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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 13, 2014

14-041

**ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES NOW OFF LIMITS AT
HAWAII STATE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS**

HONOLULU – Electronic cigarettes, also known as electronic smoking devices or e-cigarettes, are now prohibited in all state government buildings under the jurisdiction of the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS). The new policy went into effect this month and is part of the State of Hawaii’s commitment to keep workplaces and public locations smoke-free. The policy sets the tone for private sector employers and others in the community to follow.

“Based on various tests, vapors or aerosols emitted from e-cigarettes contain nicotine and other carcinogens and toxic chemicals that are just as harmful as those in secondhand smoke of regular combustible cigarettes,” said Linda Rosen, director of the Hawaii Department of Health. “It’s important that consumers be aware that e-cigarettes are not healthier than regular cigarettes, for users or those surrounding them.”

The policy is based on the Hawaii Smoke-Free Workplace and Public Places Law, which went into effect nearly eight years ago in November 2006. The law prohibits smoking tobacco products in places open to the public and places of employment.

Under the state’s newly issued policy, e-cigarettes are prohibited from use in any enclosed or partially enclosed area such as offices, lobbies, lanai, interior courtyards, patios, covered walkways, and 20 feet from entrances, exits, windows that can be opened and ventilation intakes that serve enclosed or partially enclosed area. This mirrors the current law for regular cigarettes.

“We anticipate the smoke-free zones of other employers will also begin to include e-cigarettes to protect their employees, customers and others in the public,” Rosen said.

For additional information on the laws and policies for a smoke free environment visit <http://health.hawaii.gov/tobacco/home/laws/>.

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