



# United States Ombudsman Association 2019 Annual Conference

## THE OMBUDSMAN: MAKING THINGS PONO Honolulu, Hawaii

Pre-conference | September 16 and 17, 2019  
Conference | September 18, 19 and 20, 2019

Conference Hotel: Hilton Waikiki Beach

Photo Courtesy of Hawaii Tourism Authority

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Robin K. Matsunaga

Ombudsman

Office of the Ombudsman

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## The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Aloha!

Many Hawaiian words cannot be directly and literally translated to English. They can have multiple meanings and often describe concepts or states of being that are fundamental to Hawaiian culture. For example, most of us know that the word "Aloha" means more than just "Hello" and "Goodbye," and that "living Aloha" means to live with respect and love for each other. The word "Pono," although commonly understood to mean righteous, honest, or moral, is another one of those words that have a much deeper meaning that cannot be simply defined and must be lived and felt in order to be completely understood. It means more than doing the right thing in every situation; it refers to living your life in harmony with yourself, others, and your environment.

While we may not think of it as such, much of what an ombudsman does is to make things Pono; to make things right and to restore balance and harmony in the communities we serve and live in. However, we face many challenges each day as we try to produce big results with little resources and interact with individuals who are increasingly more demanding and less civil, while continuing to deal with legal and ethical issues. Through its annual conferences, the USOA provides ombudsman professionals with training and support to assist them in meeting these challenges.

USOA's 40th Annual Conference will again provide sessions to enhance the skills, tools, and strategies needed to be an effective and efficient ombudsman. The conference planning committee has also included sessions that will teach us techniques to help us better cope with the stresses and trauma we experience, sometimes unknowingly, in our daily lives at and outside of work.

Please join us September 16-20, 2019, in Honolulu, Hawaii, where 50 years ago, the Hawaii Ombudsman's office opened its doors as the first classical ombudsman office in the United States. We are confident that you will find this conference one to remember.



Robin K. Matsunaga

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Kristie Hirschman

USOA Director – Conferences and Training

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## Pre-Conference *(additional fees apply)*

- :: **New Ombudsman Training** (2 day training) September 16 *and* 17  
Breakfast, lunch, breaks and materials included  
8-5 Monday and Tuesday
- :: **Unreasonable Complainant Conduct** (1 day training, offered twice) - September 16 *or* 17  
Breakfast, lunch, breaks and materials included  
8-5 Monday *or* Tuesday
- :: **Administrative Investigations and Demonstrating Your Value** (1 day training) - September 17  
Breakfast, lunch, breaks and materials included  
8-5 Tuesday

## Full Conference *(all activities included in the main conference registration fee)*

- :: **Opening Reception – September 17**  
(included in conference registration)  
5:30-7:30 pm Tuesday

### Wednesday – September 18

- :: 8:00 am - Conference Opening
- :: 9:00 am - De-Stressing the Ombudsman
- :: 10:45 am - Going Beyond the Report
- :: 10:45 am – The Art of Intake
- :: 12:00 pm - Luncheon and Keynote
- :: 1:30 pm - How Can Understanding the Science of Human Behavior Improve Ombudsman Work
- :: 1:30 pm - Reflections on Ombudsmanship: Looking Back and Looking Forward
- :: 3:15 pm - Town Hall Meeting – Supporting Fairness
- :: 3:15 pm - Chapter Meetings
- :: 5:30 pm - Networking Event

### Thursday – September 19

- :: 8:00 am - Grievances: The Fitness Tracker for Your Ombuds Program
- :: 8:00 am - Advancing Fairness through Preventative Ombudship
- :: 9:00 am - Open Café Style Discussions about Critical Issues
- :: 10:45 am - Office Operations: Wisdom and Grit
- :: 10:45 am - Tweets, Trolls, and Transparency: Ombuds Outreach in the Digital Age
- :: 12:00 pm - Lunch and USOA Annual Meeting
- :: 1:45 pm - How to Know Everything: Operational Knowledge Management for Public Ombuds
- :: 1:45 pm - How Our Office Develops Efficient Non-Binding Recommendations
- :: 3:00 pm - Ethical Decision Making and Effective Communication
- :: 4:45 pm - International Ombudsman Institute Meeting

### Friday – September 20

- :: 9:00 am - Vicarious Trauma and Resiliency
- :: 11:45 am - Conference Closing

**Early conference and pre-conference registration is highly recommended.**



Founded in 1972, the United States Ombudsman Association is the national organization for public sector – government - ombudsman professionals. USOA is North America’s oldest national ombudsman association with members from ombudsman offices in local, state, and federal government and affiliated ombudsman offices in the U.S. and Canada, as well as ombudsman organizations in Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa.

Under its bylaws, USOA is a non-profit entity which functions exclusively to support ombudsmen and ombudsman organizations improve their operations and services. USOA focuses on education, training, prudent practices, and social means to promote and encourage the establishment of ombudsman offices at the state, local, national, and international levels.

## about USOA



# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

## Pre-conference Options Registration: 7:30 am – 5:00 pm

### Pre-conference #1

Monday and Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> (Two-day training)  
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

#### New Ombudsman Training

This popular two-day workshop is designed for individuals who are relatively new to the role of government ombudsman. Faculty includes general jurisdiction legislative ombudsmen and executive branch/agency-specific ombudsmen with more than 50 years of collective experience in their respective offices. Participants will learn about the origin, characteristics, and standards of an ombudsman office. Instructors will discuss basic intake, interviewing and investigation techniques, report writing, and will present a case study to enable participants to apply knowledge to practice. The workshop will examine the role of the ombudsman in promoting an ethical climate in our organizations as well as review ethical challenges an ombudsman may face. Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss best practices, time saving tips, and tools of the trade with a group of experienced, seasoned ombudsmen.

#### Instructors:

*Kristie Hirschman – Ombudsman, Iowa Office of Ombudsman*  
*Linda Lord-Jenkins – Retired Ombudsman, State of Alaska*  
*Robin K. Matsunaga – Ombudsman, State of Hawaii*  
*Gerald R. Papica – Ombuds Program Dir., TN Comm. on Children & Youth*

### Pre-conference #2

Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup> OR Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>  
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

*This is a one-day workshop.*  
*Attendance is capped at 40 each day!*

*SPONSORED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE.*

#### Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

Unreasonable complainant conduct (UCC) can take up an inordinate amount of an agency's time and resources. Participants will learn the strategies developed as part of a joint project by the nine Australian Parliamentary Ombudsman offices to deal with UCC. This very popular and world-renowned one-day workshop will provide participants with specific strategies and skills to effectively and confidently deal with UCC. It is designed for staff who come into contact with, or respond to, complainants or customers who display unreasonable conduct, as well as supervisors and senior management responsible for setting complaint handling policy. The workshop will also examine participant examples of UCC. Participants will learn:

- Strategies for managing UCC;
- Key messages for complainants/clients/staff;
- Ways to support staff in implementing strategies; and
- Staff health and safety considerations.

#### Instructor:

*Donald Sword – Educator and Advocate, New South Wales, Australia*

### Pre-conference #3

Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>  
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

#### Administrative Investigations and Demonstrating Your Value

Solid investigations are key to demonstrating value to your stakeholders. In this session, we will review planning for a complex investigation based on a social welfare case, and interviewing best practices. We will then explore how to optimize stakeholder relationships and demonstrate value through strategic communications. Participants will understand the fundamentals of credible and thorough investigations, including how to identify issues, plan effectively, and conduct effective witness interviews.

They will learn why public communication is critical during and after an investigation, and learn how to reach stakeholder groups, build collaborative relationships with stakeholders and demonstrate fairness and value through balanced messaging.

#### Instructor:

*Wendy Ray - General Counsel, Office of the Ontario Ombudsman, Canada*

*(NOTE: Attendees can register for Pre-Conference 2 on Monday and for Pre-Conference 3 on Tuesday)*

# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Detailed Conference Schedule - *May be Subject to Change*

## Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm      **Opening Reception** – Hilton Waikiki Hotel

## Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>

7:30 am – 5:00 pm      **Registration**

8:00 am – 9:00 am      **Conference Opening and Welcome Remarks**

9:00 am – 10:30 am      **Plenary Session 1**

### **De-Stressing the Ombudsman**

Stress is an inescapable part of modern human life. We may not be able to escape it completely, yet we can certainly undertake some simple and effective things to lessen its effects in our lives. Ombudsmen often find themselves in the eye of a stressful conflict storm. While their primary function is to serve as independent, impartial investigators, ombudsmen often find themselves acting as counselors and coaches for persons who feel aggrieved by their government. They provide complainants a place to vet their grievances and emotions and as such, ombudsmen are subject to a very stressful working environment, which often goes unaddressed to the detriment of their health and well-being. This interactive workshop is designed to be a practical guide for self-motivated de-stressing in your office or other workday setting.

**Presenters:** *Thomas and Louisa DiGrazia, Yoga School of Kailua, Inc*

10:30 am – 10:45 am      **Break**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm      **Concurrent Session 1/A**

### **Going Beyond the Report**

Ombudsman work involves creating solutions and writing recommendations to create system change. Unfortunately, due to time and resource constraints, no one entity typically takes responsibility for implementing recommendations—leaving good reports to sit on shelves. This presentation will use real case examples to demonstrate how to leverage your reports and findings into regulatory and legal change through principles of facilitation, collaboration, and education. The strategies discussed in this session will provide attendees with tools to communicate and translate their work into long-lasting and meaningful change.

**Presenter:** *Stephanie Villafuerte, Child Protection Ombudsman, Colorado Child Protection Ombudsman Office*

10:45 am – 12:00 pm      **Concurrent Session 1/B**

### **The Art of Intake**

Intake is the first – and arguably the most important – step of the complainant handling process. How well is your office's intake process working? This session will discuss basic intake principles and the skill sets required for the job. The presenter has processed over 10,000 intakes in 24 years and will share her experience with a variety of intake processes; the benefits, the basic requirements, and the cautions. Attendees will learn tips on how to improve overall office efficiency and staff satisfaction.

**Presenter:** *Kristie Hirschman, Ombudsman, Iowa Office of Ombudsman*

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm      **Lunch & Keynote** - *Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, State of Hawaii*

1:15 pm – 1:30 pm      **Break**

# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Detailed Conference Schedule - *May be Subject to Change*

## 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Concurrent Session 2/A

### How Can Understanding the Science of Human Behavior Improve Ombudsman Work

Human behavior impacts everything we do. The presenter will explain applied behavior analysis (ABA) and the seven dimensions of the science. ABA knowledge and applicable interventions can be particularly helpful for those intervening on behalf of students, children, and individuals with mental health and/or developmental disabilities. The science of human behavior will be discussed in the context of daily life, performance management, and ombudsman work. Examples will be provided of how understanding basic principles of human behavior improves practices and outcomes in working with requestors, coworkers, and subjects of investigations.

**Presenter:** *Traci L. Shinabarger, Chief Child and Family Ombudsman, Montana Department of Justice*

## 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Concurrent Session 2/B

### Reflections on Ombudsmanship: Looking Back and Looking Forward

This session will provide attendees a view of the ombudsman from both within and outside the office, drawing on the presenter's experiences as Ombudsman for the Province of British Columbia and his subsequent work as a consultant and senior official within organizations subject to the review of the provincial ombudsman. In addition to speaking on the relationship between the Ombudsman and the authorities, departments, or organizations that are subject to the ombudsman's oversight, the presenter will speak on challenges that many ombudsman offices are or will be facing, such as expansion of jurisdiction and use of social media.

**Presenter:** *Howard Kushner, Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, Province of British Columbia*

## 3:00 pm – 3:15 pm Break

## 3:15 pm – 4:30 pm Concurrent Session 3/A

### USOA Chapter Meetings

USOA members have different areas of authority, interest, and expertise in their jobs. For this reason, a number of specialized chapters are organized within USOA to share experiences, resources, accomplishments and to problem-solve. This time also allows chapter members to develop a plan of action for the upcoming year.

You do not have to be a chapter member to attend any of these meetings.

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Children and Families | ▪ Federal    |
| ▪ Public Safety         | ▪ Healthcare |
| ▪ Education             | ▪ Municipal  |

## 3:15 pm – 4:30 pm Concurrent Session 3/B

### Town Hall Meeting – Supporting Fairness

Ombudsmen are particularly dependent upon our colleagues for their support, wisdom and experience. USOA provides the infrastructure and contacts to assist individuals and offices to make these connections. If you're new to the organization or always wanted to better understand how it works, this session is for you. USOA's President, Robin Matsunaga, will lead a panel of Board members in discussion and field questions about USOA, its history, mission, and opportunities for member involvement, as well as answer questions regarding topics of interest to attendees.

## 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm Networking Event

# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Detailed Conference Schedule - *May be Subject to Change*

**Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>**

**7:30 am – 5:00 pm**      **Registration**

**8:00 am – 9:00 am**      **Concurrent Session 4/A**

## **Grievances: The Fitness Tracker for Your Ombuds Program**

Just like tracking steps and calories to monitor your personal fitness, a grievance process can provide valuable information to help you track the fitness of your ombudsman's office. This session will provide the essential components of an ombuds grievance policy, how to have a robust and efficient grievance process, and how to use grievances to help you manage and enhance the performance of your program.

**Presenter:** *J. Kate Burkhart, Alaska State Ombudsman*

**8:00 am – 9:00 am**      **Concurrent Session 4/B**

## **Advancing Fairness through Preventative Ombudship: Highlights from the B. C. Ombudsperson Prevention Initiatives Pilot Program (2017-2020)**

An ombudsperson can help ensure fairness by collaborating with public bodies on program development and policy design, and by proactively sharing our knowledge of the principles of administrative fairness and expertise in complaint resolution. This presentation will highlight the key initiatives, challenges, and outcomes the British Columbia office has experienced in working to offer preventative approaches to supporting good public administration. Participants will learn how an ombudsperson can effect change through voluntary and strategic engagement with public bodies while still maintaining independence, impartiality, and investigative integrity as an oversight body.

**Presenters:** *Rachel Warren, Manager, Prevention Initiatives, Office of the Ombudsperson, British Columbia*

**9:00 am – 10:30 am**      **Plenary Session 2**

## **Open Café Style Discussions about Critical Issues**

This session is an interactive learning exercise on relevant topics. Common ombudsman issues and practices will be discussed in timed small group discussions. Each table in the room will have a designated topic and table facilitator. Participants may choose five topical discussions in which to participate as a time keeper moves participants at timed 13-minute intervals. Got a nagging complaint you have often wondered how other ombudsmen handle? Wondering about case management systems? Join the café-style discussions to share your experiences and hear what other ombudsmen know.

**10:30 am – 10:45 am**      **Break**

**10:45 am – 11:45 am**      **Concurrent Session 5/A**

## **Office Operations: Wisdom and Grit**

Whether you are starting a new office or yours is well established, long term success hinges on building and maintaining a solid foundation. Strong operational foundations include accurate and flexible job descriptions, hiring and managing employees, establishing operational policies, selecting an appropriate and sustainable case managements system, negotiating a meaningful budget, creating and maintaining an effective social media presence and building productive relationships with agencies, media and community. Session participants will hear from both ends of the operational spectrum as the co-presenters include an office in its infancy and one that will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year.

**Presenters:** *Kristie Hirschman, Ombudsman, Iowa Office of Ombudsman*

*Moira O'Neill, Director, New Hampshire Office of the Child Advocate*



# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Detailed Conference Schedule - *May be Subject to Change*

## 10:45 am – 11:45 am Concurrent Session 5/B

### **Tweets, Trolls, and Transparency: Ombuds Outreach in the Digital Age**

Does your office Tweet? Do you have a Facebook page? Do you blog? Social media has dramatically changed how citizens interact with government. It can be used to engage citizens and build trust, but do the benefits outweigh the pitfalls? A panel of ombudsmen will discuss considerations and consequences for using social media in your office. Attendees will also be encouraged to share their experiences.

**Panelists:** *J. Kate Burkhart, Alaska State Ombudsman*

*Trevor Leahy, Small Business Advocate, Oregon Secretary of State*

*Diane Welborn, Ombudsman, Dayton and Montgomery County Ombudsman's Office*

## 11:45 am – 12:00 pm Break

## 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm Lunch and USOA Annual Meeting and 2020 USOA Annual Conference Announcement

## 1:30 pm – 1:45 pm Break

## 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm Concurrent Session 6/A

### **How to Know Everything: Operational Knowledge Management for Public Ombuds**

The success of any ombuds organization is highly dependent on its ability to access information. The staff of ombuds organizations with broad jurisdiction are tasked with a monumental challenge of knowing the full spectrum of government services and programs they oversee, the legislation and policies that govern them, the applicable complaint and appeal processes, key points of contact, and ongoing systemic concerns – all of which are subject to change. Since 2011, the Office of the BC Ombudsperson has been exploring modern and innovative approaches to managing its operational knowledge. From developing an office wiki database to incorporating Knowledge Management as a cornerstone of their Strategic Plan, the presenter will share their office's challenges, approaches, successes, and the lessons learned over the past eight years. Attendees will also be invited to contribute to a discussion around sectoral best practice.

**Presenter:** *David Murray, Director, Intake, Planning, Policy and Research,  
Office of the British Columbia Ombudsperson*

## 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm Concurrent Session 6/B

### **How Our Office Develops Efficient Non-Binding Recommendations**

An ombudsman's report is critical in an environment of changing government priorities and nonbinding recommendations. These presenters will explain how investigations are undertaken in Canadian federal prisons and share lessons learned after undertaking two systemic investigations in partnership with government at the local, regional, and national level. They will also demonstrate how a comprehensive investigative approach ensures accountability and implementation of effective, non-binding recommendations.

**Presenters:** *Stacie Ogg, Deputy Director, Canada Office of the Correctional Investigator  
Frederic Heran, Director of Investigations, Canada Office of the Correctional Investigator*

## 2:45 pm – 3:00 pm Break

# The Ombudsman: Making Things Pono

Detailed Conference Schedule - *May be Subject to Change*

## 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm Plenary Session 3

### Ethical Decision Making and Effective Communication

The most important and difficult tasks for an ombudsman are making ethical decisions and communicating effectively. Ethical decision making is often challenging due to conflicting priorities and values. Making decisions ethically requires knowledge, wisdom and skill. It is not a simple or easy task.

The ability to communicate clearly and effectively is essential to being an effective ombudsman. The better you are able to speak, get your points across, and understand others, the more successful you will be.

This presentation offers an overview of the values and principles of ethical decision making, an in-depth perspective of key ethical standards, and a detailed step-by-step action plan that can be applied to any important and difficult decision. You will also learn critically important skills that you can apply immediately which will improve your effectiveness and your productivity.

**Presenter:** *Annabel Chotzen, Professional Speaker, Corporate Trainer*

## 4:45 pm – 5:45 pm International Ombudsman Institute Meeting

**Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>**

**(Note later start time)**

## 7:30 am – 12:00 pm Registration

## 9:00 am – 11:45 am Plenary Session 4 (Break – 10:30 am – 10:45 am)

### Vicarious Trauma and Resiliency

This highly interactive 2 1/2 hour session is designed for those who work with people who witnessed or experienced trauma. Participants review the symptoms of vicarious trauma, also known as compassion fatigue, discuss successful coping techniques, and design an action plan for resiliency.

**Presenter:** *Elizabeth Kent, Meeting Expectations Hawaii*

## 11:45 am – 12:00 pm Conference Closing

**Conference attendance certificates will be emailed to attendees.**

## USOA WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AND THANK OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

### PLATINUM

**Resolve Software Group**



### SILVER

**Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, State of Georgia**



### Workpro



### DONOR

**Mediate.com**



Please check USOA's webpage for conference and exhibitor opportunities!

# REGISTRATION FEES INFORMATION

Online registration at [usombudsman.org](http://usombudsman.org)

There are three separate registration options:

1. Full Conference, 2. Pre-Conference (four options), 3. Guest Reception & Banquet Tickets

*Please take note of the cancellation policy on page 14*

Contact [usoa@assocserv.com](mailto:usoa@assocserv.com) for information on group rates and registration assistance.

## 1) FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Full Conference Registration Fees September 18, 19 and 20, 2019 Includes the Tuesday evening reception, Wednesday and Thursday breakfast, lunch, and breaks, Wednesday evening networking event and a break on Friday morning.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$475	\$525
Non-Member	\$600	\$650
Student*	\$400	\$400

\*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

In an effort to be environmentally friendly, this year's conference materials will be provided on a flash drive and will be available on the conference app. However we know that many attendees do not bring laptops or similar devices to the conference, so if you need the conference materials printed in a binder, please notify Kristie Hirschman by August 30 at [kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov).

Single-Day Conference Registration Fees September 18 or 19, 2019 Single day registrations for Wednesday and/or Thursday includes breakfast, lunch, and breaks.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$225/day	\$250/day
Non-Member	\$250/day	\$275/day

Single-Day Conference Registration Fees September 20, 2019 Single-day registration for Friday includes breakfast and morning break.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$100	\$125
Non-Member	\$125	\$150

## 2) PRE-CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

### Pre-Conference #1

<b>Pre- Conference Registration Fees</b> <b>“New Ombudsman Training”</b> <b>September 16 and 17, 2019 (two-day training)</b> The pre-conference registration fee includes breakfast, lunch and breaks on Monday and Tuesday.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$375	\$425
Non-Member	\$475	\$525
Student*	\$350	\$350

\*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

### Pre-Conference Fees #2

<b>Pre-Conference Registration Fees</b> <b>“Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct”</b> <b>September 16 or September 17, 2019</b> <b>This is a one-day workshop. Attendance is capped at 40 each day so register early!</b> The pre-conference registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, and breaks.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$275	\$325
Non-Member	\$325	\$375

### Pre-Conference Fees #3

<b>Pre-Conference Registration Fees</b> <b>“Administrative Investigations and Demonstrating Your Value”</b> <b>September 17, 2019</b> <b>This is a one-day workshop.</b> The pre-conference registration fee – includes breakfast, lunch, and breaks.		
	On or before August 15	After August 15
Member	\$275	\$325
Non-Member	\$325	\$375

### Reception and Networking Event Tickets for SINGLE-DAY REGISTRANTS AND/OR GUESTS

<b>Reception and Networking Event Tickets</b> (Admission into these events is included with a paid full conference registration fee.) <b>CONTACT Robin Matsunaga at <a href="mailto:robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.hawaii.gov">robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.hawaii.gov</a> if you have questions.</b>	
Opening Reception - Tuesday Evening, September 17	\$25
Networking Event - Wednesday Evening, September 18	\$84
Children (5-12 years)	\$56

# General Information

## Dress/Attire

The dress/attire for the conference is business casual.

## Hotel Accommodations

### Hilton Waikiki Beach

2500 Kuhio Avenue

Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

Hotel Number: 808-922-0811

Hotel Reservation: 808-921-5521 Group Code OMBUDS

## Hotel Reservation Link

[Book your group rate for USOA 2019 Annual Conference](#)

The negotiated group rate pre-tax is \$177 or prevailing Government Per Diem Rate for King and Double Beds. The group rate is available three days pre and post event dates based on availability.

Hotel room rates are subject to a 10.25% transient accommodations tax and a 4.712% State excise tax. If you need to cancel your reservation for any reason, you must do so three days prior to arrival to avoid cancellation penalties.

**Please book directly with the hotel no later than Thursday, August 15.** This is the cut-off date for the USOA room block. After the cut-off date, the hotel will release unused rooms to the public. All reservations received after August 15 will be accepted on a space availability basis only.

## Ground Transportation

Ground transportation options between the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport and the Hilton Waikiki Beach hotel include taxi, Lyft/Uber, and independent shuttles. Average cost, one way, for these options are:

Taxi- \$48

Lyft- \$42-\$59

Uber- \$43-\$60

Shuttles- \$16 \$25 for 1-2 passengers, but check each company's policy on luggage

## Photos/Video

USOA may take photos/video of participants at the conference and these may appear in USOA's promotional materials. If you do not want to appear in photos or videos, please email Kristie Hirschman at

[kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov).



## Also of Note –

The 67th Annual Waikiki Ho`olaule`a, which is Hawaii's largest street festival block party, with booths all along Kalakaua Avenue in Waikiki that feature Hawaiian cuisine, crafts, culture, and music, will take place on Saturday, September 21, from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm. If you are planning to attend the annual conference, you may want to consider staying a couple of days after the conference to experience this event.

Link to the Ho`olaule`a event: <https://www.alohafestivals.com/67th-annual-waikiki-hoolaulea/>

Link to the Aloha Festivals main page: <https://www.alohafestivals.com/about-us/>

## Conference Reservation Cancellation & Refund Policy

**Notice of cancellation must be made in writing.** Cancellation by telephone will not be accepted. Notice of cancellation may be e-mailed to [usoa@assocserv.com](mailto:usoa@assocserv.com). If you cancel your reservation, we encourage you to send a substitute to take your place. Please contact the USOA Business Office @ [usoa@assocserv.com](mailto:usoa@assocserv.com) of any changes so we can arrange for a correct name badge and certificate.

**If you cannot find a replacement, the following cancellation policy will apply:**

Cancellation on or before August 15	100% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee
Cancellation from August 15 to September 10	50% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee
Cancellation after September 10	No refund

***USOA reserves the right to change programs and conference offerings at any time as warranted and without prior notice.***

## QUESTIONS?

E-mail [robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.hawaii.gov](mailto:robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.hawaii.gov) or [kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov)

### Hawaii's Aloha Spirit Law

"Aloha Spirit". (a) "Aloha Spirit" is the coordination of mind and heart within each person. It brings each person to the self. Each person must think and emote good feelings to others. In the contemplation and presence of the life force, "Aloha", the following unuhi laula loa may be used:

"Akahai", meaning kindness to be expressed with tenderness;

"Lokahi", meaning unity, to be expressed with harmony;

"Oluolu", meaning agreeable, to be expressed with pleasantness;

"Haahaa", meaning humility, to be expressed with modesty;

"Ahonui", meaning patience, to be expressed with perseverance.

These are traits of character that express the charm, warmth and sincerity of Hawaii's people. It was the working philosophy of native Hawaiians and was presented as a gift to the people of Hawaii. "Aloha" is more than a word of greeting or farewell or a salutation. "Aloha" means mutual regard and affection and extends warmth in caring with no obligation in return. "Aloha" is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence. "Aloha" means to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen and to know the unknowable.

(b) In exercising their power on behalf of the people and in fulfillment of their responsibilities, obligations and service to the people, the legislature, governor, lieutenant governor, executive officers of each department, the chief justice, associate justices, and judges of the appellate, circuit, and district courts may contemplate and reside with the life force and give consideration to the "Aloha Spirit."

Section 5-7.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes