

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
No. 1 Capitol District | 250 South Hotel Street | Conference Room 410
Friday, September 4, 2026 | 12:00 noon

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Appointed members present: Poki'i Balaz (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Beverly Gotelli, Louise Johnson, Roy Katsuda, Stephen Lung, Sara Lenzer Medeiros, Suzie Schulberg (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Marilyn Seely, Leimomi Shearer, Gary Simon, Scott Spallina (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Rick Tabor, Raelene Tenno, and Kathy Wyatt.

Appointed members excused and absent: Barbara Service.

(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: Alan Burdick, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Office of Community Services (DLIR OCS); Kathy Ishihara, Department of Human Services (DHS); and Ryan Mandado, Department of Education (DOE).

Executive Office on Aging (EOA) staff and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) staff present: Candice Bryant, Caroline Cadirao, Meredith Catalini, Rowena Dagdag-Andaya, Josephine Lum, James Marchant, Lani Sakamoto, Tani Salazar, Bocar Wane, Jason Wong, and SueAnn Yasuoka.

Guests present: Percy Ihara and Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Director of Advocacy, AARP Hawaii.

Those attending in-person and via Zoom introduced themselves.

ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

The draft minutes of the August 7, 2026 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting were adopted as circulated.

EOA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Attached is Caroline's report. Caroline provided highlights from her report, including updates on the Hurricane Lala response and recovery efforts by EOA and the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), the Hanai Memory Network, the KupunAloha Project, and the Long-Term Care Financing Study. Caroline also provided an update on the Dementia Business Recognition Program to promote awareness of Alzheimer's disease and dementia among the business community.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Beverly reported that she communicates with Caroline regularly to discuss and plan the PABEA agenda and activities. Considering the continuing storm and hurricane activity, disaster planning is a top priority for EOA, PABEA, and PABEA members.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Gary reported that the Committee met this morning. Gary reported that the Committee is examining developing criteria for announcements. Announcements should be aging related and support the work of EOA, PABEA, and PABEA committees. The Committee is developing criteria to support legislation based upon the goals, objectives, and strategies in the State Plan on Aging in lieu of supporting legislation based upon the narrow subject matter of a legislative bill. The Committee is also considering developing a proposal to amend the Sunshine Law to provide advisory boards and commissions (versus policy-making boards and commissions) more latitude in its discussions and agenda. The Committee is developing a letter to Hawaii's Congressional delegation to ask them to protect Social Security.

PLANS AND PROJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

Sara reported that the Committee met this morning. The Committee developed a motion recommending PABEA to draft a statement to EOA and the Department of Health to incorporate the aloha spirit, which was a statute developed and passed in 1986, and other values, such as lokahi, laulima, kuleana, and ohana, into plans and other materials, including the AAA websites and publications. The Committee began reviewing the present goals of EOA in terms of actionable items and how success would be measured. The Committee also discussed indicators that measure well-being. Sara encourages PABEA members to consider joining the PPRC.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (RAC)

Rick reported that RAC will resume meeting via Zoom on Thursday, November 5, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. to begin planning for the Older Americans Month (OAM) celebration scheduled for Friday, June 4, 2027, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the 15 Craigside solarium. Kathy Wyatt has agreed to be the Vice Chair of RAC. The Governor has been invited to the OAM celebration. The current issue of Generations Magazine includes an article on the 2026 OAM celebration. Rick encourages PABEA members to read the article.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS: Purpose of the State and Area Plans – roles and responsibilities of the State Unit on Aging pursuant to the Older Americans Act and the Code of Federal Regulations.

Caroline provided a presentation on the purpose of the State and area plans and the mission of the Older Americans Act. (Presentation attached.)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was offered.

APPOINTED MEMBERS' REPORTS

Gary Simon provided a report on the National Council on Aging's National Falls Prevention Awareness Week, September 21 – 25, 2026, and the Hawaii Falls Prevention Alliance. (Report and *6 Steps to Prevent a Fall* attached.)

EX-OFFICIOS MEMBERS' REPORTS

Kathy Ishihara reported that Med-QUEST notice (attached) regarding the new Federal requirements for H.R.1 was sent to the PABEA members. In August 2026, Hawaii Medicaid mailed the notice to Medicaid eligible adults between the ages of 19 and 64 years of age, which is estimated to be 130,000 adults. The notice entails how to meet new work requirements effective January 1, 2027, and who is exempt. Medicaid has each adult's case information. If Medicaid needs to obtain additional information, Medicaid will reach out to those adults for whom Medicaid may need to verify the new work requirements. The intent is to keep one's Medicaid eligibility. The notice also informs Medicaid beneficiary of multiple service centers and community partners from which Medicaid beneficiaries can obtain and/or access personal assistance online, in-person, or by phone regarding questions or concerns. If PABEA members and or community members have questions or concerns, please email Kathy Ishihara at kishihara@dhs.hawaii.gov.

Attached is Alan Burdick's report. DLIR OCS is in the process of developing its State Plan for 2027, the next program year. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) serves approximately 7,500 participants. The SFMNP could serve three times that figure with additional funding. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is available for those with food needs. TEFAP provides canned foods from the mainland. TEFAP has an abundance of food. A colleague of Alan Burdick administers TEFAP in Hawaii. The Hawaii Food Bank on Oahu, the Maui Food Bank on Maui, and the Food Basket on Hawaii Island are the county-level agencies that administer the TEFAP program. Those who need food can contact these agencies. Please call or email Alan if you need further information. SFMNP served 7,510 participants last year. In Honolulu, almost 5,000 participants were served. 1,685 participants were served in Hawaii County. 857 participants were served on Maui. 276 participants were served on Kauai. The United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides funding of \$50 per person per year. The senior receives a booklet of ten \$5 coupons. DLIR OCS receives an additional 10 percent from the USDA for the vendor for administrative costs. Eligible seniors must be at least 60 years old with a maximum household income of 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for Hawaii. Eligible seniors are first come, first served. The program is seasonal and operates from April 1 to October 31 of each year.

Applications are posted on the Hawaii Foodbank Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council, the Hawaii Foodbank – Kauai, and the Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO) websites in March of each year. The Honolulu and Maui programs fill immediately. Kauai and Hawaii County do not fill due to their relatively large land areas compared to population, insufficient public transportation, and seniors who are not mobile. On Kauai, few farmers are interested in becoming a vendor for SFMNP. MEO has farmers' market opportunities in the Kahului and Wailuku areas. This year is the first that Maui has the Senior Farmers Market Program operating on Molokai in Kaunakakai. The Hawaii Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is administered by DHS.

Hawaii County Office of Aging (HCOA)

Meredith Catalina provided updates on the recovery from Hurricane Lala. HCOA partnered with Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC), Community First, and Hawaii Animal Kuleana Alliance (HAKA) to deliver food, water, batteries, lanterns, and gift cards to affected Kupuna. HCOA assisted with hospitalizing people who were on oxygen but had no power at home. HCOA monitored those individuals on oxygen at home that were using generators. Many who are off grid on Hawaii Island have gas-powered and propane powered generators. Those with generators and on oxygen were able to remain in place, but they were limited in their ability to fill their propane and gas tanks post-hurricane. HCOA partnered with the Department of Health, public health nurses, and the Fire Department's Paramedicine Program to ensure that those with gas and propane generators had access to gas and propane. An apartment complex in Hilo was without electric power. When electric power was restored to the area, the complex still had no power. Faulty wiring was the cause. HCOA helped support residents in the complex, including kupuna and low-income residents. The wiring has been repaired and the complex now has power. HCOA completed wellness checks across Pahala, Naalehu, Honokaa, Waimea, Hilo, Pahoa, and Kona. HCOA utilized its Mon Ami database system. HCOA received support from other counties in performing welfare calls. Only a few remain on HCOA's list to be monitored post-hurricane, although many remain displaced. Many have access to needed resources and support. Community hubs have been established in Naalehu and Pahala. An HCOA staff member is in Pahala every Tuesday and in Naalehu every Friday. Meredith commented that September is Falls Prevention Awareness Month. Falls prevention is a large focus area of HCOA. HCOA will participate in the Akamai Senior Fair presented by Generations Magazine in Sangha Hall in Hilo on September 9, 2026. 300 kupuna and their caregivers are expected to attend. At the fair, HCOA will provide handouts with fall prevention tips and information and magnets. The AAAs' databases have records of more than 200,000 program participants. The HCOA database has records of approximately 35,000 participants in Hawaii County.

Maui County Office on Aging (MCOA)

Attached is Rowena's Maui County Executive's Report for September 2026.

Rowena reported that MCOA began exploring a year and a half ago on how MCOA could partner with the County of Maui Department of Agriculture to connect local farmers and their produce with seniors. A MCOA program specialist who formerly worked at the Department of Agriculture connected with the Department of Agriculture to examine available funding. After collaborating with the Department of Agriculture and the congregate meal program, MCOA created the Locally Grown Healthy Food for Kupuna Program and identified a vendor. Once a week, the vendor delivers fresh, locally grown produce to the kupuna at the congregate meal site. The kupuna are provided education on how to use the food and who the farmer is, and prepared items, such as soup, jelly, or baked goods. The program began yesterday. The vendor visited one of the congregate meal sites and provided kupuna apple bananas, dragon fruit, and carrots. The vendor also provided the kupuna with a mason jar filled with sweet potato and squash soup. MCOA will track performance measures for the program to determine whether seniors are expanding their diets and are using food differently and the level of engagement of the seniors with the vendor. The current program is a small pilot. MCOA would like seniors to engage with each other, including sharing recipes. Perhaps in the future, the seniors will gather and create meals together with the food that they receive. With the current funding, MCOA will pilot the program for a year. If results are positive, MCOA will expand the program even more and examine how to improve the program. A few months ago, Rowena had reported that MCOA was working with a senior who had sought help from MCOA for an unlicensed contractor who provided unpermitted home repairs at the senior's home. As a result

the Maui County Department of Planning and the Maui County Department of Public Works issued citations to the senior. MCOA intervened and contacted the two departments to help the senior, but the departments require the senior to complete an online application. An MCOA specialist connected the senior with a local architectural firm who met with the senior yesterday. The architectural firm reported that these kinds of scams are occurring frequently in the Maui community. The firm will help the senior with the application process. In the MCOA focus groups, seniors commented that they need a service that will provide information on trusted contractors who provide renovations and home safety repairs. The MCOA four-year plan will include developing that type of service and increasing awareness that not all seniors have email or online access.

Caroline reported that the PABEA ex-officio position representing the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs is vacant. The DCCA ex-officio could be the agent to connect seniors with education on contractors and on fraud and scams.

Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs (KAEA)

Attached is Emily Ishida's KAEA Executive Report.

Beverly reported that Emily is absent from today's PABEA meeting while she is attending today's Kauai Elder Law Fair sponsored by the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and KAEA. Cristina Valenzuela is also attending the fair. Kauai has had an Elder Justice Program for the last few years. For the last two years, the Program has had a conference. The Kauai Elder Justice Task Force meets quarterly. At yesterday's meeting, Paul Greenwood, who is a retired prosecuting attorney from San Diego, led the discussions. DCCA, the Fire Department, the Police Department, bank institutions, and Hawaii Health Systems Corporation were present. A common thread yesterday is that one call number is needed for resources (instead of calling multiple agencies). Development and execution can be difficult to achieve a one call number.

Caroline commented that EOA has a No Wrong Door system to coordinate government at all levels and throughout all departments and agencies to provide a warm handoff to those seeking information and resources. Caroline will reexamine the No Wrong Door system to determine what improvements are needed. ADRC staff in all four counties are well trained in aging resources and in performing the proper referral to provide a warm handoff.

Aloha United Way 211 is a statewide helpline that connects people with resources. Hawaii 811 is the utility notification center for contractors and excavators.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Kupuna Caucus Meeting: Friday, September 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Suggestions for Kupuna bills to be included in the Kupuna Caucus 2027 legislative package are due on September 25, 2026.
- PABEA monthly meeting: Friday, October 2, 2026, 12:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF PABEA MEETING

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.