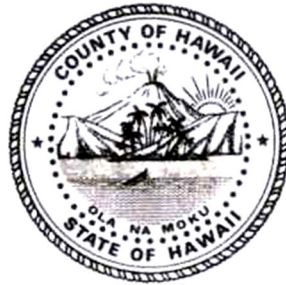


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# YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT



County of Hawai'i  
Office of the County Clerk  
25 Aupuni Street  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
<http://hawaiicounty.gov>

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## ***YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT***

***This brochure has been prepared to help Hawai‘i Island citizens participate in the County government process. It is important for citizens to know how to effectively voice their ideas and opinions. To do so, it is incumbent upon the individual to understand the basic structure and functions of our County government.***

***Many of our laws are made by the County, but the State Constitution and the laws of the State, the bulk of which comprise the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, granted each County the power to frame and adopt a charter for their own government.***

***The State legislature adopts “enabling” legislation for counties to perform specific functions. Understanding the separate State and County functions is important when attempting to influence legislation. This brochure briefly explains the role of the County. It is an overview of the structure of County government and its functions. It is also an update to a brochure created by the League of Women Voters, who deserve credit for the birth of this educational resource.***

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September 2012, December 2012, February 2014,  
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December 2024**

## HAWAI'I COUNTY CHARTER

As authorized by state law, the electorate of Hawai'i County adopted its **County Charter** in 1968 by special election. This set up the manner by which County government operates.

Under the Charter, there are two branches of government: the executive branch and the legislative branch. The Charter also created the position of Prosecuting Attorney, an official elected every four years who is charged with investigating and prosecuting public offenses and offenses against the laws of the State and County.

### **COUNTY CHARTER AMENDMENTS**

The County Charter sets forth the structure of government in Hawai'i County. Amendments to the Charter may be initiated in three ways:

- (1) By ordinance of the Council after three separate readings passed by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the entire membership;
- (2) By submittal of a petition to the Council from 20 percent of the registered voters for the last preceding general election; or
- (3) By a Charter Commission, which is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council to review the Charter every ten years.

In all cases, the registered voters of the County must vote on the proposals to amend the Charter. An affirmative vote of at least 50 percent plus one in a general or special election is required for ratification of a proposed charter amendment.

### **INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM**

**Initiative** is the power of the voters to propose ordinances by petition. **Referendum** is the power of the voters to approve or reject ordinances by election. Each initiative and referendum petition must be signed by qualified voters of the County equal in number to at least 15 percent of the number of persons who voted for the office of Mayor in the last Mayoral election. For more specific information, see article XI of the Hawai'i County Charter.

### **RECALL AND IMPEACHMENT**

The voters have the ability to remove an elected official from office through **recall**. A petition must be signed by qualified voters equal to or greater than 25 percent of the total valid votes cast for the office subject to the recall petition in the last election. If the recall petition is deemed to be sufficient by the County Clerk and the official in question does not resign within 10 days after such notice, an election is held to determine if the official should be removed from office. Elected officers can also be removed through **impeachment** proceedings. At least two percent of registered voters in the County in the last general election must sign a petition for impeachment of the mayor or prosecuting attorney, and at least two percent of registered voters in the respective council district in the last general election must sign a petition for impeachment of any council member. Impeachment can be initiated for malfeasance, misfeasance, nonfeasance, or maladministration. The circuit court is the venue for the impeachment trial of any elected official. For more specific information, see article XII of the Hawai'i County Charter.

## **THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

The legislative branch of our County is made up of the County Council and its support offices, which are under the authority of the Office of the County Clerk, and also an independent Office of the County Auditor. The primary function of the legislative branch is to create laws and develop public policy within the scope of County jurisdiction. In addition, the Council lobbies the State and Federal governments for changes it believes would be in the County's best interest.

### **COUNTY COUNCIL**

A nine member County Council is elected by the voters from the Council district in which the council member lives and votes. The Council generally meets twice a month in an open session presided by its Chair. Business is conducted through various committees known as standing committees, subcommittees, ad hoc committees, or the Committee of the Whole. Standing committees are created by the Council according to need. It is through the standing committees that detailed discussion and research work take place. The different standing committees then make recommendations to the full nine-member Council for a final decision. Meetings of the standing committees are generally held twice per month when legislative documents (bills, resolutions, and/or communications) are referred to a particular standing committee. With the adoption of Resolution 402-06 in August 2006, effective December, 2006, the County Council began holding an equal number of Committee and Council meetings in East and West Hawai'i. All such meetings are held pursuant to chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, which contains provisions for public proceedings and record keeping, more commonly known as the "Sunshine Law."

### **OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

The Office of the County Clerk serves the interests of the people of Hawai'i Island by: (1) assisting the County Council, in a professional and non-partisan manner, to carry out its policy-making duties; (2) carrying out voter registration and election-related responsibilities in a professional and non-partisan manner; (3) accurately recording and carefully preserving and maintaining the legislative records of the County Council; (4) furnishing information to the public and County departments in a timely and professional manner; and (5) meeting the reprographic needs of the County in a fair and efficient manner.

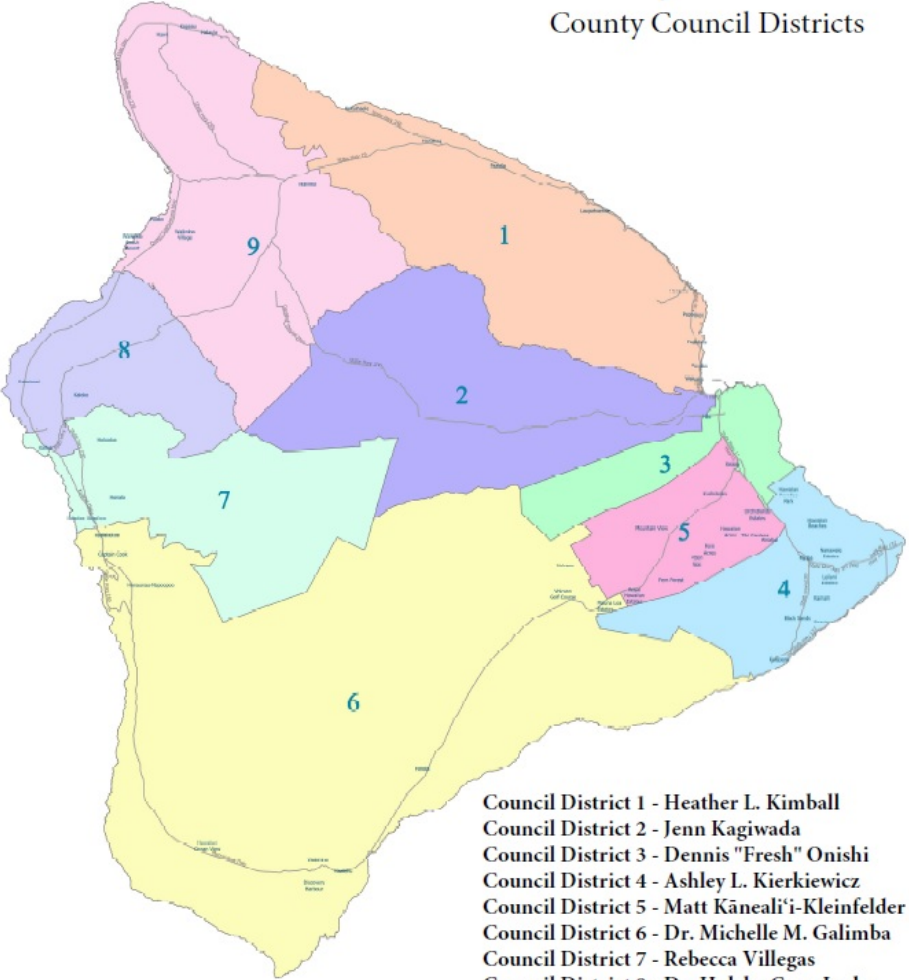
**Divisions or offices under the auspices of the County Clerk include:** Council District Staff, Council Services Section, Administrative Services, Support Services (Reprographics Division), Legislative Research Branch, and Elections Division.

### **OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR**

The Office of the County Auditor is established pursuant to Section 3-18 of the Hawai'i County Charter. The County Auditor is appointed by the County Council and serves for a period of six years and thereafter, until a successor is appointed. The County Auditor is responsible to 1) conduct, or cause to be conducted, the annual audit of the County (as required by Hawai'i County Charter, Article X, Financial Procedures); and 2) perform financial and/or performance audits and follow-up audits as set forth in an annual audit plan. The annual audit plan and audit findings and recommendations are transmitted to the County Council and the Mayor via written reports, and filed with the County Clerk as public record.

# County of Hawai'i

## County Council Districts



Hawaii County Council Districts



County of Hawaii  
Council District Final Plan  
December 21, 2021



County of Hawaii  
Redistricting  
Commission 2021



## **BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, COMMUNICATIONS**

Issues are usually introduced to the Council through its Committees in the form of ***bills, resolutions*** and/or ***communications***.

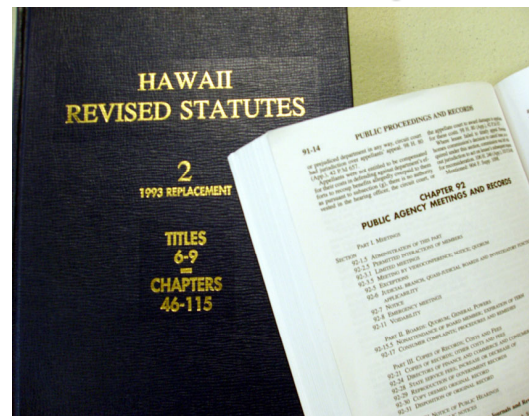
***Bills*** are legislative acts of the Council. Bills are often utilized to *amend* the Hawai'i County Code. When a bill becomes law, it is called an *ordinance*. (See pages 7-8) Certain ordinances collectively make up the Hawai'i County Code. The Code encompasses policies and standards governing signage, animal control and licensing, building, plumbing and electrical codes, land use controls, traffic control, flood control, County parks and recreation, public transportation, real property taxes, sewers, landfills and other areas relevant to the public's health, safety, and welfare that fall under the jurisdiction of the County. A bill is usually drafted by individual Council members, their staff, various County departments or the Office of the Corporation Counsel. Many ordinances are not found in our County Code, including ordinances that establish or amend our operating and capital improvement budgets, amend our General Plan, initiate Charter amendments, and authorize the issuance of bonds. Some bills (such as those related to planning) are required to go through agency or commission hearings before they reach the Council. Other bills are introduced directly to a standing committee by Council members.

***Resolutions*** are non-legislative acts that do not have the force and effect of an ordinance, unless otherwise provided by law. They have a wide array of applications. There are two types of resolutions: *formal* and *informal*. A formal resolution represents an official expression of the Council. It covers anything from creating the Council's Rules of Procedure and Organization to moratoriums on parking meter usage, approving contracts and leases, amending the salary ordinance, approving street names, or transferring budget funds. Resolutions establishing real property tax rates, authorizing eminent domain proceedings, and revising County fuel tax rates, function in a legislative manner. Informal resolutions express the will of the Council and can be utilized to lobby the County administration, state lawmakers, and/or the private sector to take action the Council deems beneficial to the County. Resolutions can also appoint Council members to a committee, designate the chair and vice chair of the Council and its committees, and accept donations made to the County.

**Communications** are letters or memos that discuss ideas and concerns about legislative issues and/or transmit legislative documents. Communications addressed to the *Council Chair* and *Members of the County Council* are distributed to all Council members and are placed on a committee agenda at the request of any Council member. Written testimony, in any format and from any source, is considered a communication. Bills and Resolutions are transmitted to the appropriate standing committee or to the full council via communication. Communications also come from the Mayor's administration, typically to transmit legislation drafted by the administration, apprise the council or its committees of information relevant to its policy-making duties, or inform that the Mayor has either vetoed a bill for an ordinance or left it unsigned. A communication can also be something as simple as one Council member requesting time for a presentation in another Council member's committee.

### **SUNSHINE LAW**

Our State "Sunshine Law" (chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes—Public Agency Meetings and Records) requires that the agenda of all Council and Committee meetings be filed with the Office of the County Clerk at least six days before a meeting so that citizens have time to consider and comment on issues at hand. Testimony on a bill, resolution or other issues before the council and its standing committees can be submitted to the Council or Committee prior to or during the meeting. The Council also accepts oral testimony on agenda items at Council and Committee meetings. Oral and written testimony become part of the Council's official record. The County Charter contains a section that is complimentary to chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes. Section 13-20 of the Charter, titled "Records and Meetings Open to the Public", provides that notice for any regular, special, rescheduled or emergency meeting shall be provided according to the provisions of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes.



## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The County of Hawai'i has multiple sources of revenue to fund its budgetary needs. The following are some of the major sources of County revenue:

### **Real property taxes**

The Real Property Tax Division of the Finance Department administers the assessment of real property and the collection of real property taxes. Following public hearing, the Council sets real property tax rates each year. Assessments are set at 100% of estimated fair market value as of January 1st of each year and taxes are levied on July 1. The taxes are due in two equal installments on August 20 and February 20. Real Property Tax revenue is the primary source of revenue for the County's operating budget.

### **Fuel tax**

Fuel taxes are collected by the state and remitted monthly to the County's highway fund. Section 243-5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, empowers the County Council to determine fuel tax rates. A public hearing is held prior to any such determination by the Council.

### **Motor vehicle weight tax**

Motor Vehicle Weight taxes are a major source of revenue for the County's highway fund, with rates set by the Council following public hearing. For a passenger vehicle, the rate is 1.25 cents per pound. For personal and commercial trucks over 6,500 pounds, the rate is 2.5 cents per pound. An additional County fee of \$25.50 is assessed on all vehicles.

### **General excise and use tax surcharge**

Pursuant to Act 11, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2018, codified as section 46-16.8, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, as amended, the County established a 0.50 per cent general excise and use tax surcharge that can be expended on public transportation needs within the County.

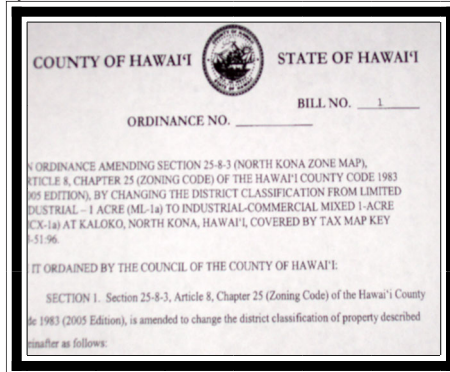
### **State and federal funds**

Funds from the State and Federal government are applied to specific projects, such as emergency medical services and services to senior citizens.

## **BUDGET PROCEDURES**

- The Mayor submits proposed operating and capital improvement budgets for the upcoming fiscal year (July 1—June 30) to the County Council, on or before March 1 of each year.
- The Mayor submits amendments to the budget to the Council within 10 working days after the close of the State Legislature, but no later than May 5.
- The County Council holds public hearings on the proposed operating and capital improvement budgets at any time after March 1, but prior to the first reading on the budget bills, which is held after May 5.
- The Council adopts the operating and capital improvement budgets, as may be amended by both the Council and the administration, on or before June 30.

# HOW BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS ARE PROCESSED



**(1) Bills and resolutions, collectively called legislation, are drafted by the County Council or Mayor’s administrative departments. (The public can introduce legislation through the initiative process—see page 1.)**

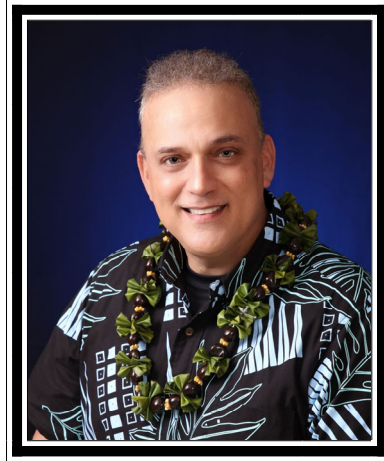
**(2) Legislation is referred to a Council committee for consideration, or waived to the full Council if the matter is time sensitive. The chair of the Council and respective Committee chairperson must approve any waiver from Committee.**



**(3) Committees make recommendations on legislation to the Council by vote. Five votes are required for a positive recommendation. Committees provide an opportunity for input and amendment of legislation prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Council.**

**(4) The Council further discusses the merits of legislation, takes testimony, can propose and adopt further amendments, and ultimately votes aye or no. In most instances, two readings and five affirmative votes are needed to pass a bill; one reading and five affirmative votes are needed to adopt a resolution\*.**

**\*Certain bills require six affirmative votes and three readings; certain resolutions require two readings.**



(5) Bills that are passed by the Council are sent to the Mayor for approval. The Mayor can: (a) sign the bill for approval—bill becomes law; (b) take no action—bill becomes law after 10 business days; or (c) disapprove the bill, returning it to the Council with objections. The Council can then override the Mayor’s disapproval; the Charter requires at least six aye votes to override the Mayor’s disapproval. A bill that becomes law is called an “ordinance.”



(6) Titles of ordinances, with a tally of votes, must be printed in at least two daily newspapers published in the county. Most ordinances are compiled into the Hawai’i County Code. Copies of adopted resolutions are sent to designated parties by the County Clerk.

## THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Article IV of our County Charter provides general provisions for the establishment of an executive branch of government. "The executive power of the County shall be vested in and exercised by the executive branch, which shall be headed by the mayor, and administered by the managing director, except as otherwise provided by this charter."

The **Mayor** is the chief executive officer of the County, whose numerous duties include:

- (a) Coordinating and supervising all executive agencies of the County through the managing director, except as otherwise provided by the charter;
- (b) Appointing necessary staff, for which the Council has made appropriations;
- (c) Submitting annually an operating budget, an operating program, a capital budget, and a capital program to the Council;
- (d) Vetoing ordinances that are deemed objectionable and returning vetoed ordinances to the Council within 10 business days with objections; and
- (e) Enforcing the provisions of the County Charter, the ordinances of the County, and all other applicable laws.

Our Mayor is elected to a four-year term by voters island wide. The Mayor may serve for more than two terms of office but shall not serve for more than two consecutive full terms of office.

The Mayor, with approval of the Council, appoints a **managing director**. The managing director's duties include:

- (a) Acting as the principal managing aide to the Mayor;
- (b) Supervising the administrative functions of all agencies, departments, boards, and commissions;
- (c) Recommending the annual operating and capital improvement budgets to the Mayor; and
- (d) Evaluating the management and performance of each executive agency, providing reports to the Mayor and the Council on the findings and recommendations of such evaluation.

The Mayor also appoints the directors of the various departments under the Mayor's administration. Each such appointment must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Council.

## **EXECUTIVE BRANCH - Departments**

### **ANIMAL CONTROL AND PROTECTION** 808-327-3558, 808 935-3311 (after hours)

The Animal Control and Protection Agency is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of County pounds and to provide animal control services to implement Chapters 142, 143, and 711, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, relating to the protection of animals, and Chapter 4 (Animals) of the Hawai'i County Code.

### **CIVIL DEFENSE** 808-935-0031; 808-935-3311 (after hours)

The role of the Civil Defense Agency is to direct and coordinate the development and administration of the County's total emergency preparedness and response program to ensure prompt and effective action when natural or man-caused disaster threatens or occurs anywhere in the County of Hawai'i.

### **CORPORATION COUNSEL** 808-961-8251

The Office of the Corporation Counsel acts as the legal advisor and legal representative for all County officers, employees, departments, agencies and boards and commissions, including the County Council. The Counseling and Drafting Division provides legal support to all County departments and assists them in facilitating their programs and the delivery of services to our community. The Litigation Division represents the County and its officers and employees in all courts of the State of Hawai'i, as well as before administrative boards and arbitrators.

### **DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** 808-932-2960

The Department of Information Technology provides information technology support to the departments and agencies of the County of Hawai'i. This includes the implementation of new technology, maintenance of existing hardware and software, coordination and support of the County-wide telecommunications network, improving customer service and providing consultation services regarding technology issues.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT** 808-961-8083

The Department of Environmental Management has the responsibility for continuous performance of all matters relating to sewer operation and maintenance; solid waste disposal and landfill programs; abandoned vehicle disposal; and all other environmental projects, including e-waste and hazardous waste disposal and recycling programs of the County. The Department of Environmental Management is also a key support agency for Civil Defense emergencies.

**DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE** 808-961-8234

The Department of Finance, under the Director of Finance, is a major staff agency under the Mayor. Its significant functions are financial planning and administration, and its primary responsibilities are in six control areas: accounts, budget, assessment, purchasing, treasury, and centralized data processing.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT** 808-932-2900

The Hawai'i Fire Department is primarily responsible for fire protection and suppression, pre-hospital emergency medical services, land and sea search and rescue, hazardous materials response, ocean safety, fire prevention and public education for the County of Hawai'i.

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES** Phone 808-961-8361; fax 808-961-8617

The Department of Human Resources administers the civil service laws as they apply to the County. The department also has responsibility for strategic planning, workforce planning and employment, human resources development, compensation and benefits, employment and labor relations, and occupational health and safety.

**IMMIGRATION INFORMATION OFFICE** 808-961-8220

The Immigration Information Office provides immigration information and assistance on immigration-related issues and concerns to the constituents of Hawai'i County, disseminates immigration forms, acts as a resource office, and serves as a liaison to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS formerly INS). **NOTE: This office does NOT provide legal advice or adjudicate immigration applications.**

**MASS TRANSIT AGENCY** 808-961-8744

The Hawai'i County Mass Transit Agency provides public transportation around the island through the Hele-On Bus system. In addition, the Transit Agency offers a Shared Ride Taxi program which provides door-to-door transportation for a nominal fee.

**OFFICE OF AGING** E. Hawai'i: 808-961-8600 W. Hawai'i: 808-323-4390

The Office of Aging is responsible for developing a comprehensive system of services for older persons in Hawai'i County. As a planning agency, staff conduct needs assessments, write grants, administer contracts, develop training programs, manage a senior citizen database, and perform advocacy functions.

**OFFICE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Administration, Community Development  
Development and Planning Divisions  
808-961-8379 (v)

Existing Housing Division  
(Section 8)  
808-959-4642 (v/tdd)

The Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) is under the direct supervision of the Mayor. The OHCD is responsible for the planning, administration and operation of all of the County's housing programs; planning, administration and monitoring of assigned federal grants and other programs; managing assigned leases and lands; and, during emergencies, assessing property damage and implementing the housing element of the County's Disaster Response Plan. The goal of the OHCD is to provide for the development of viable communities in Hawai'i County by providing decent housing, suitable living environments, and the expansion of economic opportunities.

**OFFICE OF LIQUOR CONTROL** E. Hawai'i 808-961-8218 W. Hawai'i 808-323-4370

The Office of Liquor Control regulates the manufacture, importation, sale and consumption of intoxicating liquors and ensures compliance with state and County laws.

**OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT** E. Hawai'i: 808-961-8211 W. Hawai'i: 808-323-4444

The Office of Management provides direction, leadership and operational supervision for the County departments, agencies, and boards and commissions, and works together with the County Council to develop and implement policies and programs. Its powers, duties and functions are authorized and described under Articles V and VI of the County Charter. The Office of Management was formerly known as the Office of the Mayor.

**OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

**Kelden B.A. Waltjen, Prosecuting Attorney** E. Hawai'i: 808-961-0466  
W. Hawai'i: 808-322-2552

E. Hawai'i 808-961-0466 W. Hawai'i 808-322-2552 N. Hawai'i 808-887-3017  
The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney is the legal agency responsible for the prosecution of all criminal offenses occurring on the Island of Hawai'i before the District Court, Family Court, Circuit Court, Grand Jury, Intermediate Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai'i .

**OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE, EQUITY, AND RESILIENCE**

808-865-8671

The Office of Sustainability, Climate, Equity, and Resilience coordinates and manages policies and programs to address sustainability, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to the impacts of climate change and other natural and human-caused hazards.

**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION** 808-961-8311

The Department of Parks and Recreation manages and maintains the County's recreational facilities and operates programs for summer fun, aquatics, culture and arts, and elderly activities. The department also manages County cemeteries and bands as well as special purpose facilities and programs such as the Hilo drag strip, skeet range, equestrian center, the Pana'ewa Rainforest Zoo and Gardens, Hilo Municipal Golf Course, and West Hawai'i Golf program.

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT** E. Hawai'i: 808-961-8288 W. Hawai'i: 808-323-4770

The Planning Department provides advice to the Mayor, Leeward and Windward Planning Commissions and County Council on all planning and land use matters. The department is also charged with the administration of the Subdivision and Zoning Codes.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT** 808-935-3311

The Hawai'i County Police Department is Hawai'i Island's primary law enforcement agency. The department provides 24-hour service in all districts. In an emergency, phone 911.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS** E. Hawai'i 808-961-8321

W. Hawai'i (Engineering Division) 808-323-4850 (Building Division) 808-323-4720

The Department of Public Works is responsible for all matters relating to engineering; public and private building construction and inspection; construction, inspection and maintenance of public streets, highways, bridges and drainage facilities; design, operation and maintenance of traffic signals and traffic control devices; and all other County public works projects.

**DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT** 808-961-8366

The Department of Research and Development's mission is to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i County through responsible economic development in agriculture, tourism, film, energy, and community support services, the development of new businesses and industry, and the collection and development of data for decision-making, program development and policy-making.

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY 808-961-8060**

The Department of Water Supply is a semi-autonomous agency, responsible for managing, controlling and operating the waterworks of the County and all property thereof.

**BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

The following are boards and commissions **established by the Charter** of the County of Hawai'i. Each text section provides information about the main duties of each of these bodies. There are other boards and commissions established by the County Code or that have their legal origins in the Charter. For more information, go to <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/our-county/boards-and-commissions>

**Board of Appeals**

The Board of Appeals hears and determines all appeals from the final decisions of the planning director or the director of public works. It conducts hearings in accordance with chapter 91, Hawai'i Revised Statutes and the Hawai'i County Charter. For administrative purposes, the Board of Appeals is a part of the Planning Department.

**Board of Ethics**

The Board of Ethics interprets the County's Code of Ethics for officers, employees and the public; receives and initiates complaints; conducts hearings on violations; renders opinions; and proposes revisions to the Code of Ethics.

**Charter Commission**

The Charter Commission is comprised of 11 members, nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council every 10 years, to study and review the operations of the County government under the Hawai'i County Charter. The Charter Commission may propose amendments to the Hawai'i County Charter after approving proposals in open meetings. Any proposals that are approved by the Charter Commission are then submitted to the electorate at the next General Election, or at a Special Election called by the Charter Commission, for approval by the voters of the County of Hawai'i.

**Cost of Government Commission**

The Cost of Government Commission studies and investigates the organization and method of operation of all departments, commissions, boards, offices, and other instrumentalities of all branches of County government and determines if any changes are desirable. This commission is authorized to obtain information, statistics, estimates, and suggestions from any officer, employee, and/or department or agency of the County it needs to carry out its duties. The commission submits reports on its findings and recommendations to the Mayor, managing director, and the Council.

**County Redistricting Commission**

The County Redistricting Commission establishes the boundaries of each Council district, where no district is to be drawn to unduly favor or penalize a person or political faction. Insofar as possible, districts shall be contiguous and compact; where possible, district lines shall follow permanent and easily recognizable features; and each district shall have approximately equal resident populations as required by applicable constitutional provisions. The year 1991 and each tenth year thereafter are deemed redistricting years.

**Environmental Management Commission**

The Environmental Management Commission advises the Department of Environmental Management on waste reduction strategies, recycling, litter control, community involvement, and other issues related to the functions of the department.

**Fire Commission**

The Fire Commission reviews the annual budget prepared by the fire chief and makes recommendations to the Mayor, managing director and Council; reviews the department's operations, as deemed necessary, for the purposes of recommending improvements to the fire chief; evaluates, at least annually, the performance of the fire chief and submits a report to the Mayor, managing director, and the Council; reviews personnel actions within the department for conformance with the policies of the Charter; hears complaints of citizens concerning the department or its personnel, and if necessary, makes recommendations to the fire chief on appropriate corrective actions; and submits an annual report to the Mayor, managing director, and the Council on the Commission's activities.

**Game Management Advisory Commission**

The Game Management Advisory Commission advises County, State, and Federal agencies on matters related to the preservation of subsistence hunting and fishing, protection of traditional and cultural gathering rights, and the taking and conservation of aquatic life and wildlife.

**Liquor Commission**

The Liquor Commission adopts rules and regulations having the force and effect of law for the administration of liquor control in the County; carries out the provisions of the liquor control laws of the state; and grants, renews, or denies applications for licenses for the manufacture, importation, and sale of liquor in the County.

**Merit Appeals Board**

The Merit Appeals Board decides appeals from any action taken by the chief executive, the human resources director, an appointing authority, or a designee acting on behalf of one of these individuals, relating to: 1) recruitment and examination; 2) classification and reclassification of a particular position; 3) initial pricing of classes; and 4) other employment actions including disciplinary actions and adverse actions for failure to meet performance requirements taken against civil service employees who are excluded from collective bargaining coverage.

**Pension Board**

The Pension Board reviews applications for County pensions or benefits submitted through the office of the Director of Finance. The Pension Board also holds hearings on applications for pensions or benefits, as well as revocation of a pension or benefits.

**Planning Commissions**

The Leeward and Windward Planning Commissions advise the Mayor, Council and Planning Director in all matters concerning planning and land use; review and make recommendations regarding the General Plan, subdivision and zoning ordinances and other planning rules and regulations; establish planning rules and regulations and conduct public hearings.

**Police Commission**

The Police Commission reviews the annual budget prepared by the chief of police; submits an annual report to the Mayor, managing director and Council; receives, considers, and investigates charges brought by the public against the police department (and any of its members) and submits a written report of its findings to the chief of police; advises the chief of police on police-community relations; reviews the department's operations for the purpose of recommending improvements; evaluates, at least annually, the performance of the police chief and submits a report to the Mayor, managing director, and Council; and hires personnel necessary to carry out its functions.

**Salary Commission**

The Salary Commission establishes the salaries of all County elected officials and appointed directors and deputy directors of departments and executive agencies, so that their total salaries and benefits have a reasonable relationship to compensation in the public and private sectors.

**Water Board**

The Water Board manages, controls, and operates the County waterworks; adopts rules and procedures relative to the operation, preservation and protection of the waterworks; adopts annual operating and capital budgets for the Department of Water Supply; and makes decisions relating to the acquisition of property and issuance of revenue bonds.

**Youth Commission**

The Youth Commission advises the Mayor, County Council, and official agencies of the County on legislative and budgetary matters, assesses existing programs and advances new programs that support youth development, and encourages and coordinates youth participation in County initiatives and other forms of civic engagement.

## EFFECTIVE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Be courteous. Respect public officials and their staff as human beings, keeping the door open for further dialogue.
- Introduce yourself and any organization you are representing.
- Educate yourself on the details and specifics of the issue with which you are involved and discuss only that issue.
- Be brief and to the point; submit succinct written materials.
- Explain the reasons for your position. Deal with facts, not personalities.

For more information on providing testimony at Council or Committee meetings, go to: <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/our-county/legislative/county-council/attend-meetings-submit-testimony>

or call (808) 961-8255.



## Acknowledgments

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*Nothing of lasting quality can be accomplished by the individual. Your County government is a team of many, who together, make up a strong unit pulling together for a common cause.*

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*Mahalo to all those who have contributed to this publication. Mahalo and Aloha to you for your interest in County Government and your dedication to making our community a better place for all.*

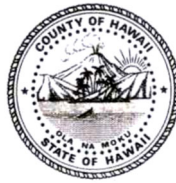
Copies of this booklet are available at the Office of the County Clerk . Please call 961-8388.

## *NOTES*

## *NOTES*



## Participate in your County Government



**Hawai'i County Council:** 808-961-8225  
**Office of the County Clerk:** 808-961-8255

### **Council Members:**

- District 1** Heather Kimball — (808) 961-8828
- District 2** Jenn Kagiwada — (808) 961-8272
- District 3** Dennis "Fresh" Onishi — (808) 961-8396
- District 4** Ashley L. Kierkiewicz — (808) 961-8265
- District 5** Matt Kāneali'i-Kleinfelder — (808) 961-8263
- District 6** Dr. Michelle M Galimba — (808) 323-4277
- District 7** Rebecca Villegas — (808) 323-4267
- District 8** Dr. Holeka Goro Inaba — (808) 323-4280
- District 9** James E. Hustace — (808) 961-8564

**Mayor Dr. C. Kimo Alameda (Office of Management)**  
East Hawai'i—(808) 961-8211 West Hawai'i 323-4444

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