



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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GOVERNOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public invited to attend events planned statewide to raise awareness during Suicide Prevention Month

HONOLULU – In Hawai'i, one person dies by suicide every two days in our state, which is why the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch, in partnership with the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force, is announcing a series of community events open to the public in recognition of Suicide Prevention Month in Hawai'i.

The goal of events across the state during the month of September is to raise public awareness about suicide prevention, the impact of suicides in Hawai'i, and to connect survivors with postvention services (schedule of events listed below).

In Hawai'i, suicide is the leading cause of fatal injuries for people ages 15 to 64 and is the tenth leading cause of all deaths in the state. From 2014 -2018, 958 Hawai'i residents died from suicide.

"Suicide is a serious, complex and preventable public health issue," said Health Director Bruce Anderson. "Our response requires a strategic and comprehensive approach through outreach, collaboration with stakeholders, and building and maintaining statewide relationships to ensure resources are available to those who need them most. We hope that through these efforts, we'll be able to identify effective strategies to reduce the risk for suicide."

Each year, the Out of the Darkness Walk is one the largest Suicide Prevention Month activities held in the state. Volunteers organize the event to increase awareness of suicide prevention resources and the available support for at-risk individuals, loved ones of suicide survivors, and the public. On O'ahu, more than 900 participants, including representatives from all branches of the military and students from local schools, will take part in this year's event on Sept. 14 at Ala Moana Beach Park, Magic Island. Event and participation details are available at www.afsp.org/oahu.

For anyone experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, or anyone who knows someone who is, call the Crisis Line of Hawai'i at (808) 832-3100 (O'ahu), 1 (800) 753-6879 (neighbor islands), the National Suicide Hotline at 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255), and text ALOHA to the Crisis Text Line at 741-741. Resources are available 24 hours every day. More information about suicide prevention may be found at <http://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/suicide-prevention/information/>.

Additional Suicide Prevention Month activities planned include:

Kaua'i:

- Sept. 7 (9 a.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Waimea Athletic Field Complex. Contact: Sheila Louis-Garcia, (808) 652-2149 or sheilalouis1425@gmail.com.

O'ahu:

- Sept. 10 (9 a.m.): Joint Services Suicide Prevention Proclamation Signing and Human Awareness Ribbon at Navy Exchange parking lot, Bougainville Dr. Contact: Melanie Beachy, Military and Family Support Center, (808) 474-0089 (office), 808-723-4292 (cell), or Melanie.beachy@navy.mil.
- Sept. 10 (3:30 p.m.): Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell proclamation signing in the Mayor's Conference Room at Honolulu Hale. Contact: Nancy Deeley, (808) 733-9238 or Nancy.Deeley@doh.hawaii.gov.
- Sept. 13 (10:30 a.m.): Gov. David Ige proclamation signing at the Hawai'i State Capitol. Contact: Nancy Deeley, (808) 733-9238 or Nancy.Deeley@doh.hawaii.gov.
- Sept. 14 (8 a.m.–1 p.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Magic Island. Contact: Pua Kaninau-Santos, (808) 271-8582 or pkshawaii@gmail.com.

Maui:

- Sept. 6 (9 a.m.): Maui County Council proclamation presentation at Council Chambers. Contact: Danielle Bergan, danielle.bergan@mentalhealthhawaii.org
- Sept. 28 (9 a.m.–1 p.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Keopuolani Park, Kahului. Contact: Danielle Bergan, danielle.bergan@mentalhealthhawaii.org

Hawai'i Island:

- Sept. 10 (12 p.m.): Community sign making at the UH Hilo campus library lanai with sign-waving to follow (4:30 – 5:30 p.m.). Contact: Yolisa Duley, hipreventsuicide@gmail.com
- Sept. 25 (10 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.): "Recognize/Connect Suicide Prevention Training" at Hilo Medical Center ground conference room. Contact: Gary Gardner, gardnerg003@hawaii.rr.com

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