

# HAWAII SMALL BUSINESS BILL OF RIGHTS

Small business owners and operators should be informed of their rights, responsibilities and obligations and be assured that these rights will be protected throughout their contact with agencies and departments of the State of Hawaii, among them:

**I.** The right to expect state agencies to provide a prompt, accurate, and courteous response to a request for information and to work together to ensure ready access to the information needed to assist businesses in their relationships with state government;

**II.** The right to a clear, stable, and predictable regulatory and record-keeping environment with easily accessible information and administrative rules in as clear and concise language as is practicable, including the posting of all proposed administrative rule changes on the Internet website of the office of the lieutenant governor;

**III.** The right to request and receive timely notice of an agency's rulemaking proceedings. The notice should be mailed to all persons who have made a written request for such a notice;

**IV.** The right to be treated equally and fairly, with reasonable access to state services;

**V.** The right to a one-stop permitting process that will, in the long term, include a centralized Internet website-based application system. This site's goals are to have quick and responsible timeframes to process state and county permits, licenses, registrations, and approvals, when appropriate, to simplify and reduce the filing of forms affecting business;

**VI.** The right to a timely response to an application for a permit, license, registration, or approval necessary to operate the small business, within the established maximum period of time for that agency in accordance with section 91-13.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

**VII.** The right to renewal of essential permits, licenses, registrations, or approvals, absent a specific reason for nonrenewal. All issuing agencies shall take action to grant or deny any renewal application for a business or development-related permit, license, registration, or approval within the established maximum period of time for that agency. The reasons for a denial should be clearly stated and under conditions set forth in law;

**VIII.** Whenever a contested case hearing is provided by law, in the event a regulatory agency takes action against a business, the right to expect a timely hearing. Officials conducting such hearings should be impartial. Small businesses should be provided a full and complete hearing to present their explanation of any alleged violation, deficiency, or wrongdoing. In any hearing, there should be a presumption

that the small business did not commit an alleged violation or wrongdoing until the agency proves otherwise by a preponderance of the evidence. The small business should have the right to present evidence, both oral and written. This evidence must be fully considered by the agency. In the event of an unfavorable decision, the business should have the right to a judicial review pursuant to section 91-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

**IX.** The right to privacy regarding confidential and proprietary business information when competing for state procurement contracts. No state agency shall mandate the disclosure of confidential or proprietary business information as a condition of obtaining any contract or payment under any contract when a contract is to be awarded on a firm fixed price or cost plus fixed price basis;

**X.** The right to all of the protections afforded in the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, P.L. 104-168;

**XI.** The right to submit complaints regarding a violation of these rights or any other administrative acts of state and county agencies with the office of the ombudsman, in accordance with chapter 96, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

**XII.** The right to request information and an opinion from the office of information practices, in accordance with chapters 92 and 92F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with regard to access to information from public meetings or the release of government documents;

**XIII.** The right to provide information to the division of consumer advocacy in accordance with chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with regard to issues under the purview of the public utilities commission;

**XIV.** The right to request information from the office of consumer protection, in accordance with chapter 487, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with regard to business and consumer issues;

**XV.** The right to access the small business advocate in the department of business, economic development, and tourism regarding any dispute with a state agency to ensure government resources are coordinated on behalf of small business and the rights of businesses are being upheld; and

**XVI.** The right to administrative rule review pursuant to the Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Act by filing a petition with the small business regulatory review board in accordance with section 201M-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes.



[www.hawaii.gov/dbedt](http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt)

808-586-2594

## Message from Ted Liu

Director, Department of Business,  
Economic Development & Tourism



*Small businesses are the heart of Hawaii's economy and are central to our way of life. The State of Hawaii recognizes that more than 95% of all businesses in Hawaii are small businesses and they employ more than 60% of Hawaii's workforce. Accordingly, Hawaii's citizens should be able to expect and enjoy a business culture that encourages and supports small business.*

*The Small Business Bill of Rights is an explanation or summary of the rights and expectations of small business.*

*This Bill of Rights outlines some of the more important rights and tenants that are available to small business owners and affect the way they do business in Hawaii.*

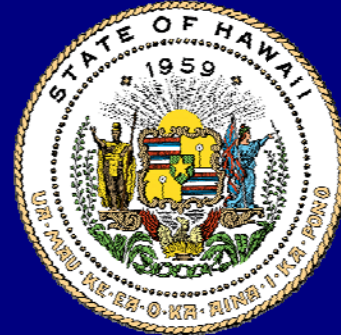
*As Hawaii's business advocate, the Small Business Regulatory Review Board is dedicated to achieving complete fulfillment of the following rights, and believes that adherence to them will be mutually beneficial to all businesses in our State.*



Department of Business,  
Economic Development & Tourism

# Small Business Bill of Rights

State of Hawaii



Small Business  
Regulatory Review Board  
"Hawaii's Business Advocate"

[www.hawaii.gov/dbedt](http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt)  
under - Featured Program  
"Hawaii Small Business  
Bill of Rights"

808-586-2594

[sbrrb@dbedt.hawaii.gov](mailto:sbrrb@dbedt.hawaii.gov)