

REPORT TO THE TWENTY-THIRD HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE  
ACT 178, PART III, SECTION 43  
REPORT DUE AUGUST 1, 2005

Part III, Section 43 of Act 178- Relating to the State Budget, requires the Department of Human Services to: conduct a review of the current internal policies to respond to legislative inquiries; provided further that the department shall establish new written policies to respond to legislative inquiries in a more timely manner; provided further that these policies will include a definitive work plan, a tracking mechanism of legislative requests and reports due, and clearer performance expectations of staff; provided further that the department shall submit to the legislature a report of both the new and old internal procedures to respond to legislative inquiries by August 1, 2005.

## Old DHS Legislative Procedures

Previous policies and procedures for timely responses for mandated Legislative reports and Legislative inquiries.

- 1) All requests for information were requested to be in writing and signed by the committee chairs and sent to the Director (DIR) per the directives of the Governor's Chief of Staff dated February 26, 2004 and February 14, 2005 (attached). E-mail requests were also accepted.
- 2) The requests were forwarded to Budget staff (BGT). BGT also sometimes received an advance copy by fax or email.
- 3) BGT logged in the request and assigned a number to the request to be used for tracking.
- 4) BGT forwarded the requests to the appropriate division, staff office, or attached agency with a suspense date.
- 5) BGT transmitted the responses to the requestor and sent copies of the responses to the Governor's Office, the Department of Budget and Finance, and the divisions, staff offices, or attached agencies.
- 6) Requests that went directly to the division, staff offices, or attached agencies that required a policy call were sent to the DIR for review.
- 7) Legislative committee staff often call after they receive our responses to get further clarification on our responses. It was not clear whether or not these calls were separate requests which needed to be submitted in writing. Nevertheless, the divisions answered the questions, when they didn't require a lot of time to research or questioned the Administration's policies, per the memoranda from the Governor's Chief of Staff (see attached), and would send a written account of who asked the question, the question, the answer, and the means of inquiry through the orange "Memorandum of Record – Legislative Query/Request" form. These were transmitted to the DIR for review and filing.

## DHS LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES

The opening day of the 24th State Legislature Regular Session of 2006 is scheduled for Wednesday, January 18, 2006 and ends on Thursday, May 4, 2006. The following departmental guidelines will be utilized in our continuing effort to expedite and facilitate the legislative process and improve communication with the Legislature.

### Legislative Team:

Tracy Okubo, Legislative Coordinator,  
Susan Yamamoto, Administrative Assistant,  
Fax  
E-Mail

586-5036  
586-4888  
586-4890

e-mailaddress@domainname.gov

### Definitions:

Legislative Team: Tracy, Susan

Four Letters: Color coded letters sent in response to each inquiry for information within 48 hours of receipt.

"Neapolitan": Got your inquiry, response is attached/enclosed  
"Vanilla": Got your inquiry, we will respond by the set deadline  
"Chocolate": Got your inquiry, need more clarification/information from you, then will respond  
"Strawberry": Got your inquiry, need extension of set deadline, approximate time to expect a response

Logs: Spreadsheets for tracking areas of interest.

1. *Legislative Inquiries*: Track inquiry from receipt to final response. Updated daily (see attached)

#### a. Requests For Information

All requests including budgetary requests and summaries of verbal requests (discouraged) should be sent to the legislative email address at DHS. A designated DHS staff will log each request and assign it to the appropriate division, agency, and/or staff office for response. A tracking log will be updated daily and available on the Q drive.

Information requested by legislative committees at hearings that could not be answered at the time shall be submitted to the chair of the committee in writing within one week. Legislative Coordinator will be notified by the DHS testifier of the request for information at the hearing within one work day at the DHS legislative email address.

The response is to be made to the Chair of the legislative committee and shall include the date of the hearing, the specific request, the name of the legislator making the request, as part of the overall response.

While most legislative requests and inquiries may be handled at the Division level, the Governor's Chief of Staff has asked that any request for information by members of the Legislature or their staff involving the Administration's policy or requiring a substantial amount of time to research, should be submitted in writing via email, hard copy and/or fax along with the appropriate due date, addressed to the Department Director. Please reinforce this directive when receiving verbal request(s) for information. If that request for written follow-up is not forthcoming, the person receiving a verbal request will send an email summarizing their understanding of the information requested and the time it will take to respond.

VICES LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY TRACKING SHEET (MASTER LIST)-LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2006

<u>Tracking Code</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Division</u>	<u>Assignment/Staff</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Date Due (Requested)</u>	<u>Date Sent Out</u>
HSE0000-06							
SEN0000-06							