



Supreme Court – THE JUDICIARY • STATE OF HAWAII

417 South King Street • Aliʻiōlani Hale • Honolulu, Hawaiʻi • 96813 • Phone (808) 539-4700 • Fax (808) 539-4703

Mark E. Recktenwald
CHIEF JUSTICE

Sabrina S. McKenna
Todd W. Eddins
Lisa M. Ginoza
Vladimir P. Devens
ASSOCIATE JUSTICES

Statement by the Hawaiʻi Supreme Court Affirming Principles of Equal Justice for All

At the Judiciary, we are responsible for ensuring the promise of equal justice for all and upholding the rule of law for the people of Hawaiʻi. We take that responsibility with the utmost seriousness as we fulfill our mission to administer justice in an impartial, efficient, and accessible manner in accordance with the law.

We strive to ensure that all people receive fair and respectful consideration in our courtrooms. We are guided in this work by the Aloha Spirit law, Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes § 5-7.5, which establishes that “aloha means mutual regard and affection . . . in which each person is important to every other person.” These words define the shared vision for our state that we adopted as a people.

In alignment with this vision, the Judiciary remains resolute in our commitment to increasing access to justice for all. To ensure fairness and provide a level playing field, we have removed barriers to access for individuals who cannot afford a lawyer, who have limited English proficiency, or who have a disability. We have also worked to eliminate bias within our own organization, and collaborated with community partners to address inequities and provide for the fair administration of justice.

Our goal is to maintain a judiciary that has the most qualified judges and staff, who reflect the community they serve. This fosters an environment where persons from all backgrounds know their voices will be heard and their disputes will be resolved fairly.

We reject any suggestion that programs that seek to welcome all people into our courtrooms, and support all members of our workforce, are in any way inconsistent with our national and Hawai'i state civil rights laws. Rather, they protect against bias, allow each individual to be judged on their merits, strengthen our community, and enable us to live up to the promise of equal justice for all.

These principles of justice and servant leadership run deep in Hawai'i. In 1797, King Kamehameha I decreed the Law of the Splintered Paddle: Ke Kānāwai Māmalahoe, that people great and humble should be respected alike, and that all people, including the elderly, women and children, could lie by the pathways in safety. Equality before the law has long been a guiding principle in Hawai'i. It seeks to elevate all people by recognizing their common humanity and eliminating the barriers that keep them from fully participating in society. It is a message that remains as important today as it was in 1797, and will always continue to guide the work we do at the Hawai'i State Judiciary.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawai'i, March 5, 2025.

/s/ Mark E. Recktenwald

/s/ Sabrina S. McKenna

/s/ Todd W. Eddins

/s/ Lisa M. Ginoza

/s/ Vladimir P. Devens

