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November 5, 2025

Via electronic submission

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker of the House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear President Kouchi and Speaker Nakamura:

Pursuant to Section 607.56, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), the Judiciary is transmitting a copy of the *Report on the Parent Education Special Fund*, including an accounting of all deposits into and expenditures from the fund in Fiscal Year 2025.

In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, we are also transmitting a copy of this report to the Legislative Reference Bureau Library.

The public may view an electronic copy of this report on the Judiciary's website at the following link: https://www.courts.state.hi.us/news_and_reports/reports/reports.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please feel free to contact Karen Takahashi of the Judiciary's Legislative Affairs and Special Projects Division at (808) 539-4896, or via e-mail at Karen.T.Takahashi@courts.hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Brandon Kimura

Brandon M. Kimura
Administrative Director of the Courts

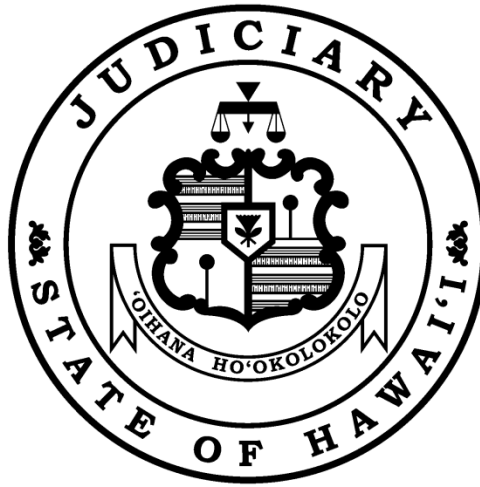
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**REPORT TO THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

A Report on the Parent Education Special Fund

Pursuant to HRS § 607-5.6



Prepared by:

The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

November 2025

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE 2026 REGULAR SESSION

A Report on the Parent Education Special Fund

Pursuant to HRS § 607-5.6

The Parent Education Special Fund, established by the 1997 Legislature, State of Hawai'i, through Act 274, codified as HRS § 607-5.6, requires the Judiciary to submit a report on the Parent Education Fund.

On May 2, 2003, HRS § 607-5.6 was amended to increase the fund's surcharge from \$35 to \$50 for Family Court matrimonial cases and to add the surcharge to parentage actions.

The Purpose of the Fund

The Parent Education Special Fund is used to administer education programs to families currently involved in divorce cases in the State of Hawai'i. Parties litigating custody matters as well as children of unmarried or never-married parents living in the same household are also required to attend. Parents attending the divorce-education programs are encouraged to refocus on their children's needs by learning how continued fighting negatively impacts their children. They are also encouraged to mediate rather than litigate their custody conflicts. The programs emphasize that:

- family violence is never appropriate and is extremely harmful to children;
- children will thrive if they live in safe homes and are loved by both parents;
- the court takes into account the safety of victims and children in making custody and visitation decisions.

Children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) also attend to learn how to cope with changes in their family. The programs emphasize that children are not the cause of parental separation, that parents do not divorce their children, and that there are many families going through similar experiences. Children and teens participate in age-appropriate discussions and activities focused on helping each child identify and understand their emotions.

After an opening statement by a Family Court judge, parents and children watch *The Purple Family* (1999), a timeless film which gently broaches themes of divorce and separation. The film is unique in that the words "divorce" or "separation" are never used explicitly to describe the family's situation. The programs distribute parenting guides with island-specific information on resources for counseling, domestic violence, parenting, and anger management classes. The website www.kidsfirsthawaii.com is also available to provide island-specific program and contact information to families.

Parent Education Programs

Each circuit administers its parent education program. In the First (O'ahu), Second (Maui), and Fifth (Kaua'i) Circuits, the program is called *Kids First*. The Third Circuit (Hawai'i Island) has two programs: *Children First* in Kona and *Children in Transition* in Hilo.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which created unprecedented interruptions across the State of Hawai'i, in April 2020 *Kids First* O'ahu created innovative online programming still utilized by families on all islands. The online program features pre-recorded presentations by Family Court judges and licensed psychologists from *Kids First*. The judges speak to parents about what to expect in Family Court, while the presenters discuss ways to minimize risks during the divorce or separation process. The programming also includes the award-winning *Purple Family* film, as well as a presentation by a licensed psychologist and interactive activities for children. Parents are asked to complete a feedback form and encouraged to ask questions, which are forwarded to *Kids First* staff and licensed psychologists.

The O'ahu *Kids First* program is held in person on Wednesday evenings, alternating weekly between Hale Hilina'i in Honolulu and the Ronald T.Y. Moon Court Complex in Kapolei. In addition, Zoom sessions are held for parents and children every Thursday evening and online classes are conducted for families with exceptional circumstances. The Maui *Kids First* program is held in person on the second Wednesday of the month at Hoapili Hale in Wailuku. Hawai'i Island continues to provide online classes only, utilizing O'ahu's online platform with its own link on the O'ahu web page and many of its own videos. Kauai's *Kids First* program is held in person on the second Wednesday of the month at Pu'uhonua Kaulike Building in Lihu'e.

FY 2024-2025 Cases by Circuit	Divorce	Parentage	Civil Union	Total Cases
First (O'ahu)	1,855	579	1	2,435
Second (Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i)	377	140	1	518
Third (Kona and Hilo)	564	191	1	756
Fifth (Kaua'i)	164	56	0	220
Total:	2,960	966	3	3,929

The percentage of filings for each circuit closely mirrors the population distribution for the State of Hawai'i. The majority of cases were filed on O'ahu, with 1,855 new divorce cases (63% of the state total) and 579 parentage filings (60% of the

state total). Additionally, one civil union divorce was filed on O‘ahu (the state total is three).

FY 2024-2025 Attendance by Circuit	Adult Attendance	Children Attendance	Total Attendance
First (O‘ahu)	1,855	1,121	2,976
Second (Maui, Moloka‘i, Lana‘i)	267	178	445
Third (Hilo and Kona)	241	274	515
Fifth (Kaua‘i)	187	116	303
Total:	2,550	1,689	4,239

Statewide, divorce education classes served a total of 4,239 individuals (2,550 parents and 1,689 children). In FY 2024-2025, *Kids First* O‘ahu served a total of 2,976 individuals (1,855 adults and 1,121 children).

Statewide revenue during FY 2024-2025 totaled \$121,389, which includes interest of \$15,334. Total expenses were \$81,450.

The Parent Education Special Fund began collecting filing fee surcharges and donations beginning July 1, 1997. The attached financial report reflects the 28th year of collections. The Parent Education Special Fund continues to support all five of the State of Hawai‘i Judiciary’s parent-education programs.

THE JUDICIARY
PARENT EDUCATION SPECIAL FUND
FY 2025 (July 01, 2024 - June 30, 2025)

OBJECT CODE	DESCRIPTION	FIRST CIRCUIT	SECOND CIRCUIT	THIRD CIRCUIT	FIFTH CIRCUIT	TOTAL
<u>REVENUES</u>						
0288	INTEREST	15,334	-	-		15,334
0763	SURCHARGE	<u>74,350</u>	13,400	11,780	6,525	106,055
		89,684	13,400	11,780	6,525	121,389
TOTAL REVENUES						
OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES & ENCUMBRANCES						
2901	ESCORT SVC/ OTHER STATE DPT					-
2902	SECURITY SERVICES	10,045	4,962		741	15,748
3204	DUPLICATING SUPPLIES	117				117
3206	DATA PROCESSING SUPPLIES	379				379
3209	OTHER STATIONERY AND OFFICE SUPPLIES	400				400
3301	FOOD SUPPLIES	1,929			765	2,694
3501	DUES					-
3502	SUBSCRIPTIONS					-
3901	PRINTING AND BINDING					-
4102	CAR MILEAGE - OTHERS					-
4401	TRANS OUT OF STATE - EMPLOYEES					-
4501	SUBSISTENCE OUT OF STATE - EMPLOYEES					-
4601	HIRE OF PASSENGER CARS - EMPLOYEES					-
4801	OTHER TRAVEL					-
5503	OTHER RENTALS (PARKING PASS)					-
6619	OTHER PUBLIC SUPPORT & ASSISTANCE					-
7131	INTERPRETER FEES	534				534
7198	OTHER SERVICES ON FEE BASIS	28,760	18,000		8,700	55,460
7204	SPECIAL FUND ASSESSMENT (ACT 34, SLH 1964)	6,118				6,118
7205	TRNG COST & REG FEES					-
7215	OTHER MISC CURRENT EXP					-
7751	DATA PROCESSING SOFTWARE					-
7752	DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT					-
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES						
		48,282	22,962	-	10,206	81,450