used for the relocation. A large portion of one of the floors in the building will be dedicated to establishing a community-accessible, universally designed Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Currently, EAD is only an ADRC in concept and not in physical infrastructure. Walk-ins will be accepted. The ADRC will have a multi-purpose room which can be used for community meetings. More parking is available at the School Street site than is available at the current EAD site. EAD has begun discussions with the City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services to examine safe movement of people to and from the site, such as bus routes and safe streets.

HAWAII COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING (HCOA)

Attached is Kauionalani's report.

Kauionalani reported that, during the tsunami alert, participant names were not aligned with the correct addresses of the participants in reports generated from WellSky. HCOA has resolved the issue with WellSky in order that accurate reports can be transmitted to HCOA's partners, including transportation partners and home delivered meals partners. HCOA will be revising its vendor contracts to include providing HCOA with a post-disaster summary to include what worked well for the vendor and what did not work well for the vendor.

Kauionalani shared that a resident was feeling sick and not her normal self. She went to the hospital and was diagnosed with sepsis. She had no idea what sepsis is. She came to HCOA requesting information on sepsis to be available and accessible to kupuna and to the community. HCOA created a pamphlet and placed it in HCOA's *Silver Bulletin* to disseminate to those on HCOA's mailing list. HCOA is also working with hospitals and community health clinics to provide education and outreach on health issues, emergency preparedness, and advocacy on disaster planning and preparedness.

KAUAI AGENCY ON ELDERLY AFFAIRS (KAEA)

Attached is Emily's June 2025 Executive Report for KAEA.

Emily reported that the tsunami warning facilitated KAEA to improve its emergency and disaster preparedness plan. KAEA will shift its perspective. KAEA's contractors will be responsible for contacting KAEA's consumers. (Historically, KAEA has contacted consumers during an emergency or disaster.) KAEA will remain responsible for maintaining open communication with its consumers and with Kauai's elderly and ensuring that they are prepared. KAEA will also support its staff and the community. KAEA has established improved communication within KAEA and down the chain of command.

Emily reported that she and one other KAEA staff member attended the Hawai'i Dementia Initiative In-Person Coalition Meeting last week. The meeting was informative and insightful. Emily appreciates the opportunity to attend the meeting.

Emily looks forward to seeing others at the HPGS conference which begins tomorrow.

MAUI COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING (MCOA)

Attached is Rowena's report.

Rowena reported that yesterday's County of Maui Council on Aging meeting included a presentation on Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). Council on Aging members were interested in training for seniors. MCOA will be working with Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to host these trainings. Many of the issues and topics that are presented in the training address personal preparedness and managing medical emergencies. The training is valuable for teenagers up to older adults, including those over the age of 60 years old. Rowena recalls a senior in his 90s attending CERT training. MCOA encourages older adults to take advantage of the CERT Program. MCOA is continuing its education with Maui County's senior clubs. MEMA and MCOA have been providing presentations to senior clubs throughout Maui and the senior clubs at Hale Mahaolu. MCOA encourages seniors to prepare a go-bag and to create their own disaster preparedness plan. Last week, AARP provided a presentation for the senior resident facilities on Maui, including Hale Mahaolu, on how to develop preparedness plans for their facilities. MEMA partnered in the presentation and provided an introduction on different hazards and risks of which to be aware. AARP, with their consultant, presented the preparedness plan that can be implemented at senior resident facilities. MCOA is targeting different agencies and different groups with continuing education throughout the year, beyond hurricane season. Maui Electric is also a partner in disaster preparedness and has been providing presentations to organizations on its Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Program. With respect to the tsunami warning, feedback from seniors, especially those in Hana, is to alert the public in a different way as the siren warnings cause anxiety with some seniors and community members with disabilities. MCOA is examining

different possibilities to communicate emergency alerts and warnings, perhaps through a phone or other device. Another issue is timely access to accurate and reliable information. Some seniors indicated that they were unsure of the location of evacuation shelters. Some seniors received the tsunami alert and evacuation information late. The tsunami was due to arrive at 6:30 p.m. Information regarding evacuation shelters was announced at 5:00 p.m. MCOA is encouraging residents to sign up for phone alerts through MEMA and the Genasys Protect platform implemented in April 2025 by MEMA.

Rowena reported that the County of Maui Commission on Persons with Disabilities received a presentation from the County of Maui Planning Department on the Lahaina rebuild. The Commission sent a letter to the Mayor of Maui County and to the Maui County Council Chairperson, Alice Lee, with issues and items for the Mayor and the Council to consider in the Lahaina rebuild, including:

- committing to accessibility and inclusion;
- creating more accessible and age-friendly housing and building a more inclusive and livable community so that people can age-in-place in Lahaina and in other communities;
- ensuring that information about the rebuilding is accessible to all people in the community; and
- continuously engaging with the Commission members on the rebuild.

Rowena shared that the partnership between MCOA and the Maui Prosecuting Attorney's Office on providing senior clubs with financial and contractor scams and fraud information has been successful. Many senior clubs are interested in the topic. Scammers are now sending text messages to targeted potential victims. Rowena shared an experience in which she was targeted. She did not recognize the phone number, but the scammer asked whether they could get together sometime for Rowena to share with her pinakbet and adobo recipe with the scammer. She knew not to respond as once you engage with the scammer, the scammer will not stop. While meeting yesterday with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Adult Protect Services, and the Maui Police Department, she received another text message requesting to meet after work and have hot pot in Chinatown (although Rowena was not near a Chinatown). Ethnically, the scammers have become clever. Financial scams and fraud are increasing in our communities.

Beverly shared that she received a text: *"Hi, how are you doing? We're going to come to visit Hawaii soon. Let's get together. Are you still there?"* Beverly commented that if you are asking her whether she still lives in Hawaii, then you do not know who she is. Beverly strongly recommends deleting scam texts and blocking the scammer's phone number. Each of us needs to protect ourselves from scams and fraud.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- PABEA Monthly Meeting: Friday, October 3, 2025, 12:00 p.m.
- Kupuna Caucus Meeting: Friday, October 3, 2025, 2:00 p.m., via Zoom

ADJOURNMENT OF PABEA MEETING

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 12:49 p.m.