

State of Hawaii  
Department of Taxation

EFW2 and EFW2C Format  
Forms W-2 and W-2C

Electronic Filing Specifications Handbook



Updated October 2021  
Version 1.0

## Form W-2 Electronic Filing Information for Hawaii

### Handbook Updates

Document Version Number	Updates
V1.0	Original Document
V2.0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised Item #2 of "Choose your method for transmitting a file"</li> <li>2. Revised Error codes list by removing "first 30".</li> <li>3. Added Instructions on method to validate your files.</li> <li>4. Updated start date to mid January 2018.</li> <li>5. Updated "Acknowledgment retrieval method option 2".</li> <li>6. Deleted "Important reminder about proof of filing acknowledgments:...." As there will not be any ACKs provided.</li> <li>7. Updated and clarified format of the Hawaii specific record specifications.</li> <li>8. Revised Magnetic Media and Paper section.</li> <li>9. Separated into a new section "Important Reminders."</li> </ol>
V3.0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Revised File Size section "must be zipped and be no more than 200MB"</li> <li>11. Revised Specifications to add zip and PGP encrypted.</li> <li>12. Added naming standard and example for Option 1 in SFTP File Naming Standard section.</li> <li>13. Added to Employee City and Employer City "Must not be blank, unless foreign country is specified" in RE, RW, RS records.</li> <li>14. Inserted "117-138 Employee City Must not be blank, unless foreign country is specified" in RS record.</li> </ol>
V4.0 Rev. 10/2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Deleted State symbol, inserted image of the Hawaiian islands. Inserted "Hawaii" on the front cover.</li> <li>16. Added "We do not accept EFW2/EFW2C files for tax years before 2017" under Requirements.</li> <li>17. Deleted "February 28, 2018" and inserted "February 28 (February 29 for leap year)", deleted "call us for specific instructions" inserted "please e-mail Electronic Processing Section at <a href="mailto:Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov">Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov</a> for specific instructions"</li> <li>18. Reworded methods for transmitting a file.</li> <li>19. Deleted Transmit Production File Start Date and Receipt.</li> <li>20. Replaced HiBEFS to HBFS.</li> <li>21. Added "Hawaii State Code is: 15" in RS Record.</li> <li>22. Deleted Taxpayer Services contact information.</li> <li>23. Replaced 2017 with 2018 throughout the document.</li> </ol>

V1.0  
Rev. 10/2020

1. Changed to Rev. 09/2019, September 2019, and V1.0
2. Page 2 created hyperlink for [Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov](mailto:Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov)
3. Page 3 inserted "(see details on page 4 RA Record)"
4. Page 3 inserted "you must also", deleted "us", inserted the Hawaii Department of Taxation." Deleted "for your" inserted "For", deleted "using" inserted "use", inserted "the" and "Department of Taxation", deleted "through" and "either the", inserted "via one of three", deleted "have" and "of time" and "with the IRS" inserted "from the IRS", deleted "you transmit must be zipped and" inserted "must" and "The file must be transmitted via one of the three methods outlined below." Deleted "Transmissions are through three methods, either the simple web file...."
5. Page 4 deleted "recommended optional" inserted "Field", deleted "Choose your method of transmitting the file" inserted "Method of Transmission", deleted "two" inserted "three" Inserted "1. a", "Hawaii Tax Online" "2. A Simple File Import (SFI) which is a Microsoft Excel file uploaded through HTO (see [https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/eservices/ebiz/20pubef12\\_W2\\_Simple\\_File\\_Import.pdf](https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/eservices/ebiz/20pubef12_W2_Simple_File_Import.pdf))" Inserted "3. (see <https://tax.hawaii.gov/eServices/bulk>)" Inserted "Transmission methods 1 & 2 (HTO file uploads), deleted "Transmission method 1 & 2: HTO file upload - This is the easiest free method available for submitting W-2s and W-2Cs" inserted "Simple and free." Inserted "or Microsoft Excel file" deleted "with the filed HW-3 return completed" Inserted "or create a Microsoft Excel file." deleted "and select Form HW-3." Inserted "or import the Microsoft Excel file." Deleted "Complete for Form HW-3." Inserted "d. For years 2019 and prior, select Form HW-3." Inserted "e. For years 2020 and forward, select Form HW-14 last quarter for the filing year." Inserted "Transmission method 3 (SFTP file upload via HBFS)." Deleted "Transmission method 2: SFTP file upload thru HBFS."
6. Page 4 corrected website address and created hyperlink <https://tax.hawaii.gov/eServices/bulk>
7. Created hyperlink for <https://hitax.hawaii.gov>
8. Deleted "app," inserted "application"
9. Deleted "password," inserted "login username"
10. Fixed footer page numbers, after page 4 the wrong page number was listed
11. Page 5 - Inserted "&2", inserted "For Simple File Import (SFI) your file must adhere to the (SFI) specifications found in the handbook."

12. Deleted “2” inserted “3” deleted “thru” inserted “via”, deleted “SFTP”, deleted “2019” inserted “2020”, deleted “2” inserted “3”

Inserted “Recent development for W-2/W-2C acknowledgements (ACKS) require testing and certification for both good and bad W-2 files in order to receive acknowledgements. Acknowledgements will be sent for each W-2/W-2C file. The ack will include a status of whether the file was accepted or rejected, as well as details on all the errors on the file.”

13. Page 7 deleted "0 or 1," inserted "1 or 0", deleted “DoTax”, inserted “DOTAX”

14. Page 10 deleted "2018," inserted "2019" throughout the document, inserted “The” and “Department of Taxation”, deleted “no longer”, inserted “not”, deleted “Your” and “are”, inserted “will be” and “via any other”, deleted “Be aware that”, inserted “IMPORTANT:”, deleted “Please note that”, inserted “its”, deleted “2019: inserted “2020”

15. Created hyperlink for [Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov](mailto:Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov)

16. Formatting changes

17. Page 6 formatting changes, page 7 remove bold, remove highlight, page 8 deleted “s”, deleted “and HW-3”

18. Page 6 inserted a period.

19. Page 7 deleted “In an effort”, made t capital.

20. Deleted “We will not notify you by email, letter, or by phone...”

21. Inserted “In order to receive Acknowledgements (ACKS), testing and certification for both good and bad W-2/W-2C files are required. ACKS will be sent for each W-2/W-2C file submitted and will include a status of whether the file was accepted or rejected. If the W-2 file is rejected, there will be one ACK file with a status of rejected that lists all the records in error for that W-2 file.

If you are not set up to receive ACKS, we will NOT notify you by email, letter, or by phone that the file was rejected or accepted.”

22. Deleted “There are no specific error codes.....”

23. Inserted “ If you are transmitting the file via method 1, you will automatically be validating the file when you upload. If you are transmitting the file via method 3, please validate your file through the HTO validation process before transmitting the file through our SFTP site.

There are no specific error codes. When a field does not validate correctly, the validation application will display an error message list of the encountered field errors. The list contains the row and position of the field in error, as well as a message stating the error.”

24. Page 12 deleted “W-2 and W-2C filing requirements will not be met if you send us a file in any other format....”

V1.0  
Rev. 10/2021

1. Changed to Rev. 10/2021, Updated October 2021
2. Added Page 5 for V1.0 Rev. 10/2021 Handbook Updates
3. Pg. 6 Deleted “February 28 (February 29 for leap year)”, inserted January 31, inserted “and Additional Hawaii Record Specifications”, deleted “(”, deleted <http://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2&EFW2C.htm>), inserted <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2%26EFW2C.htm>
4. Pg. 7 Deleted page “9”, inserted “10”, deleted “.” at end of <https://hitax.hawaii.gov>
5. Pg. 8 Deleted “password”, inserted “credentials”, deleted submitter’s, inserted submitter
6. Pg. 9 Hawaii Field Validations header and content moved to pg 9 from pg 8, deleted “(”, deleted <http://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2&EFW2C.htm>), inserted <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2%26EFW2C.htm>
7. Pg. 13 Important Reminders deleted 2020, inserted 2021, inserted “and W-2C” to Contact Information

## **Requirements**

If you are an employer or payroll provider who is required by the federal government to electronically file Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statements, or Form W-2C during the year, you must also electronically transmit these informational returns to the Hawaii Department of Taxation. For Hawaii employees and withholding, use the Social Security Administration's EFW2 and EFW2C format and the Hawaii format specified in this guide.

We do not accept EFW2/EFW2C files for tax years before 2017.

**IMPORTANT: A separate, direct file transmission to the Hawaii Department of Taxation may be completed via one of three transmission methods outlined in this guide.**

## **Due Date**

The due date for submitting W-2s electronically is **January 31**. If you received an extension from the IRS to file the W-2s electronically, please email the Electronic Processing Section at [Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov](mailto:Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov) for specific instructions.

## **Avoid common mistakes:**

Make sure that a line feed and carriage return are included after each record (each record is a single line of 512 fields for the W-2 file, 1024 for the W-2C file). **Do not** re-transmit any accepted W-2 record, as this creates duplicate records for your employee. If you need to correct a W-2, you must file a W-2C.

## **Data Type/ Required character set**

The only acceptable character set is the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII).

## **File Size**

Each file must be zipped and no more than 200MB. If multiple files are transmitted, each file must contain all required fields. Information for multiple employers may be within a file but the zip file may not be more than 200MB and must not break at an employee (a single employee record cannot span files).

## **Specifications and Additional Hawaii Record Specifications**

The file must meet the electronic filing specifications outlined by the Social Security Administration guide available at <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2%26EFW2C.htm> and include additional Hawaii record specifications (fields, layouts) which are detailed in this guide. The file must be transmitted via one of the three methods outlined below.

**Hawaii Required Fields – Form W-2 (see details on page 10 RA Record)**

Header	Header	Field Recommendations
Code RA	Submitter Record	Required
Code RE	Employer Record	Required
Code RW	Fed. Employee Wage Record	Required
Code RO	Employee Wage Record	<i>Optional</i>
Code RS	Hawaii Wage Record	Required
Code RT	Fed. Total Record (RW)	Required
Code RU	Total Record (RO)	<i>Optional</i>
Code RV	Hawaii Total Record (RS)	<i>Optional</i>
Code RF	Final Record	Required

**Hawaii Required Fields – Form W-2C**

Header	Header	Field Recommendations
Code RCA	Submitter Record	Required
Code RCE	Employer Record	Required
Code RCW	Fed. Employee Wage Record	<i>Optional if no corrections</i>
Code RCO	Employee Wage Record	<i>Optional if no corrections</i>
Code RCS	Hawaii Wage Record	<i>Optional if no corrections</i>
Code RCT	Fed. Total Record (RCW)	Required
Code RCU	Total Record (RCO)	<i>Optional if no corrections</i>
Code RCV	Hawaii Total Record (RCS)	<i>Optional if no corrections</i>
Code RCF	Final Record	Required

**Method of Transmission**

Transmissions are required through one of three methods:

1. a simple web zip file upload through Hawaii Tax Online (HTO) (recommended for most small business taxpayers)
2. a Simple File Import (SFI) which is a Microsoft Excel file uploaded through HTO  
(see [https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/eservices/ebiz/20pubef12\\_W2\\_Simple\\_File\\_Import.pdf](https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/eservices/ebiz/20pubef12_W2_Simple_File_Import.pdf))
3. the zipped & PGP encrypted file through the SFTP server HBFS method  
(see <https://tax.hawaii.gov/eServices/bulk>)

Transmission methods 1 & 2 (HTO file uploads) – Simple and free. These methods do **not** require any special software in order to upload the file. A zip file or Microsoft Excel file is submitted through HTO.

Take the following steps:

8. Create an EFW2 file with a .txt extension, and then zip it with a .zip extension or create a Microsoft Excel file.
9. Logon to HTO at <https://hitax.hawaii.gov>
10. Follow the prompts to upload the EFW2 file you created or import the Microsoft Excel file.
11. For years 2019 and prior, select form HW-3.
12. For years 2020 and forward, select form HW-14 last quarter for the filing year.

**Note:** If you are using a third-party service or program, check if it is able to export an EFW2 file that you could upload.

Transmission method 3 (SFTP file upload via HBFS) – You must already have an existing Bulk Filer Number and PGP encryption keys for HBFS in order to participate in the W-2 program. These credentials will allow the transmitter to access the Hawaii SFTP site to send transmissions and are valid year to year. Use the same encryption key for your zip file.

**Transmitting Test Files**

1. Transmission methods 1 & 2 (HTO file uploads) – There is no testing required, however, we highly recommend submitters validate their zipped EFW2 and EFW2C files through our validation application which can be found on our HTO landing page at <https://hitax.hawaii.gov>. The file will also be validated upon upload. For Simple File Import (SFI)

your file must adhere to the (SFI) specifications found in the handbook

2. Transmission method 3 (SFTP file upload via HBFS) – Once you have verified your files have proper structure by validating the file on the HTO website, submit your file through a test transmission and wait for approval by a member of the Electronic Processing Unit before being able to transmit production files. Please be sure to use the correct credentials (test or production) for the file type you are transmitting.

When Form EF-2 is approved, a Hawaii Bulk Filer Number, test login username and production login username will be provided to you. Use the test login username to transmit your test file to HBFS. Any information transmitted using the test login username will be treated as test data and is **not** considered “live” data. **We strongly encourage each transmitter to upload test files until the test file is accepted. This will ensure proper formatting of the file and will reduce errors when transmitting production files.**

### **File Naming Standard**

Files submitted via **method 1** – HTO file upload must use the following naming standard:

[CompanyName]\_[FormType]\_[YYYYMMDDhhmmss].zip

*Example:* ABCPayroll\_W2C\_20200731020345.zip

Files submitted via **method 3** – SFTP file upload thru HBFS **MUST** be named utilizing the following standard:

[CompanyName]\_[FormType]\_[YYYYMMDDhhmmss].zip.pgp

*Example:* AcmePayroll\_W2\_20200831020345.zip.pgp

To prevent and quickly identify any wrong environment issues, test files **MUST** be submitted with a "\_T" added after the timestamp and before the .zip.pgp as follows:

*Example:* AcmePayroll\_W2\_20200731020345\_T.zip.pgp

CompanyName should be the submitter.

Form Type should be either W2 or W2C.

### **Acknowledgments (proof of filing)**

A transmitted file will either meet the content specifications and be accepted or will have an error and immediately be rejected. In order to receive Acknowledgements (ACKS), testing and certification for both good and bad W-2/W-2C files are required. ACKS will be sent for each W-2/W-2C file submitted and will include a status of whether the file was accepted or rejected. If the W-2 file is rejected, there will be one ACK file with a status of rejected that lists all the records in error for that W-2 file.

If you are not set up to receive ACKS, we will **NOT** notify you by email, letter, or by phone that the file was rejected or accepted.

### **Error Codes**

If you are transmitting the file via method 1, you will automatically be validating the file when you upload. If you are transmitting the file via method 3, please validate your file through the HTO validation process before transmitting the file through our SFTP site.

There are no specific error codes. When a field does not validate correctly, the validation application will display an error message list of the encountered field errors. The list contains the row and position of the field in error, as well as a message stating the error.



## **Hawaii Field Validations**

The file you transmit must meet the electronic filing specifications outlined by the Social Security Administration guide available at <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/EFW2%26EFW2C.htm> and include **additional** Hawaii record specifications (fields, layouts) which are detailed in this section.

What rules do you have for the employer Hawaii Withholding Tax Identification Number (WH Tax ID)?

- This is in the RS Record at Position 248-267.
- This is in the RCS Record at Positions 344-363 and 364-383.
- Only alphanumeric characters.
- Omit hyphens.
- The employer WH Tax ID should match the WH Tax ID under which tax payments were submitted to the Hawaii Department of Taxation on Form HW-14.

## RA Record – Submitter Record

Record Position	Field on File	Validation by DOTAX
3-11	Submitter FEIN	Must be numeric
29	Resub Indicator	Must be 1 or 0
95-116	Location Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
117-138	Delivery Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
161-162	State Abbreviation	Must not be blank
163-167	ZIP Code	Must be numeric
168-171	ZIP Code Extension	Must be numeric or blank
217-273	Submitter Name	Must not be blank
296-317	Submitter Delivery Address	Must not be blank
318-339	Submitter City	Must not be blank
340-341	Submitter State	Must not be blank
342-346	Submitter ZIP	Must be numeric
347-350	Submitter ZIP Extension	Must be numeric or blank
396-422	Contact Name	Must not be blank
423-437	Contact Phone Number	Must not be blank
500	Preparer Code	Must be A, L, O, P, or S

## RE Record – Employer Record

Record Position	Field on File	Validation by DOTAX
3-6	Tax Year	Must be 4 digit
7	Agent Indicator Code	Must be 1, 2, 3, or blank
8-16	Employer/Agent Identification Number (EIN)	Must be valid 9 digit number
17-25	Agent for EIN (FEIN)	Required if Agent Indicator code = 1
26	Terminating Business Indicator	Must be 1 or 0
31-39	Other EIN (FEIN)	Must be valid 9 digit number, or blank
40-96	Employer Name	Must not be blank
97-118	Employer Location Address	Must not be blank
119-140	Employer Delivery Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
141-162	Employer City	Must not be blank, unless foreign country is specified
170-173	Employer ZIP Code Extension	Must be numeric or blank
174	Kind of Employer	Must be one of F, N, S, T, or Y
219	Employment Code	Must be one of A, F, H, M, Q, R, X, or blank
220	Tax Jurisdiction Code	Must be one of G, N, P, S, V, or blank
221	Third-Party Sick Pay Indicator	Must be 1 or 0

### RW Record – Federal Employee Wage Record

Record Position	Field on File	Validation by DOTAX
3-11	Social Security number	Must be numeric
12-26	Employee First name	Must not be blank
42-61	Employee Last name	Must not be blank
66-87	Employee Location Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
88-109	Employee Delivery Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
110-131	Employee City	Must not be blank, unless foreign country is specified
188-198	Wages, Tips, and Other Compensation	Must be Numeric
276-286	Dependent Care Benefits	Must be Numeric
486	Statutory Employee Indicator	Must be 1 or 0
488	Retirement Plan Indicator	Must be 1 or 0
489	Third-Party Sick Pay Indicator	Must be 1 or 0

### RS Record – Hawaii Wage Record

Record Position	Field on File	Validation by DOTAX
3-4	State Code	Must be valid state code Hawaii State Code is: 15
10-18	Social Security number (SSN)	Must be Valid SSN
19-33	Employee First Name	Must not be blank
49-68	Employee Last Name	Must not be blank
73-94	Employee Location Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
95-116	Employee Delivery Address	Delivery/Location Address - one must not be blank
117-138	Employee City	Must not be blank, unless foreign country is specified
203-213	State Quarterly Unemployment Insurance Total Wages	Must be blank or valid number
214-224	State Quarterly Unemployment Insurance Total Taxable Wages	Must be blank or valid number
225-226	Number of Weeks Worked	Must be blank or valid number
227-334	Date First Employed	Must be blank or have Valid Date
235-242	Date of Separation	Must be blank or have Valid Date
248-267	State Employer Account number	Must not be blank
274-275	State Code	Must be valid state code
276-286	State Taxable Wages	Must be numeric
287-297	State income Tax Withheld	Must be numeric

**RCA Record – Submitter Record**

<b>Record Position</b>	<b>Field on File</b>	<b>Validation by DOTAX</b>
32-88	Submitter Name	Must not be blank
111-132	Submitter Delivery Address	Must not be blank
133-154	Submitter City	Must not be blank
155-156	Submitter State	Must not be blank
157-060	Submitter Zip	Must not be blank
212-238	Contact name	Must not be blank
239-253	Contact Phone Number	Must be numeric

**RCE Record – Employer Record**

<b>Record Position</b>	<b>Field on File</b>	<b>Validation by DOTAX</b>
4-7	Tax Year	Must be valid Year
17-25	Employer's/Agent's Federal EIN (FEIN)	If indicator code is 1, must be valid number
26	Agent Indicator Code	Must be 1, 2, 3, or blank

**RCW Record – Federal Employee Wage Record**

<b>Record Position</b>	<b>Field on File</b>	<b>Validation by DOTAX</b>
13-21	Employee's Correct SSN	Must be valid SSN
72-86	Employee's Correct First name	Must not be blank
102-121	Employee's Correct Last Name	Must not be blank

**RCS Record – Hawaii Wage Record**

<b>Record Position</b>	<b>Field on File</b>	<b>Validation by DOTAX</b>
4-5	State Code	Must be valid state code
25-33	Correct Social Security Number	Must be valid SSN
344-363	Originally Reported State Employer Account Number	Only alphanumeric characters. Omit hyphens
364-383	Correct State Employer Account Number	Only alphanumeric characters. Omit hyphens
396-397	State Code	Must be valid state code
398-408	Originally Reported State Taxable Wages	Must be numeric
409-419	Correct State Taxable Wages	Must be numeric
420-430	Originally Reported State Income Tax Withheld	Must be numeric
431-441	Correct State Income Tax Withheld	Must be numeric

## **Rejection Resolution Procedure**

If any part of the file was rejected, the entire file will be rejected. Once all errors have been corrected, the entire file must be resubmitted

## **Magnetic Media or Paper**

The Hawaii Department of Taxation will not accept W-2 and W-2C information submitted on CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, tapes, and diskettes. These are not acceptable forms of transmission and will not be processed or accepted.

**IMPORTANT:** You will **not** receive a “Rejected” acknowledgement for files sent to us in other formats or methods. Please refer to the file specifications if you have questions about the correct file format.

## **Record Retention:**

You must keep these documents and its information in your books and records for at least three years and submit them if we request. Only W-2 or W-2Cs electronically transmitted in compliance with the specifications provided in this document (EFW2 and EFW2C) are accepted or unless otherwise directed by us.

## **Important Reminders:**

- A direct file transmission to Hawaii may be completed through either of the file transmission methods outlined in this guide (separate from the filing transmission to the federal government).
- Within the file, make sure that a line feed and carriage return are included after each record (each record is a single line of 512 fields for the W-2 file, 1024 for the W-2C file).
- Do not** re-transmit any accepted W-2 record as this creates duplicate records for your employee. If you need to correct a W-2, you must file a W-2C.
- Files should only contain records for the same tax period (e.g., only 2021 W-2Cs).

## **Contact Information**

For all technical questions concerning the Electronic W-2 and W-2C Program as well as file and record layouts, email us at [Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov](mailto:Tax.Efile.Test.Bulk@hawaii.gov).