

VI. PURPOSES

Rule 21 of the Rules of the Hawai`i Supreme Court sets forth fourteen purposes to accomplish the goal of substantially increasing access to justice in civil legal matters for low-and moderate-income residents of Hawai`i.

Purpose (1)

Provide ongoing leadership and oversee efforts to expand and improve delivery of high quality civil legal services to low-income people in Hawai`i.

The Commission, through the Committee on Education, Communications, and Conference Planning, organized and convened the annual summit conference on Wednesday, June 24, 2009, at the William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai`i from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with the help of volunteers and law school staff.¹⁰ Over 200 people attended the conference.

The five segments of the conference produced stimulating discussion. The unmet needs session commenced with a brief review of the 2007 assessment of civil legal needs by Nalani Fujimori Kaina, Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i.¹¹ Russ Awakuni, an attorney with Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i and his client presented an example of the human cost of failing to meet basic civil legal services.

The first panel (Ms. Kaina; Moya Gray, Executive Director, Volunteer Legal Services Hawai`i; Robin Kobayashi, Executive Director, Hawai`i Immigrant Justice Center; and Colleen Hanabusa, State Senate President and moderator, Richard Guy, Chief Justice, Washington Supreme Court, retired) faced the complicated question: Do desperate times require re-evaluation of how legal services are provided to low-income clients? The panel members engaged in a lively debate on the hard new reality of funding for legal services and on whether a restructuring of the current programs should be contemplated.

¹⁰ See Appendix "AA" for the dates that the 2009 Access to Justice Conference will air on Olelo. See Appendix "BB" for Access to Justice Summit Conference Agenda and Biographies of Panelists, Participants, and Moderators.

¹¹ See Appendix "CC" for Ms. Kaina's handout at the Access to Justice Summit: "Civil Legal Needs and Barriers of Low- and Moderate- Income People in Hawaii.

The second panel (Family Court Judge Michael Broderick and R. Elton Johnson, III, paralegal with moderator, Robert LeClair, Executive Director, Hawai'i Justice Foundation) discussed non-traditional approaches to meeting civil legal needs, including self-representation and extensive use of non-lawyers. The question of civil representation as a right, a civil right to counsel, is a difficult one.

The third group (Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director, The Mediation Center of the Pacific, Inc.; Nanci Kreidman, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Action Center; Robin Kobayashi, CEO, Haw. Immigrant Justice Center; and James H. Pietsch, Professor, William S. Richardson School of Law) illustrated the predicament for low-income and immigrant clients in locating the proper legal assistance.

Chief Justice John T. Broderick of the New Hampshire Supreme Court, was the featured speaker. Breakout group discussions¹² continued the momentum with concluding remarks of the conference given by Family Court Judge Evelyn Lance (retired).

The first annual summit conference illustrates the momentum of the Commission's industrious efforts to provide the necessary leadership to expand an awareness of the critical access to justice issues. During this past year, the Commission formulated model pro bono policies that government legal agencies and law firms could implement.¹³ That leadership will continue so that a significant improvement to the delivery of high quality civil legal services to low-income Hawai'i residents will be realized.

The Commission, through the Committee on Right to Counsel in Civil Proceedings, has studied the civil right to counsel issue by examining the existing right-to-counsel statutes in Hawaii and comparing them with statutes in other jurisdictions. The Commission is considering the feasibility of a proposed model right-to-civil-counsel statute to address certain high priority basic needs such as shelter, sustenance, safety, health, and child custody.

On September 8, 2009, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission visited Maui to meet with attorneys with offices on that island, government agencies, and legal service providers to provide information about the Commission and the various actions taken by the Commission in promoting

¹² See Appendix "DD" for suggestions from the breakout discussions at the Access to Justice Summit for the Commission to consider.

¹³ See discussion under Purpose (6).

equal access to justice. On September 15, 2009, the Chair and Vice Chair also conducted a similar visitation on Hawaii.

Purpose (2)

Develop and implement initiatives designed to expand access to civil justice in Hawai`i.

The Commission, through the Committee on Initiatives to Enhance Civil Justice, developed and approved a proposed foreclosure mediation program, which was considered by the Hawaii Supreme Court. The program would allow homeowners facing residential judicial foreclosure proceedings filed in Hawai`i to request mediation with the lender.

Although residential foreclosures are increasing nationwide, Hawai`i is being hit especially hard. A study done by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that 1 in 29 Hawai`i homeowners is expected to face foreclosure by the end of 2010, and that on average a Hawai`i homeowner in foreclosure is expected to lose \$24,768 in property value.¹⁴ Adding to the impact, Hawai`i as a whole will suffer projected losses of \$4.16 billion from combined state and local property tax revenues.¹⁵ Although the majority of residential foreclosures are handled outside of the court system, the number of recent judicial foreclosures is itself distressing. By way of example, in the Third Circuit alone, 375 foreclosure cases were filed from July, 2008, the beginning of the fiscal year, to May, 2009, as compared to 276 cases filed from July 2007 to June 2008.

Committee member and consumer lawyer George Zweibel commented:

In representing people with mortgage problems for many years, I have seen firsthand the alarming increase in Hawaii's foreclosure rate - now considerably above the national average - and the accompanying drop in our property values. This hurts everyone: families who lose their homes, neighbors whose property values are reduced even further, and lenders, whose losses are skyrocketing.

After review by the Hawai`i Supreme Court Committee to Review the Foreclosure Mediation Protocol, the Supreme Court issued an order on September 29, 2009 establishing a Foreclosure Mediation Pilot Project in the

¹⁴ Pew Charitable Trusts, *Defaulting on the Dream: States Respond to America's Foreclosure Crisis*, Hawaii (December, 2008).

¹⁵ Id.

Third Circuit Court, effective November 1, 2009, to October 31, 2010.¹⁶ In a residential foreclosure action, a Foreclosure Mediation Notice that substantially complies with Attachment A of the September 29, 2009, Order shall be served along with the complaint and summons. The Foreclosure Mediation Notice provides that the party is allowed to participate in mediation under the Foreclosure Mediation Pilot Project if (1) the party is the borrower or co-borrower, and (2) the party occupies the property as his/her primary residence. If a Foreclosure Mediation Request is filed within fifteen days after service of the notice with the complaint and summons, then the deadline to file and serve an answer to the complaint and to seek relief by dispositive motion is suspended until further order of the court.

Purpose (3)

Develop and publish a strategic, integrated plan for statewide delivery of civil legal services to low-income Hawai`i residents.

The Commission discussed whether a strategic plan was necessary at this stage. The Commission is only one year old and has developed a protocol whereby certain objectives are assigned to committees to examine in terms of substantially increasing access to justice. The committees transmit their findings and recommendations to the Commission for action.

It was determined by the Commission that in essence, a plan is already in place. Therefore, the Commission decided to table any action on a formal strategic plan as contemplated under Rule 21 for the present time.

Purpose (4)

Increase and stabilize long-term public and private funding and resources for delivery of civil legal services to low-income Hawai`i residents.

The Commission prepared resolutions for submission to the state legislature:

- supporting the proposal to raise the jurisdiction of the small claims court, a division of the district court, from \$3,500 to \$7,000. This legislation amending Haw. Rev. Stat. § 633-27 would free judicial time and allow the pro se litigants greater and less expensive access to the legal system.

¹⁶ See Appendix "S," Order Establishing Foreclosure Mediation Pilot Project in the Third Circuit Court of the State of Hawaii.

- supporting funding for the indigent legal service recipients grants
- supporting an increase of the filing fee in civil cases, which monies are paid into the Indigent Legal Assistance Fund, that, in turn, supports the legal services providers.

Purpose (5)

Maximize the efficient use of available resources by facilitating efforts to improve collaboration and coordination among civil legal services providers.

The Committee on Maximizing Use of Available Resources recognized that currently there is no comprehensive centralized information on all of the programs provided by the civil legal service providers. The Commission is working to create a database of centralized information from all civil legal services providers and programs concerning the services they each provide. Creation of such a centralized source of information will help the Commission assess the current framework of delivery of such services and assist with facilitating concrete, workable improvements to the framework. In conducting this review, the Commission seeks to ensure that:

- (1) there is an efficient and effective referral system of clients to the “right” program and among programs;
- (2) innovative methods of legal services delivery are explored and used;
- (3) new ways to utilize technology, including a centralized access to justice website, to meet current unmet legal needs are implemented where appropriate;
- (4) mediation and other alternative dispute resolution methods for resolving legal problems are utilized when appropriate; and
- (5) outreach efforts are coordinated among legal service providers as well as with social service providers, agencies and other organizations.

In addition, it may be necessary to explore with existing providers whether there are current gaps in their provision of services and to make recommendations concerning how such services might be expanded. This may include increasing types of legal problems for which assistance is offered; expanding office and clinic locations; extending office hours to include evenings and weekends.

In expanding outreach and publicity regarding the availability of legal services to the public, considerations are: locating outreach sites in areas convenient to potential clients; engaging in partnerships with community groups and agencies; and publicizing services and programs in low and moderate-income communities.

On or about July 9, 2009, and on September 21, 2009, the Committee on Maximizing Use of Available Resources sent surveys to organizations providing legal services regarding their access to justice needs.

Facilitating the collaborative efforts of the legal service providers, the Commission supported the 2009 National Pro Bono Celebration at Tamarind Park in downtown Honolulu on Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The event was a celebration of and introduction to the Access to Justice legal service providers and pro bono opportunities.

Purpose (6)

Increase pro bono contributions by Hawai`i attorneys through such things as rule changes, recruitment campaigns, increased judicial involvement, and increased recognition for contributors.

The Committee on Increasing Pro Bono Legal Services (“Pro Bono Committee”) was established to move forward on this purpose. Through this committee, the Commission has studied the implementation of the following model policies: a judicial pro bono policy, a corporate pro bono policy, a private law firm pro bono policy, and a government attorney pro bono policy.

Judicial Pro Bono Policy

In May 2009, the Commission adopted the model Judicial Pro Bono Policy recommended by the Pro Bono Committee, which policy is a compilation in one document of the different provisions in the Hawai`i Revised Code of Judicial Conduct relating to pro bono activities by judges. The policy references the appropriate rule or comment, allowing judges easy accessibility to what is appropriate conduct.¹⁷

Proposed implementation steps include giving all judges a survey that was modeled after the Montana judicial survey with amendments developed by the Commission; gathering data from all legal service providers regarding pro bono opportunities; preparing a pro bono guide book for the Hawai`i judges; and conducting training related to the guide book.

¹⁷ See Appendix “T” for a copy of the Hawai`i Judicial Pro Bono Policy.

Judicial Guidelines for Pro Bono Service

In July 2009, the Judicial Pro Bono Guidelines, setting forth pro bono activities that are allowed to be performed by judges, was recommended by the Committee to Increase Pro Bono Service, and ratified by the Commission without objection.

A proposal to amend Rule 3.7 of the Hawai'i Revised Code of Judicial Conduct, to clarify participation in allowable pro bono activities by judges, was posted for public comment on July 31, 2009, with a deadline of November 3, 2009 to submit comments.¹⁸

Corporate Pro Bono Policy

After extensive research, the Pro Bono Committee determined that there is no “model company” that employs a large number of attorneys. Therefore, the Commission is alternatively considering the promotion of an existing model or project for pro bono activity in the corporate sector.

Lawyers/Law Firm Pro Bono Policy

Policies in various states were reviewed, and it was concluded that the Montana model would serve as an appropriate starting point to incorporate Hawai'i law and practices. The Commission approved a model law firm policy presented by the Pro Bono Committee. On August 20, 2009, the HSBA board of directors endorsed such policy.¹⁹

Government Pro Bono Policy

Haw. Rev. Stat. §28-10²⁰ provides that deputy attorneys general must devote their entire time and attention to the duties of their office and shall

¹⁸ See Appendix “V” for the proposed amendment to Rule 3.7 of the Hawai'i Revised Code of Judicial Conduct.

¹⁹ See Appendix “W” for a copy of the Model Pro Bono Policy for Hawai'i Law Firms.

²⁰ Haw. Rev. Stat. §28-10 provides as follows:

Prohibition on private practice of law by the attorney general, first deputy, and other deputies. The attorney general, the attorney general's first deputy, and other deputies shall devote their entire time and attention to the duties of their respective offices. They shall not engage in the private practice of law, nor accept any fees or emoluments other than their official salaries for any legal services. This section shall not apply to any special deputy employed on a part-time basis for a limited period.

not engage in the private practice of law. This statute, which was enacted in 1953, has been interpreted by some as imposing a limitation on deputy attorneys general in rendering pro bono legal services.

In 2008, House Bill 2391 was introduced, which bill sought to amend Haw. Rev. Stat. §28-10, to allow a deputy attorney general to provide pro bono legal services if the services did not create a conflict of interest with the duties of the deputy's office. Although House Bill 2391 was passed by the Hawai'i legislature, it was vetoed by the Governor, who cited concerns about the process for determination of a conflict of interest. The Commission is considering re-introduction of this bill and will draft testimony, which will (1) specifically address the Governor's conflict of interest concerns and (2) highlight the urgency of the bill's passage due to a growing unmet need for such services.

Despite the current restriction on the type of pro bono activity by deputy attorneys general, the Commission approved a Model Policy for Government Attorneys Performing Pro Bono Work, to provide a framework for pro bono activities.²¹ This policy was adopted after review of pro bono policies for government lawyers in various states, federal agencies, the County of Hawai'i, the County of Maui and similar policies in Washington and Minnesota, and policies adopted by the United States Department of Justice and the New York State Bar Association. The selected provisions for inclusion in the Commission's Government Pro Bono Policy best reflect a common sense approach to government attorneys performing pro bono services in their community.

New CLE Rule

The Commission supported new Supreme Court Rule 22 that requires that each active attorney take three credit hours annually of approved Mandatory Continuing Professional Education (MCPE). Access to justice is

Interestingly, section 28-5 provides that there should be assistance by the attorney general to the poor. That section provides as follows:

Aids poor. The attorney general shall give counsel and aid to poor and oppressed citizens of the State and assist them in obtaining their just rights without charge; provided that the attorney general shall not be obliged to render such aid, counsel, and assistance, unless requested so to do by the governor, or by some one of the heads of departments.

²¹ See Appendix "X" for the model policy for government attorneys performing pro bono work.

one of the qualifying education topics for MCPE. In addition, all active attorneys are encouraged to complete nine or more credit hours annually of approved Voluntary Continuing Legal Education (VCLE). The Commission's proposal that up to three hours of VCLE may be satisfied by providing pro bono service, as defined in Rule 6.1 of the Hawai'i Rules of Professional Conduct was included in Rule 22.²²

The Commission will be working with the HSBA on the access to justice aspects of the new Rule 22.

Purpose (7)

Reduce barriers to the civil justice system by developing resources to overcome language, cultural, and other barriers and by providing input on existing and proposed laws, court rules, regulations, procedures, and policies that may affect meaningful access to justice for low-income Hawai'i residents.

The Committee on Overcoming Barriers to Access to Justice was established to take action on this purpose. The Committee met with Debi Tulang-De Silva, Project Director for the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts, to discuss the certification process for court interpreters. Based upon data compiled in 2007, the following languages were the highest in demand: Chuukese, Ilokano, Vietnamese, Spanish, Korean, Tongan, Marshallese, Japanese, Samoan, Cantonese, Tagalog, Mandarin, Pompeian, and Laotian. Currently, there are 176 names on the certification registry list.

The committee will meet with a representative of the State of Hawai'i Judiciary's Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts ("CEAC") to determine if the Committee should have a role in the CEAC's project to provide intensive multi-part workshops that will target the leaders of the Southeast Asian communities interested in gaining improved access to the courts. In addition, there will be a review of models utilized by the Domestic Violence Action Center in exploring strategies to educate the legal

²² See Appendix "Y" for Supreme Court Rules 17 and 22 regarding mandatory continuing legal education. Furthermore, see Appendix "EE" for an article "CLE Rule Brings New Focus on Access to Justice" by Kristen Yamamoto and Lynda Arakawa, which article will be published in the December 2009 issue of the *Hawaii Bar Journal*. The article explains that "[a]dding access to justice as a MCLE topic is a significant step by the court to enhance the visibility of and to expand attorneys' knowledge of access to justice issues."

community and the public regarding the issues of interpreters in civil matters.

Other types of barriers that will be investigated include cultural, physical disability, and mental disability barriers.

Purpose (8)

Encourage lawyers, judges, government officials, and other public and private leaders in Hawai'i to take a leadership role in expanding access to civil justice.

The Commission encouraged participation in Law Week and Law Day. In addition, Nalani Fujimori Kaina of the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and Jill Hasegawa, Commission Vice Chair, addressed the statewide conference of the Office of the Public Defender, State of Hawai'i.

Rule 6.1 of the Hawai'i Rules of Professional Conduct embodies an aspirational goal that lawyers provide 50 hours of pro bono service annually, which would encompass participation in various pro bono activities as described in the rule. Associate Justice Simeon Acoba, with, at different times, Moya Gray, Jill Hasegawa, Nalani Fujimori Kaina, and Rai St. Chu, visited with the groups to encourage their commitment to meet the goals of Rule 6.1 including the following offices:

Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing

Ashford & Wriston

Ayabe Chong Nishimoto Sia & Nakamura

Cades Schutte

Carlsmith Ball, LLP

Chee & Markham

Damon Key Leong Kupchak Hastert

Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel

Hawaii County Office of the Corporation Counsel

Hawaii County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney

Hawai'i Disability Rights Center
Henderson Gallagher & Kane
Intermediate Court of Appeals
Labor and Industrial Relations Appeals Board
Maui County Department of the Corporation Counsel
Office of the Federal Public Defender
Office of the Public Defender, State of Hawaii
Schlack Ito Lockwood Piper & Elkind
Law Office of Eric A. Seitz
Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher

The foregoing named groups have committed to striving to meet the requirements of Rule 6.1. The Commission has recognized these law firms and government offices by acknowledging their commitment in the *Hawai'i Bar Journal* and at the Access to Justice website.²³

Comment [5] to the Revised Code of Judicial Conduct

In May 2009, the Commission adopted the recommendation by the Initiatives Committee to add a Comment [5] to Rule 2.2 of the Hawai'i Revised Code of Judicial Conduct, which would permit a judge to sanction an attorney by ordering the attorney to perform pro bono legal services or to make a monetary contribution to a non-profit organization providing pro bono legal services. This amendment was posted for public comment on August 11, 2009, with a deadline of November 13, 2009 to submit comments.²⁴

²³ See Appendix "Z" for photographs of the various attorneys in these committed law firms and government agencies and brief statements of their pro bono policies.

²⁴ See Appendix "U" for the proposed amendment to the Commentary to Rule 2.2 of the Hawai'i Revised Code of Judicial Conduct (Comment 5).

Purpose (9)

Educate governmental leaders and the public about the importance of equal access to justice and of the problems low-income people in Hawai`i face in gaining access to the civil justice system through informational briefings, communication campaigns, statewide conferences (including an annual summit to report on and consider the progress of efforts to increase access to justice), testimony at hearings, and other means. Increase awareness of low-income people’s legal rights and where they can obtain legal assistance as needed.

Communications

The Commission encouraged the publication of articles related to access to justice in the *Hawai`i Bar Journal*, the official magazine of the HSBA. The December 2008 issue of the *Hawai`i Bar Journal* featured a number of articles describing the Commission and the funding outlook for the access to justice. In 2009, there have been monthly articles in the magazine highlighting various legal service providers such as the Domestic Violence Action Center and the Hawai`i Immigrant Justice Center. The Commission also provided periodic updates of the various model pro bono policies adopted.²⁵

The Commission published an informative article about the Commission and its actions in the *Pacific Business News* (special supplement for the 2009 HSBA bar convention).²⁶

The Commission established an “Access to Justice” subpage at the HSBA website. The “Access to Justice” site provides helpful information about the Commission and current news articles.

Legislation

Commission members had conferences with various legislators during the 2009 legislative session and met the entire House leadership.

Through the Committee on Funding Civil Legal Services, the Commission supported legislation that would have increased the initial filing

²⁵ See Appendix “EE” for various articles on access to justice published in the *Hawaii Bar Journal*.

²⁶ See Appendix “FF” for various articles on the Commission published in the *Pacific Business News*.

fee for civil actions. Such legislation was not successful during the 2009 session.

Additionally, the Commission supported the proposed legislation raising the jurisdiction of the small claims court, a division of the district court, from \$3,500 to \$7,000. This legislation would have allowed pro se litigants greater and less expensive access to the legal system.

The Commission also adopted a resolution addressed to the state legislature supporting the requests for grants for indigent legal services by the various legal service providers. However, as noted earlier, the legislature did not approve any grants in the last legislative session.

Purpose (10)

Increase effective utilization of paralegals and other non-lawyers in the delivery of civil legal services to low-income Hawai'i residents.

The Committee on Initiatives to Enhance Civil Justice examined several issues related to the expanded role of paralegals:

- (1) what is the current situation in Hawai'i;
- (2) what is the role of paralegals in other states; and
- (3) whether the expansion of paralegals' roles would be in the context of employment for one of the legal service providers or applied to an individual paralegal.

The Committee is examining projects that would benefit from an expanded role of paralegals, such as assisting in uncontested divorces where the parties are unrepresented by attorneys and guardian ad litem work. The Commission will examine the issue of expanded roles for non-lawyers.

Purpose (11)

Increase support for self-represented litigants, such as through self-help centers at the courts.

The Commission acknowledges that a past attempt was made to establish a court navigation project. In that project, a self-help center was established at the First Circuit Court. This self-help center provided informational packets of instructions and forms to assist individuals in handling certain of their own legal proceedings and processes (e.g., filing for an uncontested divorce). Although this project was discontinued after the initial grant funds were expended and possible lack of sufficient court staff

and unresolved bureaucratic barriers, other future options include establishing self-help centers organized and staffed by legal services providers (rather than the Judiciary) or providing a part-time service at the courts to assist self-represented parties with filling out court forms and with making return and post-mediation appearances.

In addition to the foregoing, the Commission, through its Committee on Self-Representation and Unbundling, is considering increasing the number of family law and bankruptcy clinics, conducting workshops on electronic resources and court forms, and approaching the Judiciary about securing physical space to provide pro bono services.

Purpose (12)

Develop initiatives designed to enhance recruitment and retention of attorneys who work for nonprofit civil legal services providers in Hawai`i and to encourage law students to consider, when licensed, the practice of poverty law in Hawai`i.

Currently, the William S. Richardson School of Law (WSRSL) has demonstrated its commitment to public service law through various programs, including its Clinical Program, externship placements, Advocates for Public Interest Law (APIL) student organization, and Law Student Public Service Program.

The Commission evaluated the current efforts made by WSRSL and identified, through its Law School Liaison Committee, several areas for possible new initiatives or enhancements:

Grants, Loan Reimbursements, and Scholarships

WSRSL, through APIL, recently awarded two grants to advance the work of WSRSL alumni whose professional endeavors are focused on serving the poor. In an effort to increase the number of grants provided, as well as opportunities for loan reimbursements and scholarships, the Committee is exploring possible legislative funds or support.

Pro bono Program Awareness

The Committee believes that WSRSL's pro bono program could be greatly strengthened if more practicing attorneys volunteered to accept pro bono cases or mentor students on pro bono cases. In the hopes that more attorneys would volunteer for these activities if they were aware of the availability of law student assistance, the Committee is considering

mechanisms to increase awareness of WSRSL's pro bono program, such as WSRSL's website and a direct link to that website from the HSBA website.

Special Projects

The Committee determined that pro bono work should extend beyond individual cases, and is exploring ways to encourage law students and attorneys to develop projects that prevent legal problems or provide alternative dispute resolution options, particular for the poor.

Student Practice Rule

The Committee will examine the possibility of expanding the student practice rule under the Hawai'i Rules of Professional Conduct to allow students to represent consenting clients in court without the presence of a supervising attorney, in order to alleviate time demands on pro bono supervisors and to provide students with more direct access to under-served clients.

Volunteer Programs

The Committee is recommending that more should be done to encourage professors and students to become actively involved in the volunteer programs run by HSBA that provide legal information to under-served individuals (such as Legal Lines and Table Clinics).

Pro bono Mandate

WSRSL has a Law Student Public Service Program that mandates at least sixty hours of pro bono work from each student for no additional credits.

Purpose (13)

Encourage the formation of a broad coalition of groups and individuals to address ways to alleviate poverty in Hawaii.

The Commission is in the process of identifying appropriate groups and individuals to participate in a coalition aimed at alleviating poverty in Hawaii by ensuring that every child/person in Hawai'i has adequate food, shelter, healthcare, and education.

As a mechanism for gathering interest and identifying appropriate groups and individuals for the coalition, the Commission's Committee on Alleviating Poverty in Hawaii has considered the possibility of a study of the

legal proceedings dealing with housing issues in Hawaii, particularly landlord-tenant and eviction cases, on the rationale that the loss or lack of adequate shelter is often the precipitating incident that causes a spiral into poverty.

Through this study and other future efforts, it is hoped that the Commission will be able to assemble a coalition that has the proper interests, skills, and resources to generate creative and effective solutions to address poverty issues in Hawai`i.

Purpose (14)

Conduct a statewide assessment of unmet civil legal needs among low-income people in Hawai`i five years after the Commission holds its first meeting to measure the progress being made.

An initial statewide assessment of unmet civil legal needs among low-income people in Hawaii was completed in November 2007. The Commission held its first meeting on July 23, 2008. Therefore, the next statewide assessment is not scheduled until July 23, 2013.