

# OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

*<http://www.oha.org/>*

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) was established in 1978 by amendment to the State Constitution, Article XII, Section 5, and Chapter 10, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Under the direction of nine trustees elected statewide, OHA has functioned operationally as both a government agency with a strong degree of autonomy and as a trust. Its purpose is to provide the opportunity for a better life and future for all Hawaiians.

The mix of trust funds, earmarked for Hawaiians of at least fifty per cent blood quantum, and general funds provided annually by the Legislature, allows OHA to serve Hawaiians of any blood quantum. In addition to running its own programs, OHA provides major funding to many community-based programs and coordinates joint activities with participating organizations. It advocates for Hawaiians in the State Legislature, state and federal courts, the United States Congress and the local media, as well as by supporting community initiatives and interests.

## **Board of Trustees**

OHA's Board of Trustees is composed of nine trustees who are elected to their seats in public elections open to all State of Hawaii voters. Four of the nine positions on the Board are designated as at-large seats representing the state as a whole, while the other five trustees represent each of the following districts: Hawaii Island, Maui, Molokai and Lanai, Oahu, and Kauai and Niihau. While there are residency requirements for candidates seeking the district seats, all voters statewide are permitted to vote in each of the OHA races. Trustees are elected to their seats for four-year terms, and there is no limit on the number of terms a trustee may serve.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting OHA policy and managing the agency's trust. The Board meets regularly at the agency's headquarters in Honolulu, and at least once annually on each of the major islands.

Each of the trustees sits on the Board's two standing committees: the Committee on Asset and Resource Management (ARM) and the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment (BAE). The ARM Committee recommends policies for the management of the agency's investment portfolio and other OHA fiscal and budgetary matters, in addition to policies relating to land use, native rights, and natural and cultural resources. The BAE Committee focuses on the agency's legislative and advocacy efforts, as well as OHA programs that address issues relating to health, human services, education, housing, land use, environment, and natural resources.

The ARM and BAE committees convene regularly, and the committees' approved actions and recommendations are forwarded to the full Board for consideration and final approval.

## **Office of the Administrator**

The Office of the Administrator manages the internal operations of OHA by providing leadership, guidance, direction, and executive oversight. It implements the policies, rules, and directives adopted by the Board of Trustees and guides the organization's operation within the parameters established by the Board and in response to the concerns of OHA's beneficiaries. Additionally, the Office works with other agencies, both government and private, that also serve Hawaiians. The Administrator reports to the Board on OHA's fiscal status and on the status of projects and programs. This includes developing and overseeing organizational structures and procedures; securing, supervising, and inspiring staff in the skills and attitudes required to work together; and guiding the implementation of OHA's functional, master, and strategic plans and processes.

OHA is organized into two branches under the Office of the Administrator: Operations and Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment. Three additional divisions are overseen directly by the Administrator: the agency's fiscal and information technology division, its Washington, D.C., office and a federally funded preservation project. The Operations branch is headed by a deputy administrator who directs seven support services divisions tasked with managing the agency's various internal operations. The Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment section is also led by its own deputy administrator who guides OHA's six program divisions, or hale.

## **Treasury and Other Services**

Treasury and Other Services (TOS) works in partnership with other OHA divisions to manage and report on the agency's finances, and implements and maintains information technologies.

TOS's major functional areas are:

- Accounting – responsible for day-to-day processing and auditing of accounting transactions, maintaining the general ledger and the production of accurate financial reports.
- Treasury – reviews the management of OHA's Native Hawaiian Trust Fund, develops and coordinates OHA's biennial and annually aligned budgets, and handles credit and collections. Treasury functions include ensuring that allocation of resources corresponds to OHA's long-range and strategic plans.
- Financial Management – ensures that Accounting and Treasury areas develop financial plans that are in accord with OHA's policy statements regarding spending and investment to safeguard assets and maximize return on OHA's financial assets.
- Information Technology – manages and maintains OHA's local and statewide computer information network.

## **Washington, D.C., Bureau**

The Washington, D.C., Bureau assures an ongoing presence at the nation's capital for the more than 401,000 Native Hawaiians residing in Hawaii and on the U.S. continent. The goal of the Bureau is to educate Congress and the executive branch on issues important to Native Hawaiians and secure passage of favorable legislation at the national level. The five primary objectives are:

- To educate Congress and the executive branch on issues important to Native Hawaiians;
- To establish and maintain organizations and individuals at the national level as allies;
- To overcome resistance of non-supporters of issues important to Native Hawaiians; and
- To establish a mechanism to collect and disseminate information on issues important to native peoples.

## **Halawa Luluku Interpretive Development Project**

The Halawa Luluku Interpretive Development Project (HLID) was created as a result of the H-3 Memorandum of Agreement, which requires development, with community consultation, of an Interpretive Development Plan that addresses the mitigation of land areas affected by the construction of the H-3 Freeway, and which preserves, interprets, and perpetuates Native Hawaiian history, traditions, and culture.

## **Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment**

### **Economic Development**

The mission of the Economic Development division is to create, retain, and expand the wealth of Native Hawaiians by improving economic self-sufficiency and business sustainability. The Economic Development division administers three services: (1) Lending through the Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund (NHRLF) and the Consumer Micro-Loan Program (CMLP); (2) Grants through the Community-Based Economic Development program (CBED); and (3) Facilitation and capacity-building through training and technical assistance.

## **Education**

The mission of the Education division is to facilitate culturally sound educational opportunities for Native Hawaiians to promote academic success and life-long learning. The Education division provides access to a wide range of educational opportunities, furnishing financial support and technical assistance to Hawaiian educational programs and advocating for increased statewide support of Native Hawaiians' educational goals.

## **Hawaiian Governance**

Hawaiian Governance seeks to assist and facilitate the Hawaiian community in creating and building a strong Hawaiian nation by involving Hawaiian communities, organizations, and agencies, and encouraging individual Hawaiians to enroll in Kau Inoa and actively participate in the nation-building process.

As the formation of a Hawaiian nation is critical to protecting Hawaiian programs, trusts, and kuleana from legal attacks, Hawaiian Governance staff works to bring the Hawaiian community together for discussion on the creation of a Hawaiian nation, and also encourages the support of non-Hawaiians in the nation-building process.

## **Health, Human Services and Housing**

This division aims to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians in the areas of social service programs, housing, and health opportunities. The Human Services program accomplishes this by enhancing beneficiary access to resources, information, and services through advocacy, technical assistance, and financial support to Hawaiian agencies and other direct service providers. The Housing section works cooperatively with others to achieve equality in living standards for Native Hawaiians by building or rebuilding healthy, self-sufficient Native Hawaiian communities. This includes the planning and implementation of programs that foster the development of safe, decent, and affordable housing for Native Hawaiians. The Health component seeks to improve the overall health of the Hawaiian community by partnering with various organizations and Native Hawaiian stakeholders to address pertinent health issues; funding health gatherings, conferences, and programs; and promoting and preserving traditional healing practices.

## **Land Management**

The Land Management Hale works to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians and supports self-determination by:

- Facilitating the acquisition of key lands, including distinct areas where Native Hawaiians live and/or practice their culture;

- Demonstrating effective control and management of lands by optimizing cultural, environmental, and economic returns.

The Land Management Hale currently holds principal responsibility for management of Waimea Valley on Oahu, and Wao Kele o Puna on Hawaii Island.

### **Native Rights, Land and Culture**

The mission of the Native Rights, Land and Culture (NRLC) Hale is to advocate for the rights, land and culture of the Hawaiian community at the international, federal, state, and county levels. NRLC's advocacy efforts include the protection of Hawaiians' traditional and customary rights, as well as ensuring that federal, state, and county resources are proportionately directed to Hawaiian needs. NRLC reviews proposed federal, state, and county legislation and regulations, and reviews, comments and consults on proposed federal, state, and county projects. Private projects are also reviewed, and relevant comments are submitted to reviewing agencies for consideration or inclusion into environmental impact statements and other reviews.

## **Operations**

### **Community Resource Coordinators**

The mission of the Community Resource Coordinators is to establish and promote positive interaction among the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, beneficiaries, the general community, governmental, private agencies, and groups interested and involved in Hawaiian issues and concerns.

### **Government Relations and Legislative Affairs**

The Government Relations and Legislative Affairs (GRLA) division is responsible for the promotion, protection and advocacy of Native Hawaiian rights and entitlements at the federal, state and county levels. GRLA accomplishes this by developing and strengthening the governmental relations and legislative resources of OHA and engages officials and lawmakers at the county, state and federal levels. GRLA also develops, reviews and promotes proposed legislation and regulations that better the conditions of Native Hawaiians. In addition, GRLA coordinates public forums to discuss Native Hawaiian issues in order to stimulate involvement by the community at large.

### **Human Resources**

The mission of the Human Resources division is to effectively manage the human resources service capabilities of OHA. The Human Resources division meets the human

resources needs of OHA through the provision and coordination of employment, and benefit and employee services.

Human Resources also fulfills agency needs in such areas as employment law compliance, recruitment and placement, wage and benefit administration, position and personnel transactions, employee services, staff development, leave accounting, volunteer program services, safety and security, personnel record keeping, and related areas in accordance with applicable statutes, standards and guidelines.

In addition, electronic timesheet processing, personnel budgetary support, payroll processing, position reviews and salary studies, processing benefit changes, functional statements and organization chart updates, special projects and studies, and Oracle Human Resources Management Systems maintenance are provided by the division.

### **Office of Board Services**

The Office of Board Services (OBS) works to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of OHA policymaking, programs and operations, and to manage information needed to reach decisions that lead to the achievement of OHA's mission and goals. OBS serves as custodian of Board of Trustee records and supervises the revision, codification and printing of Board of Trustee policies, by-laws and related materials. OBS also monitors and reports on the administration and staff's fulfillment of BOT actions.

### **Office of the Staff Attorney**

The mission of the Office of the Staff Attorney (OSA) is to support the mission of the agency and to meet the legal needs of OHA's administration to ensure compliance with applicable laws. As an integral part of OHA's infrastructure, OSA focuses on protecting the agency, its trust, and its beneficiaries through the coordination and provision of legal advice. OSA provides competent legal advice, counsel, and support to the Administrator and administration staff, coordinates the provision of legal services with outside law firms, conducts legal research and analysis, drafts legal services contracts and other documents, administers outsourced legal services contracts, develops policy, provides risk management assessments, and drafts legislation.

### **Planning, Research, Evaluation and Grants**

The Planning, Evaluation and Grants division (PEG) is responsible for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of OHA programs and operations by administering: (1) a timely and professional planning process that uses sound planning and reporting principles to assist OHA in defining and achieving its short- and long-term goals and strategies; (2) an evaluation process that uses sound evaluation and reporting principles and practices to monitor progress toward agency goals and assess the effectiveness of OHA initiated and/or funded grant awards; (3) an

efficient grantmaking process that uses sound grantmaking and reporting principles to further OHA Strategic Plan goals, and improves conditions for Hawaiians by promoting sustainable community development through strategic vesting of OHA assets; and (4) consistent and quality policy, program, and advocacy research, data collection, and analysis services that support agency-wide decision-making, as well as timely response to staff and trustee information needs.

### **Public Information Office**

The Public Information Office (PIO) serves the communications, publications, graphic design, public relations, multi-media production, and information needs of OHA. PIO coordinates the dissemination of OHA programs, policies, and general information to the public through various print, electronic, and broadcast media. PIO assists all OHA divisions with communications needs, with particular attention to olelo Hawaii, cultural appropriateness, and an overall Hawaiian approach. PIO produces OHA's monthly newspaper, *Ka Wai Ola*; manages OHA's websites; and keeps the media informed on OHA programs and board actions through press releases and media advisories.

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