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State of Hawai'i
Department of Budget and Finance
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ABOUT STATE GOVERNMENT

GENERAL

The State was admitted into the Union on August 21, 1959, as the fiftieth state. It is an archipelago of eight major islands, seven of which are inhabited, plus 124 named islets, totaling 6,425 square miles in land area, located in the Pacific Ocean in the Northern Hemisphere, mostly below the Tropic of Cancer, about 2,400 statute miles from San Francisco. The State is slightly larger than the combined area of the States of Connecticut and Rhode Island and ranks forty-seventh of the fifty states in land area, being also larger in area than the State of Delaware. The island of Hawai'i is the largest island, with 4,028 square miles in area. The other inhabited islands, in order of size, are Maui, O'ahu, Kauai, Moloka'i, Lāna'i and Niihau. According to the U.S. Census, the total population of the State was 422,770 in 1940, 499,794 in 1950, 632,772 in 1960, 769,913 in 1970, 964,691 in 1980, 1,115,274 in 1990, 1,211,537 in 2000, and 1,360,301 in 2010, making the State the 40th most populous state in the Union as of 2010. The City and County of Honolulu consists of the island of O'ahu (plus some minor islets) with a land area of 599.8 square miles. The capital of the State and the principal port are located on O'ahu. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, about 70.1 percent of the population of the State lives on O'ahu. Hawai'i's population exhibits greater ethnic diversity than other states because it is descended from immigrants from Asia well as from Europe and the mainland United States. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 38.6 percent of the State's population is of Asian descent and about 24.7 percent of the State's population is Caucasian. Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders constitute 10.0 percent of the population. The balance consists of people of mixed races and other races, such as African Americans and American Indians.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The Constitution of the State provides for three separate branches of government: the legislative branch, the executive branch and the judicial branch. The legislative power is vested in a bicameral Legislature consisting of a Senate of twenty-five members elected for four year terms and a House of Representatives of fifty-one

members elected for two year terms. The Legislature convenes annually. The executive power is vested in a Governor elected for a four year term. In the event of the absence of the Governor from the State, or his or her inability to exercise and discharge the powers and duties of his or her office, the Lieutenant Governor, also elected for a four year term, serves as the chief executive. Under the Constitution, the judicial power is vested in a Supreme Court, one intermediate appellate court, circuit courts, district courts, and such other courts as the Legislature may from time to time establish. Pursuant to statute, the Legislature has established four circuit courts, four district courts and an intermediate appellate court. The executive and administrative offices are limited to not more than twenty principal departments under the supervision of the Governor. The executive functions have in fact been grouped into eighteen departments. The heads of the departments are appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, and hold office for a term to expire with the term of the Governor. The Department of Budget and Finance is one of the principal departments permitted by the Constitution of the State, with the head of said department being designated as the Director of Finance. Under the general direction of the Governor, the Department of Budget and Finance administers the State's proposed six year program and financial plan, the State budget, and financial management programs of the State.

Further information can be found on this link to the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i - <http://hawaii.gov/lrb/con/> (<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/con/>).

THE COUNTIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE

There are four counties in the State: the City and County of Honolulu, the County of Maui, the County of Hawai'i and the County of Kaua'i (and one quasi county, Kalawao). Each of the counties has a separate charter for its government, each of which provides for an elected mayor and an elected council. The mayor is the chief executive and the council is the legislative body. There are no independent or separate cities or other municipalities, school districts or townships. The State government of Hawai'i has total responsibility for many functions that are performed by or shared by local governments in most other parts of the United States. For example, the State pays all costs in connection with the public school system, libraries, public welfare, and judiciary. The greatest expenditures by the State in past years have been in the areas of education and public welfare. The counties' major areas of responsibility and expenditure are in police and fire protection, waste disposal, water and sewer facilities, and secondary streets and highways.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Unlike most other states, the State operates a statewide public school system for elementary, intermediate, and high schools. In addition, the State operates a statewide public community college and university system. The public education