



THE HIGH ROAD

"Preserving public confidence in public servants."

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Hawaii State Ethics Commission

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Check Out Our New Web Site!

The Hawaii State Ethics Commission's Web site has a new look! On April 8, 2008, the Commission launched a "new" Web site. This is actually a redesign of our previous Web site, with a number of improvements.



Here's what's new:

- **Redesigned Layout with Right and Left Menus.** The left menu lists the categories of information available on our Web site. The right menu provides current news and useful reminders.
- **Enhanced Search Engine.** The new search engine searches all categories of information on our Web site. (The old search engine produced search results from the Commission's opinions and decisions only.) Now, your search may produce results from several categories, such as advisory opinions, *The High Road* newsletter, or other Commission publications.
- **Who We Are and What We Do.** This section provides information about the Hawaii State Ethics Commission and its duties.
- **News.** Press releases and other newsworthy items can be found in this section of our Web site.
- **Legislation.** Check this section to see testimony the Commission has submitted to the State Legislature during the current session.
- **Filing Deadlines.** Deadline dates for filing financial disclosures, lobbying reports, and gifts disclosures can be seen at a glance on our Web site.
- **Direct Link to Our Email Address.** This link will enable you to contact us more easily.
- **Links to related Web sites.** Our Web site can quickly link you to the Web sites of other related government agencies.

As always, our Web site provides access to:

- The state ethics laws and state lobbying laws administered by the Commission;
- Opinions and decisions issued by the Commission;
- Publications and guidelines issued by the Commission;
- Public financial disclosure filings;
- Gifts disclosure filings;
- Lobbying registrations and reports;
- Contract notice filings; and
- Forms and instructions for ethics and lobbying disclosure statements.

Please visit our Web site at
www.hawaii.gov/ethics!

Nepotism Ban Fails to Pass Legislature

This year, the Hawaii State Ethics Commission urged legislators to pass a nepotism law that would prohibit all state officials and employees from appointing, employing, or promoting their own relatives. The Commission's Executive Director, Daniel Mollway, asked legislators to support the passage of a nepotism law for Hawaii. "I doubt there is any reasonable person in the United States who believes that state officials and state employees should be freely able to hire their own relatives or any immediate family members for state jobs," stated Mollway in a memorandum to legislators regarding Senate Bill No. 945, H.D. 1. "All people in Hawaii deserve a chance to obtain a state job," said Mollway. "Nepotism is just wrong, and should be abolished." Despite the Commission's efforts, the nepotism bill failed to pass Hawaii's legislature this year.



ETHICS QUIZ

Question: Bob is a state inspector. In his spare time, Bob does carpentry work. One of the businesses that Bob inspects is interested in purchasing a koa table that Bob has made. What should Bob do in this situation?



- A. Demand a high price for the table because the business is in no position to bargain and will probably pay whatever Bob asks.
- B. Sell the table to the business at a fair market price.
- C. Contact the State Ethics Commission for advice because this transaction may be prohibited by the ethics code.

Answer: The correct answer is **C**. Bob should contact the State Ethics Commission for advice. The State Ethics Code prohibits substantial financial transactions between a state employee and a person or business that the employee supervises or inspects. This prohibition is part of the "Fair treatment" law, HRS §84-13, which prohibits the misuse of official position by a state employee. This law prohibits Bob from entering into a substantial financial transaction with a business that he inspects as part of his state duties. Bob should call the Commission to discuss his situation to make sure that he does not run afoul of the ethics code.

Sign Up For An Ethics Workshop

The Hawaii State Ethics Commission has scheduled the following ethics workshops for state employees:

Ethics for State Employees. This workshop covers the major provisions of the State Ethics Code that are applicable to all state employees. Hypothetical case studies are used to engage participants in discussions about ethics. Topics include conflicts of interests; gifts and the reporting of gifts; confidential information; misuse of government office and government resources; the award of state contracts to state officials and employees; and post-employment restrictions. The workshop also covers the role of the Hawaii State Ethics Commission in administering and enforcing the State Ethics Code.

Ethics for State Procurement Personnel. This workshop covers ethics issues that are especially relevant for employees who procure goods and services for the State. Topics include conflicts of interests; outside employment with vendors and contractors; gifts, including meals, trips, and special discounts from vendors and contractors; misuse of government office in dealing with vendors; requirements for the award of contracts to state officials or to businesses in which state officials have controlling interests; and ethics restrictions for former state employees who are employed by vendors or contractors doing business with the State.



Ethics for State Supervisors. State supervisors play an important role in maintaining a high awareness of ethics in the workplace. This new workshop covers ethics issues that are especially relevant for state supervisors and managers. Topics include supervising employees who have possible conflicts of interests with their state duties; office procedures and policies for gifts and the reporting of gifts; ethics issues that can arise in dealings between supervisors and subordinates, including the misuse of government office and government resources; and post-employment restrictions. The workshop will give supervisors tips on how to promote awareness of ethics and help employees comply with the State Ethics Code.

For workshop dates, times, and locations, and information about registering for a workshop, visit our Web site at www.hawaii.gov/ethics.

The High Road is a publication of the
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