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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Ensuring “facility access” through the design and construction of buildings, facilities, and sites that are free of barriers is vital for the maximum inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. Section 103-50, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), requires all plans and specifications for the construction of public buildings, facilities, and sites to be prepared so that public buildings, facilities, and sites are accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The Disability and Communication Access Board’s (DCAB) Standing Committee on Facility Access and Facility Access Unit (FAU) are responsible for implementing §103-50, HRS.

The Standing Committee on Facility Access is comprised of the following seven (7) members of DCAB:

- Marie Kimmey, Chairperson
- Ronald Awa
- Scott Fleming
- Dayne Greene (from 9/26/24)
- Michael Nojima
- Teri Spinola-Campbell
- Charlotte Townsend

Activities of this Committee include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing accessibility guidelines for the design of public buildings, facilities, and sites.
- Issuing Interpretive Opinions to clarify accessibility guidelines.
- Approving Site Specific Alternate Designs where an alternate design provides equal or greater access.

The FAU is comprised of eight (8) staff that are managed by DCAB’s Executive Director.

- Kirby Shaw, Executive Director
- Rodney Kanno, Facility Access Coordinator
- Rodney Kanno, Facility Access Specialist II
- Eric Isidro, Facility Access Specialist II
- Alan Tarumoto, Facility Access Specialist II
- Glenn Arakaki, Facility Access Specialist II
- Jarrett Okutsu, Facility Access Specialist II (from 6/17/24)
- Nathan Iwamasa, Facility Access Specialist II (from 10/17/24)
- Laurie Palenske, Facility Access Specialist I
- Mylynne Simon, Office Assistant

This Report highlights key facility access accomplishments for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

FACILITY ACCESS UNIT ACTIVITIES

Activities of the FAU include, but are not limited to:

- Review of plans and specifications of public buildings, facilities, and sites.
- Research and develop recommendations on requests for Interpretive Opinions.
- Research and develop recommendations on requests for Site Specific Alternate Designs.
- Review master plans of public buildings, facilities, and sites.
- Review, analyze and provide comments on codes, guidelines, or standards regarding access for persons with disabilities.
- Monitor projects that have not been submitted as required under §103-50, HRS.
- Monitor and provide testimony on issues regarding access for persons with disabilities.
- Provide general technical assistance to State and County agencies, design professionals and the general public.
- Conduct and coordinate workshops and training sessions.
- Prepare and distribute editions of DCAB's Access E-Bulletin.

PLAN REVIEWS

SECTION 103-50, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES

Plan reviews form the primary core of the work for DCAB's FAU. Section 103-50, HRS, requires all State and County agencies to seek the advice and recommendation of DCAB prior to starting construction to ensure that public buildings, facilities, and sites are designed to be accessible to persons with disabilities. Advice and recommendations are provided by means of a comprehensive and technical plan review to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, the Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines, and Interpretive Opinions, as adopted and amended by DCAB. The §103-50, HRS, review process covers public buildings, facilities, and sites and the infrastructure thereof that: 1) are designed, constructed, purchased or leased with the use of State or County funds or federal funds administered by the State or a County, 2) house State or County programs, services, or activities that are intended to be accessed by the general public, 3) are places of public accommodation or commercial facilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, title 28 Code of Federal Regulations part 36, and are constructed on State or County lands, or 4) are constructed on lands that will be transferred to the State or a County upon completion of construction.

DOCUMENT REVIEWS CONDUCTED

The following chart is a compilation of plan reviews completed by the FAU for fiscal year 2024-2025 with a comparison to the prior two (2) years.

Fiscal Year: 2024-2025

- Total Reviews: 966
- New Submittals: 473
- Resubmittals: 493

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024

- Total Reviews: 1,054
- New Submittals: 558

- Resubmittals: 496

Fiscal Year: 2022-2023

- Total Reviews: 1,168
- New Submittals: 587
- Resubmittals: 581

The total number of plan reviews conducted in fiscal year 2024-2025 was nine hundred sixty six (966). The total number of new submittals conducted in fiscal year 2024-2025 was four hundred seventy three (473). A new submittal is when plans and specifications are first submitted to DCAB for review.

The total number of resubmittals conducted in fiscal year 2024-2025 was four hundred ninety three (493). A resubmittal is when revised plans and specifications are submitted to DCAB for an additional plan review.

Further details on new submittals that were reviewed by the FAU in fiscal year 2024-2025 are shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3 on the following pages.

- Table 1 shows the number of new submittals by department/agency overseeing the project. The State Department of Education, the State Department of Transportation, and the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Design and Construction submitted the greatest number of new submittals.
- Table 2 shows the number of new submittals by type of facility. Schools and Streets, Roads, Sidewalks, Malls account for the greatest number of reviews.
- Table 3 shows the number of new submittals by location. Similar to previous fiscal years, the predominant number of document reviews was for facilities located on Oahu.

FEE FOR REVIEW OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Effective January 1, 2013, DCAB initiated a fee for the review of plans and specifications subject to §103-50, HRS. During the period covering this fiscal year, DCAB collected nine hundred seventy thousand three hundred eleven and three cents (\$970,311.03) under §103-50, HRS, from the four hundred seventy three (473) State and County construction document reviews. It should be noted that resubmittals typically do not involve a review fee.

TABLE 1: Facilities Reviewed by Department/Agency (New Submittals) Fiscal Year 2023-2024

State of Hawaii

Hawaii Health Systems Corporation - 9
Department of Accounting and General Services - 13
Department of Agriculture - 2
Department of Land and Natural Resources - 16
Department of Transportation - 77
Department of Education - 97
Department of Human Services - 3
Department of Public Safety - 1
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands - 5
Hawaii Community Development Authority - 1
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation - 13
State Office of Community Services - 1
State School Facilities Agency - 9
University of Hawaii at Manoa and Hilo - 22
University of Hawaii, Community Colleges - 4

Sub-Total 273

City and County of Honolulu

Department of Environmental Services/Public Lands Development Corporation - 6
Department of Community Services - 1
Board of Water Supply - 22
Department of Wastewater Management - 2
Department of Design and Construction - 48
Department of Facility Maintenance - 1
Department of Planning and Permitting - 18
Department of Transportation Services - 1
Department of Public Works - 1

Sub-Total 100

County of Maui

Development Services Administration - 3
Department of Fire and Public Safety - 1
Department of Housing - 1
Department of Parks and Recreation - 8
Department of Public Works - 21
Department of Water Supply - 2
Department of Management - 1
Department of Transportation - 1

Sub-Total 38

County of Hawaii

Department of Water Supply - 1
Department of Environmental Management, Wastewater - 3
Department of Parks and Recreation - 20

Department of Public Works - 17

Office of Housing and Community Development - 8

Sub-Total 49

County of Kauai

Department of Water - 2

Department of Housing - 2

Department of Parks and Recreation - 2

Department Public Works - 6

Office of the Mayor - 1

Sub-Total 13

TOTAL 473

TABLE 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED BY TYPE OF FACILITY (New Submittals)
Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Airport Facility - 24
Animal Shelter/Zoo - 6
Bus or Mass Transit Terminal/Guideway Station - 5
Cemetery/Memorial - 3
Community/Cultural Center - 6
Convention Center - 2
Correctional Facility - 3
Court - 2
Dikes/Dams - 1
Fire Station - 3
Food Processing - 1
General Sitework (i.e., landscape, slope stabilization, stream bank, leachfield) - 3
Golf Course/Facility - 3
Harbor/Boat/Docks - 18
Health Clinic - 6
Highways/Tunnels/Bridges - 18
Hospital/Medical Care Facility - 5
Hotel - 1
Housing - Apartments or Condominiums-General -14
Housing - Apartments or Condominiums-Specialized Elderly/Handicapped - 2
Housing – Dormitory - 1
Housing – Faculty - 1
Housing - Homeless Shelters - 4
Housing – Residential - 8
Housing - Group Home/or other Community Care - 4
Infrastructure (i.e., mass grading, sitework, utilities) - 18
Laboratory - 2
Museum - 1
Office - 20
Park/Gym - 38
Parking/Maintenance Facility - 10
Police Station - 6
Restaurant/Cafeteria (Not at a School) - 2
Sanitary Landfill - 4
School – Cafeteria - 6
School – Classroom - 4
School – General - 72
School – Gymnasium - 2
School - Track and Field/Courts/Playcourt - 39
School - Vocational or Trade Shop - 1
Shopping Complex/Retail - 1
Stadium or Auditorium (Not at a School) - 2
Streets/Sidewalk/Mall - 62
Theatre - 2
Trails/Wilderness/Campsite - 1

Warehouse/Storage Facility - 6
Wastewater or other Treatment Facility - 9
Water Pump Station/Water Piping - 21
TOTAL 473

TABLE 3: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED BY LOCATION OF FACILITY (New Submittals)
Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Oahu - 238
Maui, Molokai and Lanai - 94
Kauai - 28
Hawaii - 113
TOTAL 473

ON-LINE FACILITY ACCESS PLAN SUBMISSION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

The FAU contracted and worked with Tyler Hawaii (former Hawaii Information Consortium) to develop a web-based document review system that uses ehawaii.gov accounts to log into the system. It is titled the Facility Access Plan Submission and Review System. The online review system has been in use for over four (4) years, and continues to show improved efficiency for the document review process. The FAU benefits from the online system by combining the three (3) separate processes below into one database.

- The online system is much more efficient, eliminating the need for redundant data entry. Since the new system is a web-based database, the central storage of data makes it easier for staff to find and track data and eliminates the need for physical storage of project files.
- The FAU uses software that allows the reviewer to take measurements from PDF drawings. Hard copy drawings are no longer required to be submitted for review, which can add up to a substantial cost savings for the submitter.
- The Facility Access Plan Submission and Review System gives submitters the ability to look at all projects they have submitted and check the status of projects or retrieve final review letters. The submitter now has the option to pay the review fee by credit card.

POLICY GUIDANCE AND MONITORING ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES

The FAU monitors and provides DCAB testimony to ensure that applicable codes incorporate or reference the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, the Fair Housing Act Accessibility Guidelines, the Hawaii Outdoor Developed Areas Accessibility Guidelines, or other draft interim guidelines of the U.S. Access Board as best practices.

- Monitored the adoption status of “Accessibility Standards for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way” by the Department of Justice.
- Monitored the proposed Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines; EV Charging Stations.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON DESIGN

The FAU provides technical assistance to design professionals in both the public and private sectors on how to make buildings, facilities, and sites accessible for persons with disabilities. In fiscal year 2024-2025, the FAU fielded six hundred eighty eight (688) requests for general technical assistance in areas concerning the design standards for §103-50, HRS, the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, the Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines and other accessibility guidelines. Technical assistance was provided through meetings, telephone calls, faxes, and email inquiries.

MONITOR PROJECTS NOT SUBMITTED TO DCAB

DCAB monitors projects that have been published as starting construction or that are in the bid process, but have not been submitted for review as required by §103-50, HRS. This year DCAB notified ADA Coordinators or department/agency representatives that thirty seven (37) of their projects were not submitted for review as required by §103-50, HRS. DCAB received ten (10) responses, and eleven (11) projects were submitted.

ACCESS E-BULLETIN

To assist the design profession, the FAU prepared and distributed thirteen (13) Access E-Bulletins to approximately seven hundred twenty four (724) subscribers. The Access E-Bulletin includes information on new training sessions and webinars, and important information about accessibility and facility access.

SITE SPECIFIC ALTERNATE DESIGN

Section 103-50, HRS, authorizes DCAB to rule on Site Specific Alternate Designs (SSAD). A site specific alternate design departs from particular scoping or technical provisions of the 2004 Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. The SSAD provides substantially equivalent or greater access for persons with disabilities but only applies to the specific State or County project for which the design was submitted.

- No requests for SSAD were submitted this fiscal year.

DESIGN SEMINARS AND TRAININGS

The FAU coordinated and conducted workshops and training sessions that focused on accessibility guidelines and standards, human factor requirements for persons with disabilities, and laws related to accessibility. The following trainings and workshops were conducted or coordinated for various State and County department/agency personnel, the architectural and engineering community, and user groups this fiscal year.

Conference:

The FAU conducted the virtual 2025 Disability Access Conference featuring speakers from the U.S. Access Board with sessions on Accessible Residential Housing and Accessible Transient Lodging presented by Josh Schorr, Debra Martins, and Sarah Presley from the U.S. Access Board. One hundred forty one (141) registrants participated in the Zoom conference.

Trainings:

- Coordinated and presented five (5) virtual basic trainings designed to provide foundational information to prepare program participants for more complex topics to be covered at the annual conference. The primary audience for the training and conference was the architectural/engineering community, but any interested parties could attend.

U.S. Access Board Webinars:

- Participated in thirty one (31) webinars conducted by the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center and the U.S. Access Board, and Fair Housing Accessibility First. By participating in these webinars, DCAB staff increased and/or refreshed their knowledge of the ADA and Fair Housing requirements to better provide technical assistance.

INTERPRETIVE OPINIONS

Section 103-50, HRS, authorizes DCAB to issue interpretive opinions. An Interpretive Opinion clarifies an accessibility guideline, which then becomes applicable to all projects covered by §103-50, HRS.

- Interpretive Opinion 2025-01 Signage Installation Height and Location. Clarifies braille is a tactile character and the minimum mounting height is taken to the baseline of the lowest tactile character.

MASTER PLAN REVIEWS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

In an effort to provide assistance to the State and Counties to ensure that accessibility compliance was acknowledged at the earliest phase of a project, conceptualizations or plans for two (2) projects were submitted for review this fiscal year.

- Master Plan Review: East Kapolei Elementary School Project Pre-Assessment Consultation for Draft Environmental Assessment.

Josh Green, M.D., Governor
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