

**COUNTY OF HAWAI‘I
YOUTH COMMISSION
BYLAWS**

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this commission shall be known as the County of Hawai‘i Youth Commission.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND
POLICY; DEFINITIONS**

The Youth Commission shall express the policy priorities of the youth of the County of Hawai‘i. The Youth Commission shall carry out the policy of the County of Hawai‘i to promote the development of future leaders through increasing civic engagement and volunteer service of youth, and ensuring young people are provided with opportunities for their ideas and perspectives to be integrated into local government on a regular basis.

Wherever used in these bylaws, the following terms shall be taken to have the following meaning:

- A. “Charter” shall mean the County Charter of the County of Hawai‘i, State of Hawai‘i.
- B. “Commission” shall mean the Youth Commission of the County of Hawai‘i, State of Hawai‘i.
- C. “Council” shall mean the County Council of the County of Hawai‘i, State of Hawai‘i.
- D. “County” shall mean the County of Hawai‘i, State of Hawai‘i.
- E. “Mayor” shall mean the Mayor of the County of Hawai‘i, State of Hawai‘i.
- F. “Commissioners” shall mean the appointed members of the Youth Commission.

ARTICLE III – POWERS, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Commission shall:

- A. Identify the aspirations, needs, and concerns of the youth of the county.
- B. Examine and devise strategies that support or improve existing social, economic, educational, health, and recreational programs for youth. These strategies may include developing new programs and submitting such recommendations to the council and mayor for consideration and action.
- C. Advise the council and mayor on the effects of legislative policies and proposed legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the county.

- D. Respond to requests for comment and recommendation on matters referred to the commission by the council, mayor, other county officers, agencies, and executives and legislative branch advisory committees of the county.
- E. Initiate educational campaigns.
- F. Encourage other young people to increase civil engagement in the county.
- G. Coordinate activities that increase youth participation in county-led initiatives, such as development of community plans and emergency preparedness.
- H. Create community resources for youth that are available to residents of all ages in the county.
- I. Select three adult residents of the county to serve as its advisors.

ARTICLE IV - ORGANIZATION AND MEETINGS

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The commission shall consist of at least nine (9) to no more than fifteen (15) members between the ages of fourteen (14) to twenty-four (24) years at the time of appointment and serve for staggered terms of two years. If a commissioner turns twenty-five (25) years old during his/her/their term, the commissioner may finish his/her/their complete term on the commission.
2. Each council member shall appoint a member to serve on the commission who resides in the respective council member's district. The mayor may appoint up to six (6) members who are residents of the county.
3. Commissioners who have attained the age of majority at the time of appointment shall be duly registered voters of the county.
4. The mayor shall designate a secretary for the commission, who shall provide the primary administrative and clerical support to the commissioners. The Office of Management shall provide adequate training and resources to fulfill the purpose, duties, and responsibilities of the commission.
5. The council chair may assign one member of the council to serve as an ex-officio member on the commission without voting rights. If the ex-officio member knows he/she/they will be absent from a regularly scheduled meeting, the ex-officio member, at his/her/their discretion, and upon concurrence from the council chair, may temporarily assign another council member to attend the regularly scheduled meeting to fill in as the ex-officio member without voting rights. The temporary assignment shall not grant the temporary ex-officio member with any more rights, duties, or obligations than that which are afforded to the ex-officio member.
6. The commission shall elect annually a chair, vice-chair, and assistant secretary to serve for a term of one year. If, for any reason, the chair, vice-

chair, or assistant secretary cannot hold the position for the term, a special election shall be held. In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall serve as acting chair. In the absence of the vice-chair, the assistant secretary shall serve as acting vice-chair. In the absence of the assistant secretary, then any willing, remaining member of the commission may serve as acting assistant secretary.

7. Commissioners shall attend all meetings, unless there is good cause for absence. Each commissioner shall notify the commission secretary, the chairperson, or the assistant secretary of any absence prior to the scheduled meeting. If the commissioner notifies the commission secretary, the chairperson or the assistant secretary of his/her/their absence prior the scheduled meeting, his/her/their absence shall not be an unexcused absence. The commission, by a two-thirds vote of all the members to which the commission is entitled, may remove a commissioner for good cause, which may include but is not limited to, dereliction of duties, or three (3) consecutive, unexcused absences. A commissioner may resign at any time with written notice to the mayor and the chairperson. Upon a commissioner's resignation, the mayor's office shall proceed to fill the vacancy in accordance with the charter.

B. MEETINGS

1. The commission shall hold regular meetings, at least once a month, at a public facility (or other site accessible to the public), which public facility shall alternate between Hilo and Kona.
2. The commission shall hold its meetings and conduct its business in accordance with Chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, as amended. Robert's Rules of Order may be used in the absence of any applicable provision(s) under these bylaws.
3. A majority of all of the members to which the commission is entitled shall constitute a quorum to do business. A concurring vote of the majority of those present at a duly noticed meeting shall be sufficient to make any action valid. Quorum shall constitute the following, where there is more than nine (9) but fewer than fifteen (15) members of the commission at any given time:

Number of commissioners	Quorum
9	5
10	6
11	6
12	7
13	7
14	8

15	8
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4. Abstentions are only permitted if there is a clear conflict of interest or if the particular motion refers to a matter a commissioner would not be in a position to be knowledgeable of (e.g., the approval of minutes from a meeting the commissioner did not attend).
5. Oral public testimony on any agenda item shall be limited to three (3) minutes in length. Oral testimonies of interested persons shall not be limited to the beginning of the commission's agenda or meeting. The commission's secretary shall be the timekeeper. Repetitious or disruptive testimony may be curtailed by the chairperson.
6. Written public testimony on any agenda item shall be accepted by the commission.
7. In the event neither the chair nor the vice-chair are able to attend a scheduled meeting, either the remaining commissioners present at the scheduled meeting may select a temporary chair to preside over the meeting, or the ex-officio member may temporarily preside over the meeting.

ARTICLE V - YOUTH COMMISSION OFFICERS

A. OFFICERS

1. The officers of the commission shall be the chair, vice-chair, and assistant secretary.
2. The commission may appoint other officers, such as a treasurer and a press secretary, who shall work closely with, and be supervised by, the mayor's office and the commission secretary.

B. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The chair shall:
 - a. Preside in-person at all meetings of the commission, alternating between Hilo and Kona.
 - b. Work with the assistant secretary to create the commission's agendas.
 - c. Call regular and special meetings to order.
 - d. Act as the liaison between the commission and the council, mayor, or any other county agency, and attend other county meetings as necessary.
 - e. Give chairperson announcements at the start of every meeting on events, or other topics of interest for other youth commissioners.
2. The vice-chair shall:
 - a. Act as the chair if the chair is unable to fulfill his/her/their duties.
 - b. Shall fulfill duties as requested by the chair.
 - c. Assist the chair in organizing and planning activities for the commission.
3. The assistant secretary shall:
 - a. Assist the commission's secretary by taking notes during the meetings and keeping records.
 - b. Assist the chair with creating the commission's agendas.
 - c. Call roll at the meetings, as needed.
 - d. Fulfill duties as requested by the chair and vice-chair.

C. NOMINATION & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Any member can nominate any member to run for any officer position.
2. The nominee shall accept the nomination to be considered a candidate for the position.
3. To be elected for the position, the candidate must receive the majority vote.
4. The commission shall conduct a run-off election if there are more than two candidates for the position. The top two candidates with the highest votes will then run against each other for a final vote for the desired position.

Following the election of a nominee, the nominee who did not receive the majority will be able to run for lower office where the same process shall follow.

5. A member cannot preside as chair over his/her/their own election. If no member can serve as chair for the election, the ex-officio member may serve as the chair solely for the purposes of election. In the absence of an ex-officio member, the deputy corporation counsel assigned to the commission may serve as the chair solely for the purposes of facilitating the election(s).

ARTICLE VI - ADULT ADVISORS

A. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

1. Pursuant to section 5-3.4(b) of the county charter, the commission shall select three adult residents of the county to serve as its advisors. It shall be the responsibility of the adult advisors to support and encourage the commission from an advisory capacity and provide assistance, as needed and as requested, to the commission.
2. Adult advisors shall be non-voting members of the commission.
3. Adult advisors are expected to attend all commission meetings and events.

B. REQUIREMENTS OF ADULT ADVISOR

1. Each adult advisor shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age and shall reside within the county.
2. Each adult advisor shall support and work cooperatively with the commission in accord with the goals and objectives of the commission.
3. The adult advisor shall not interfere with the administration and operation of the commission.
4. Each of the adult advisors shall have an area of expertise that he/she/they will advise the commission on. Each of the adult advisors shall be proficient and sufficiently knowledgeable in his/her/their area of expertise. Prior to any proposed appointment of an adult advisor, the commission may request appropriate documentation from any proposed adult advisor for the purposes of evaluating the advisor's expertise and knowledge in the area.
5. At least one of the adult advisors shall be a Hawaiian cultural practitioner.

C. SELECTION OF ADULT ADVISOR

1. The commission shall have the sole authority to select and appoint its adult advisors. If desired, the commission may use any permitted interaction allowable under applicable law, as a mechanism to select any adult advisor. The appointment of any adult advisor shall be approved by the whole commission.

D. TERM OF ADULT ADVISOR

1. Each adult advisor shall serve for a term of one (1) year. Adult advisors may be reappointed for an additional one (1) year term, subject to the whole commission's approval.
2. The commission, by a two-thirds vote of all the members to which the commission is entitled, may remove an adult advisor for good cause, which may include but is not limited to, dereliction of duties and three (3) consecutive, unexcused absences. If an adult advisor notifies the commission secretary, chairperson, or the assistant secretary of his/her/their absence prior to the scheduled meeting, the absence shall not be counted as unexcused. An adult advisor may resign at any time with written notice to the mayor and the chairperson. Upon an adult advisor's resignation, the commission shall proceed to fill the vacancy in accordance with this article.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by any commissioner, at any time, and must be given to all commissioners ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting. Amendments shall be subject to a 2/3 majority vote of the commissioners present at the scheduled meeting for approval of the amendments.

Dated: Kailua Kona, Hawai'i, December 28, 2023

Approved and Adopted December 13, 2023
YOUTH COMMISSION OF THE
COUNTY OF HAWAI'I,
STATE OF HAWAI'I

By: 
ERIC P. GEE, Its Chairperson

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

By: 
Deputy Corporation Counsel

Date: December 29, 2023