



HAWAI‘I STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

State of Hawai‘i · Bishop Square, 1001 Bishop Street, ASB Tower 970 · Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

NEWS RELEASE

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New State Nepotism Law, Effective July 11, 2023

HONOLULU, HI -- A new law establishing a bright-line prohibition of nepotism goes into effect July 11, 2023. It applies to almost all state employees (except those working for the legislative or judicial branches). Among other things, this law prohibits:

- (1) the hiring or supervising of a relative or household member or
- (2) awarding of contracts to businesses owned by relatives or household members.

“This new law helps to reinforce the public's confidence in the integrity of our state government,” said Wes Fong, Chair of the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission. “It ensures that state employment is based on merit and not familial relationship and favoritism.”

“Passage of this bill ensures opportunities are based on talent, skill, and qualifications rather than family connections,” said Kee Campbell, Enforcement Director, Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission. “It is a powerful message that positions of power should be earned through merit rather than inherited.”

“We appreciate the leadership shown by the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct; the House of Representatives; the Senate; and the Department of Human Resources Development in helping establish this new law,” said Robert D. Harris, Executive Director and General Counsel for the Hawai‘i Ethics Commission. “It is a strong commitment to transparency, fairness, and ethical governance.”

More information can be found in the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commissions Quick Guide to the Nepotism Law https://ethics.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/quickguide_nepotism.pdf.

Individuals affected by the new law should contact the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission for further information on how to resolve the situation or seek a good cause exemption.

The Order Regarding Nepotism can be found on the Commission’s website at <https://ethics.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/Order-NepotismExceptionProcess.pdf>