

VIA EMAIL

February 12, 2026

Ryan Yamane, Director
Department of Human Services
State of Hawai'i
dhs@dhs.hawaii.gov

Re: Disclosure of Records Concerning Geanna Bradley and A.B. (b. 02/2019)

Dear Director Yamane:

We write to respectfully ask you to release the Department of Human Services' records regarding Geanna Bradley and "A.B.", born February 2019, pursuant to your express authority under HAR § 17-1601-6(16). Public disclosure is warranted for at least three reasons.

First, as permitted by federal and state law, DHS rules authorize you as director to disclose these records to the public under four distinct circumstances. The rules designate disclosure to the public a "legitimate state purpose" when:

- (A) The subject of the report has been criminally charged with committing a crime relating to the child abuse or neglect report;
- (B) A law enforcement agency or official, a state's attorney, or a judge of the state court system has publicly disclosed in a report, as part of his or her official duty, information regarding the investigation of a report, or the provision of services by the department;
- (C) A legal custodian of the child, the alleged perpetrator, or other party has voluntarily made a public disclosure concerning a child abuse and neglect report, investigation of a report, or the provision of services by the department; or
- (D) The child named in the report is missing, has suffered a near fatality, been critically injured, or has died.

HAR § 17-1601-6(16); *see* 42 U.S.C. § 5106a(b)(2)(B)(viii)(VI) (DHS permitted to disclose records for a "legitimate state purpose"), (x) (DHS required to disclose information about a "case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality"); HRS § 346-10(a)(10) (DHS permitted to disclose child abuse or neglect records as provided by rules); HRS § 350-1.4(a) (same); HRS § 587A-40(b) (DHS permitted to



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disclose family court records without court order as provided by rules). As reflected by relevant criminal indictments, civil lawsuits, and media reports, each of these circumstances is present here.

Second, disclosure would send a clear message to the public and policy makers that DHS is serious about change. The Act 86 (2023) Malama Ohana Working Group concluded that more transparency and accountability is needed. Disclosure advances systemic improvement. That cannot happen without more public scrutiny when things go horribly wrong.

Third, the Hawai`i Supreme Court recently clarified the standard for disclosure of family court records in abuse and neglect cases – which are full of DHS records – and that standard is squarely met here. *Pub. First L. Ctr. v. Viola*, 157 Haw. 242, 248, 576 P.3d 755, 761 (2025) (“we hold that a family court may find a ‘legitimate purpose’ to disclose information from a CPA proceeding where a foster child is missing, has suffered a near fatality, been critically injured, or has died”). Instead of reacting to a motion to unseal or court order directing the same, as in the case of Ariel Sellers, DHS has the opportunity here to proactively disclose records and help the public better understand how it responds to the problems of child abuse and neglect.

We understand these are sensitive matters. But they are unquestionably important to the community and the subject of legitimate public interest and debate about how to better protect Hawai`i keiki. Although we anticipate some redaction would be appropriate to protect the identities of minors, mandated reporters, and others with legitimate privacy interests, please note that we do not make this request under the Hawai`i public records law and do not need DHS to construe it as such.

If you are willing to entertain this request, we kindly ask that you let us know by February 27, 2026. We welcome further discussion about appropriate redactions and any other practical concerns you may have. I can be reached directly at (808) 380-3576 or ben@publicfirstlaw.org.

Respectfully,



Benjamin M. Creps
Staff Attorney
Public First Law Center