



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Valerie Kato confirmed as deputy director of DOH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 5, 2024

24-040

HONOLULU — The Hawai'i State Senate voted today to confirm the appointment of Valerie Kato to serve as Deputy Director for the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH), where she joins Director Kenneth Fink, M.D.

“Val brings knowledge, leadership and energy to DOH and we are very fortunate to have her on the team,” Director Kenneth Fink said. “Her experience as the Supervising Deputy Attorney General of the Health Division allowed her to engage regularly with DOH staff and leadership across many programs. Her understanding of the department’s operations along with her continuous improvement mindset make her a terrific addition for advancing the department’s mission.”

Kato said she is honored and humbled and thanked the Governor and Director for the opportunity to serve the State of Hawai'i.

“I am very grateful for the opportunity to work alongside Director Fink and the hardworking staff at the Department of Health to serve the people of Hawai'i,” said Valerie Kato. “Having worked with DOH through numerous emergencies and challenges in recent years from responding to the COVID pandemic to the Maui Wildfires disaster, I am eager to forge a more efficient and less silo-ed administration that moves forward together and supports each other.”

Before she began her career in public health as the Supervising Deputy Attorney General, Health Division, and First Deputy Attorney General under AG Holly T. Shikada, Kato was in private practice for 17 years and formerly clerked for Judge Corinne K.A. Watanabe at the Hawai'i Intermediate Court of Appeals. Kato earned her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington D.C. and earned her B.A. in English from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

As Deputy Director of Health, Kato will head the DOH administrative offices, which oversees the Administrative Services Office (ASO), Health Information Systems Office (HISO), Human Resources Office (HRO), Office of Health Status Monitoring (OHSM), Office of Planning, Policy and Program Development (OPPPD), Office of Affirmative Action (OAA) and the District Health Offices (DHOs).

A photo of Valerie Kato is attached.

###