

“The people of Hawaii believe that public officers and employees must exhibit the highest standards of ethical conduct and that these standards come from the personal integrity of each individual in government.”

*— Hawaii State
Constitution
Article XIV*

**Hawaii State
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The High Road

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State Ethics Website: New Look, Improved Features!

Have you visited the State Ethics Commission's website recently? We have redesigned it to help you find the information or services that you need more easily. Select from the following choices on our new homepage:

ADVICE – Find out how to get quick, confidential ethics advice from one of the Commission's attorneys. Learn whether you may need to seek a formal Advisory Opinion from the Commission and what that process involves. Fill out and submit an online travel questionnaire form to request advice about a gift of travel. View the Commission's *Quick Guides* to the Ethics Code and *The High Road* newsletter.

PUBLIC DATA – Learn what public records are available for review and access public filings, including financial disclosure statements, gifts disclosure statements, and lobbying registration statements and expenditure reports.

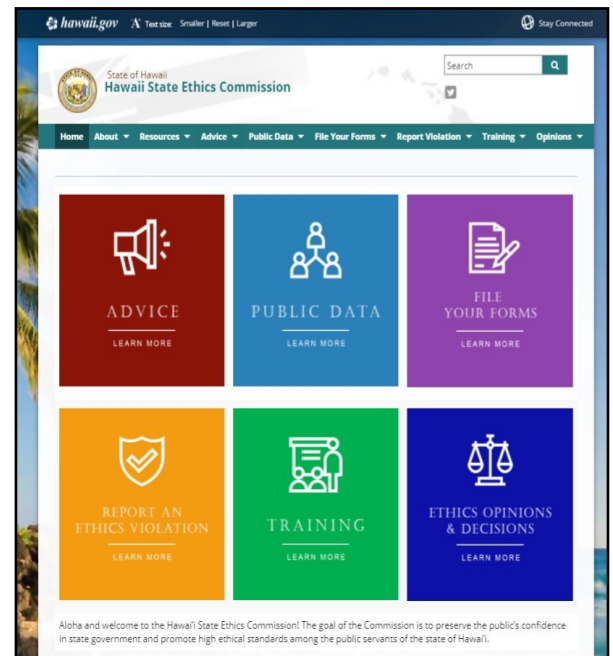
FILE YOUR FORMS – File your financial disclosure form or gifts disclosure form, register as a lobbyist, or file your lobbying expenditure report. Learn more about the filing requirements, including whether you need to file and how to file online.

REPORT AN ETHICS VIOLATION – Find out how to make an ethics complaint and learn what happens when you make a complaint. Use our new online form to submit a confidential/anonymous complaint. Learn about the Commission's enforcement process for ethics violations.

TRAINING – View the Commission's in-person training schedule and sign up to attend a training class. Submit a request for ethics training for your state agency. Take the Commission's 30-minute online ethics training course for a quick introduction to the State Ethics Code. (Note: All in-person training sessions have been suspended at this time due to the pandemic, but we are working to develop videoconference trainings. We will update our training schedule on the website as soon as our in-person sessions resume.)

ETHICS OPINIONS & DECISIONS – Review the Commission's advisory opinions, decisions (issued after contested case hearings), and resolutions of charges/investigations (issued after the Commission enters into settlement agreements with those accused of ethics violations).

Visit our website here: <https://ethics.hawaii.gov/>



“The purpose of this chapter is to . . . establish an ethics commission which will . . . render advisory opinions and enforce the provisions of this law so that public confidence in public servants will be preserved.”

Preamble,
Hawai‘i Revised
Statutes Chapter 84
(State Ethics Code)

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Campaign Activities Reminder for State Officials and Employees



In this election year, it is important for all state officials and employees to remember that the State Ethics Code prohibits the use of state government resources for political campaign activities. Here are some reminders for legislators and employees:

- Do not use your official position to pressure others to make campaign contributions, provide campaign assistance, or otherwise support a candidate.
- Do not conduct campaign activities during state work hours or use state personnel to perform campaign activities during state work hours.
- Do not use state facilities, including state offices and meeting rooms, for campaign activities.
- Do not use state equipment (including phones, photocopiers and computers) or state supplies for campaign activities.
- Do not use your state email account to send or receive campaign-related emails. If you receive an unsolicited campaign-related e-mail at your state e-mail address, we advise that you delete the e-mail and/or ask the sender to remove you from the mailing list.
- Do not use state newsletters, state websites or state social media accounts for campaign purposes. For example, do not use a state website or social media account to link followers to a campaign website.

For more information, read our *Quick Guide on Campaign Activities for State Officials and Employees*: <http://bit.ly/HSEC-campaigns>

2020 Candidate Financial Disclosures Posted for Public Review

All candidates for state elective office were required to file a disclosure of their financial interests with the State Ethics Commission by July 20, 2020. A total of 175 out of 182 candidates filed their disclosures by the deadline. Candidates who failed to meet the filing deadline were assessed a \$50 penalty as required by law.

A candidate’s financial disclosure includes information about a

candidate’s sources of income; business ownership interests; officer or director positions in businesses; debts; real property interests; clients represented before state agencies; and creditor interests in an insolvent business. Candidate financial disclosures are public records and are posted on the Commission’s website at <https://hawaiiethics.force.com/public/s/hsecm-cfd-public/>

2020 Ethics Legislation Pending Governor's Review

Hawai'i State Ethics Commission

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Governor Ige has notified the Legislature that he intends to veto an ethics bill that will tighten the post-employment restrictions for high-ranking state officials. [H.B. 2124, H.D.1, S.D.2](#) prohibits officials from lobbying the Legislature and administrative agencies for a year after leaving state office. The bill's restrictions would apply to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, cabinet-level officials, members and executive directors of certain state boards, legislators, and other specified officials.

The State Ethics Commission strongly supported H.B. 2124, testifying that it would "promote integrity in government by strengthening the wall of separation between lobbyists and high-ranking government officials" (<https://tinyurl.com/y36yv6yw>). However, Governor Ige announced that he will veto the bill because its restrictions will make it more difficult to recruit volunteer board members. (<https://tinyurl.com/y3dxcubb>).

Commission Chair Ruth Tschumy has asked Governor Ige to allow H.B.2124 to become law. Strong post-employment laws prevent abuses by government officials to benefit potential employers and combat the perception that former state officials are using their connections from government service to obtain special favors. The Commission believes that, on balance, H.B. 2124 will significantly improve the public's trust in government, with minimal impact on the recruitment of volunteer board members.

The Legislature also passed the following ethics bills, which were not on the Governor's veto list:

[H.B. 2125, H.D.2, S.D.1](#) amends the financial disclosure law by (1) requiring filers to report any clients they assist or represent for pay before state agencies, even if the filer's assistance is behind the scenes, and (2) updating the law to provide for the electronic filing of financial disclosures. H.B. 2125 also removes an exemption in the financial disclosure law for members of the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission ("HCSOC"). HCSOC members will now be required to file financial disclosures with the State Ethics Commission.

[H.B. 1673, H.D.1, S.D.1](#) clarifies the rulemaking responsibilities of the State Ethics Commission and the Legislature with regard to the Fair Treatment law and how legislators must disclose potential conflicts of interests.

[H.B. 361, H.D.1, S.D.2](#) adds a new section to the State Ethics Code which prohibits the Governor, while holding office, from having any other employment or controlling interest in a business. The measure also prohibits the Governor from receiving any emolument (any salary or payment other than the Governor's state salary, retirement income, rental income, or other forms of passive income). H.B. 361 establishes similar restrictions for the county mayors.

The Governor has until September 15, 2020 to sign these bills or allow them to become law without his signature.

