

A Q&A with Christin Johnson

May, 2023

CHRISTIN JOHNSON, a former New York City corrections monitor, was appointed by Governor David Ige in April 2022 to serve as Oversight Coordinator for the Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission. That commission is tasked with moving Hawaii's prisons and jails to a "rehabilitative and therapeutic model" of corrections. She responded to the following queries from Les Estrella by email in May, 2023.

What's the prison (jail) capacity?

The capacity limits are set in accordance with the 2001 Corrections Population Management Commission report (found here):

- Hawaii Community Correction Center total – **226**
- Main Facility (Punahelu, Waianuenu, Komohana) – Capacity is **126**
- Hale Nani – Capacity is **100**

How many individuals are in the corrections facilities currently?

As of Monday May 19, the Main Facility had a count of **232** whereas Hale Nani had a count of **64**. This means the Main Facility is at **184% capacity**. Hale Nani is at 64% capacity.

This is why I separate Hale Nani from the Main Facility when talking about overcrowding – Hale Nani is a low security space for work furlough specifically, and is completely separate from the main facility. However, for the attached demographical statistics, Hale Nani is included.

How many are shipped out of state?

None shipped from HCCC (jail, not prison).

How many of the prisoners are Indigenous Hawaiians? Male? Female?

[See Attachment.] Hawaii's general population data was pulled from the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism census. HCCC and Saguaro's demographic data was pulled from the Department of Public Safety May 4 2023 population data (which is not a public document).

How many Indigenous Hawaiians are shipped out of state?

[See Attachment.] Hawaii's general population data was pulled from the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism census. HCCC and Saguaro's demographic data was pulled from the Department of Public Safety May 4 2023 population data (which is not a public document).

What options are prisoners given for wellness and healing practices?

The Main Facility does not get wellness or healing programming. However, Hale Nani (furlough) does. According to the warden: "Most of the cultural [based] practices are done in the prison system due to inmates having [knowledge of] the duration of time they have to participate in the program. [The] majority of the inmates in the jail setting are pretrial detainees and often not in custody long enough to have meaningful participation. At HCCC we have a program called the Kanaka Way that is taught by Aunty Aloha Beziella. She teaches Ho'oponopono, which means healing practices to help our inmates to become better parents and to start healing the families."

I've heard that there's a minister who comes to share the Bible with prisoners. Are there any Hawaiian Cultural Practitioners who come to teach prisoners anything with cultural relevancy?

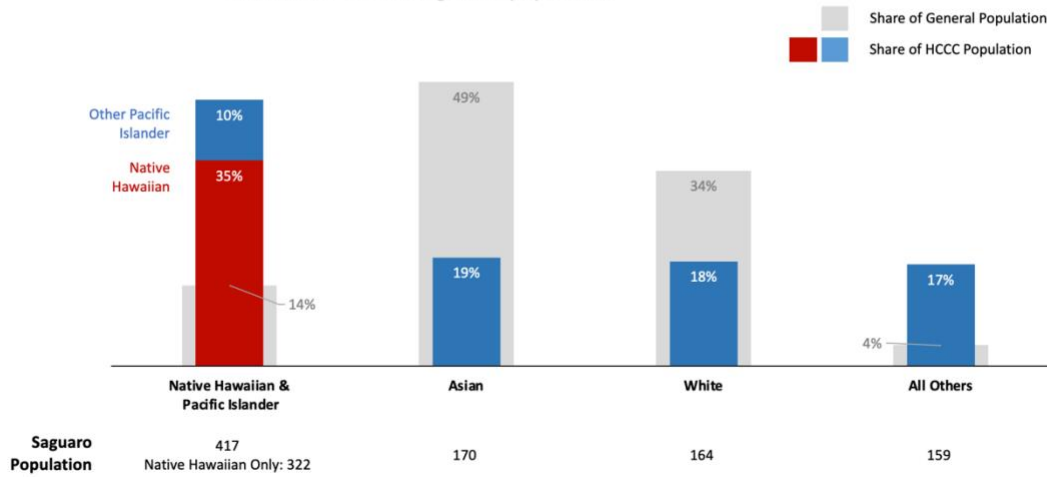
No, not that I am aware of outside of what's listed above for Hale Nani.

What is the protocol for a journalist team (news writer and photographer) to visit the prison to conduct interviews?

This response is from the HCCC Warden: "Media Agencies normally send their representative during media tour day. During the tour, they may take certain photos to update their profile of all the facilities. [The] HCCC media tour was during the time that I was out sick in November 2022. As for what you are requesting, we usually don't set up on camera or in person interviews with inmates when it's about their crime... especially pre-trial detainees. They can write to the inmates and ask them to call collect, or they can contact their attorneys and have them relay the message. In most cases, pre-trial detainees attorneys do not recommend [that] their clients ... talk with the media about their case without them being there. The facility does not allow 3-way calls. Normally, all media goes through PIO Toni Schwartz."

Attachment

Despite making up <14% of Hawaii's general population, **Native Hawaiians** account for 35% of Saguaro's population



Despite making up <14% of Hawaii's general population, **Native Hawaiians** account for 40% of HCCC's population

