

### **What services are being offered?**

The Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) is a statewide agency of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. RICO enforces the regulatory standards of over forty professions, occupations, and programs by receiving, investigating, and prosecuting consumer complaints.

### **How does filing a complaint help me?**

Filing a complaint may lead to resolution of your complaint. Please keep in mind that RICO takes action against the respondent, on behalf of the State of Hawaii, therefore, filing a complaint may not necessarily assist you with what you are seeking.

### **Does it cost anything to file a complaint?**

There is no fee to file a complaint. However, you may incur incidental expenses such as copying fees.

### **What kind of complaints can I file?**

RICO takes complaints involving the professions, occupations, and programs it regulates. Typical complaints RICO investigates and prosecutes are misrepresentation, poor workmanship, negligence in the practice of the professions, and unlicensed activity.

For instance, RICO may investigate if a contractor fails to complete a job or an auto repair dealer fails to properly repair your car. RICO does not take action in areas such as employer/employee relations, contractual disputes, billing disputes, and personality conflicts.

### **Is there a time limit for filing a complaint?**

There is no time limit for filing a complaint. However, it is best to file your complaint as soon as possible, as the elapsed time may make the investigation of your complaint more difficult.

### **What do I have to do to file a complaint? What is my role in the complaint filing process?**

You need to obtain a complaint form by writing, calling, or personally coming into the nearest RICO office. Each office is authorized to accept written complaints. Oral complaints will not be accepted.

You need to provide copies of documentation/evidence to support your allegations. Please do not submit original documents.

Should the case proceed to a hearing, you may be called upon to testify as a witness.

Complaints may be filed anonymously, however, you will not be privy to the investigation findings.

### **Do I need an attorney?**

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with RICO. However, if you are considering taking civil action against the respondent, you should consult your private attorney as soon as possible.

### **What happens after I file my complaint?**

You may be contacted by an investigator for additional information and you may be requested to provide additional documentation. You will be notified of what type of action RICO will be taking on your complaint.

### **Does RICO represent me?**

RICO does not represent you. We take action against the respondent on behalf of the State and the general public. You need to consult your own attorney for legal advice.

### **Can I get any money back by filing a complaint?**

There is no guarantee that you will get any money back by filing a complaint with RICO. Therefore, you are encouraged to consult your own attorney to determine whether you should bring a private legal action.

### **What kind of penalties may be imposed?**

Civil or administrative penalties may be imposed on a respondent, ranging from a fine, or suspension or revocation of a license, or an injunction against the unlicensed person/entity. Although restitution may be requested, there is no guarantee that it will be received. RICO does not have criminal jurisdiction.

### **Is my complaint public record?**

Certain complaints information is available to the public on RICO's complaints history web site. The information posted includes the name of the individual or business complained about, the allegation and outcome of a closed complaint, and whether a complaint is pending. Disclosure of any additional information, if requested, is subject to and in accordance with Chapter 92F, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

## RESOURCES

### HONOLULU OFFICE:

Leiopapa A Kamehameha Building  
235 South Beretania Street, 9th Floor  
Honolulu, HI 96813

### CONSUMER RESOURCE CENTER (CRC):

Verification of current status of existing licensees or businesses, complaint history of licensees & businesses, file complaints against licensees & businesses, & other general consumer information.....**587-3222**

To call Honolulu numbers from the Neighbor Islands, dial Kauai 274-3141, Maui 984-2400, the Big Island 974-4000, Lanai/Molokai 1-800-468- 4644, then dial the last five digits of the state phone number you want to call, then press the # sign.

(Neighbor Islands, repeat the same process as instructed above.)

### MAUI OFFICE.....243-5808

1063 Lower Main Street, Suite C-216  
Wailuku, HI 96793

### KAUAI OFFICE.....274-3200

3060 Eiwa Street, Suite 204  
Lihue, HI 96766

### HILO OFFICE.....933-8846

345 Kekuanaoa Street, #12  
Hilo, HI 96720

### KONA OFFICE.....327-9590

75-170 Hualalai Road, Room C-309  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

RICO website: [www.hawaii.gov/dcca/rico](http://www.hawaii.gov/dcca/rico)  
RICO e-mail: [rico@dcca.hawaii.gov](mailto:rico@dcca.hawaii.gov)

Check Out a Business Online at  
[businesscheck.hawaii.gov](http://businesscheck.hawaii.gov)  
for:

- ✓ Business/Licensee Complaint History Search
- ✓ Business Name Search
- ✓ Professional and Vocational License Search
- ✓ General Excise Tax License Search

## RICO'S AREAS OF JURISDICTION

Accountancy  
Activity Desks  
Acupuncture  
Advanced Practice Registered Nurse-Rx  
Barbering and Cosmetology  
Boxing  
Cemetery and Pre-Need  
Chiropractic  
Collection Agencies  
Condominium Property Regimes  
Contractors  
Dentists and Dental Hygienists  
Detective and Guards  
Electricians and Plumbers  
Electrology  
Elevator Mechanics  
Employment Agencies  
Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors  
and Landscape Architects  
Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters  
Marriage and Family Therapy  
Massage  
Medical & Osteopathy (MD, DO, EMT, PA, POD)  
Mental Health Counselors  
Motor Vehicle Industry  
Motor Vehicle Repair Industry  
Naturopathy  
Nursing  
Nursing Home Administrators  
Occupational Therapy  
Opticians, Dispensing  
Optometry  
Pest Control  
Pharmacy  
Physical Therapy  
Port Pilots  
Psychology  
Real Estate Appraisers  
Real Estate Brokers and Salespersons  
Real Estate Education, Schools & Instructors  
Social Workers  
Speech Pathology and Audiology  
Subdivision  
Time Share  
Travel Agencies  
Veterinary Medicine

# REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMPLAINTS OFFICE

