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COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL
ADVOCATES PROGRAM

IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT

STATE OF HAWAII

SPECIAL PROCEEDING TO
UNSEAL PORTIONS OF CHILD
PROTECTIVE ACT PROCEEDING

Case No. 1FFM-24-0000019
(Special Proceeding)

INTERESTED PARTY COURT
APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES
PROGRAM'S MEMORANDUM
REGARDING PUBLIC FIRST'S LETTER
FILED JANUARY 26, 2026 (JEFS DKT.
73); CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Judge: Honorable Dyan M. Medeiros
Hearing Date: None

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INTERESTED PARTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES PROGRAM'S
MEMORANDUM REGARDING PUBLIC FIRST'S LETTER FILED JANUARY 26, 2026

Interested Party COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES PROGRAM

("CASA"), responds to the Letter filed by Movant PUBLIC FIRST LAW CENTER ("Public First") on January 26, 2026. JEFS dkt. 73.

Public First requests (among other things) that:

1. JEFS dkts. 1, 6, 31, 41, 61, 63, and 65 in Case No. 1FFM-24-0000019 be unsealed; and
2. JEFS dkts. 19, 37, 43, and 69 in Case No. 1FFM-24-0000019 remain or be sealed.

JEFS dkt. 73 at 1-2. Public First further asserts that the documents identified in the first category can be unsealed "consistent with this Court's prior orders (modified to the extent affected by the Hawai'i Supreme Court's September 20, 2025 opinion)." *Id.* at 1.

This Court construed the Letter as a motion and gave all parties an opportunity to file a memorandum in opposition or objection within 20 days after service of the Letter and Order. JEFS dkt. 75 at 2-3.

CASA acknowledges that Public First may seek to unseal (or seal) documents in Case Nos. 1FFM-24-0000018 and 1FFM-24-0000019 under *Pub. First Law Ctr. v. Viola*, 157 Hawai'i 242, 576 P.3d 755 (2025) ("*Public First v. Viola*"). However, the Hawai'i Supreme Court made clear that any documents ordered to be unsealed must first be appropriately redacted to protect identifying information. *Id.* at 252, 576 P.3d at 765. Specifically, the *Public First v. Viola* Court stated:

Last, we note that the petition did not seek any relief as to the unsealing of the miscellaneous proceedings initiated by Public First to access Ariel's CPA and adoption case records. See 1FFM-24-0000019 (moving to unseal CPA records); 1FFM-24-0000018 (moving to unseal adoption records). Some records filed in these miscellaneous proceedings identify the Siblings, including their years of

birth, initials, and other information. To support its order, the family court details personal information about the Siblings in the case files. See 1FFM-24-0000019 Dkt. 59:10, ¶ 39. Also, DHS’s opposition discloses their birth years and initials. If a motion to unseal these miscellaneous proceedings is filed in the family court, then this information should be redacted.

Pub. First Law Ctr. v. Viola, 157 Hawai‘i at 252, 576 P.3d at 765.

Here, although Public First seeks to unseal certain filings, it does not identify what portions of those documents require redaction to comply with this Court’s prior orders and the requirements articulated in *Public First v. Viola*. This omission is significant. As the Hawai‘i Supreme Court recognized, requests of this nature impose “a substantial burden on family court . . . to prepare redacted case files.” *Id.* at 251, 576 P.3d at 764 (citation omitted). To mitigate that burden, this Court may require Public First, as the moving party, to submit proposed redacted versions of the documents sought to be unsealed – JEFS dkts. 1, 6, 31, 41, 61, 63, and 65 in Case No. 1FFM-24-0000019. *See id.* (recognizing the family court’s inherent powers to order a party to prepare redacted versions of case filings).

CASA therefore requests that, before ruling on Public First’s request, this Court: (1) require Public First to submit proposed redacted versions of JEFS dkts. 1, 6, 31, 41, 61, 63, and 65 in Case No. 1FFM-24-0000019 that it contends comply with this Court’s prior orders and *Public First v. Viola*; and (2) give CASA an opportunity to review the proposed redactions and, if necessary, file objections within a reasonable time as set by this Court.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawaii, April 20, 2026.

STATE OF HAWAII

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

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The undersigned hereby certifies that, on the date indicated below, a true and correct copy of the foregoing document was duly served upon the following parties through the US Mail, postage prepaid, or electronically by the Judiciary Electronic Filing System:

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DATED: Honolulu, Hawaii, April 20, 2026.

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