

‘ĀINA • HAWAI‘I EDITION

Protect Our *Land*

A free guide for Native Hawaiian families:
Hawaiian Home Lands, kuleana and family
land, and how to keep it

Hawaiian Home Lands • kuleana • heirs' property • quiet title &
partition • ground leases
with Hawai'i contacts for help

Blake Soifua • Projects Possible

@projectspossible • pasifikaplanning.com • Free to share



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Aloha mai kākou

Our ‘āina holds our names, our iwi kūpuna, our lo‘i and our stories. It came to us from those before, and it is meant to go to those who come after.

In Hawai‘i, land works under **U.S. and State of Hawai‘i law**, not custom alone. That means different risks: family land can be lost through **court cases, unpaid taxes, missing paperwork** or a long lease, often without anyone in the family ever “selling” it.

This guide explains, in plain words, how Hawaiian Home Lands leases work, how kuleana and family land can be protected, what to check before signing anything, and where to get free help.

How to use this guide

- ◆ **Short on time?** Read “Someone offered us a lease” (page 7) and use the one-page **Lease Check** (page 30).
- ◆ **Got court papers?** Don’t ignore them. Call for help right away (Section 3).
- ◆ **Print it, share it, read it aloud** at your ‘ohana gathering.

HAWAI‘I

‘Āina

land

HAWAI‘I

Kuleana

right, responsibility, land
award

HAWAI‘I

‘Ohana

family

Please note: General information, not legal advice. Talk to a lawyer, DHHL or legal aid before signing or going to court. Laws, fees and contacts change. Always check with the official office.

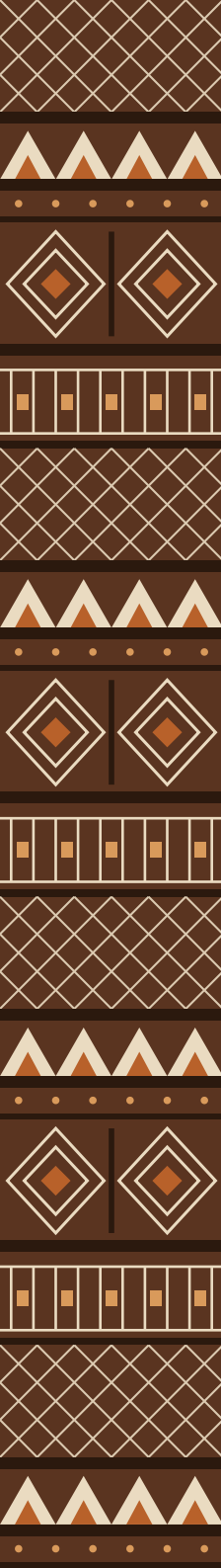
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1

Before you sign a long lease

A lease is a promise that lasts longer than most of us will. It is worth slowing down for.

“We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we hold it for our grandchildren.”

A saying shared across many cultures

WHY IT MATTERS

A 99-year lease is about four generations

Hawaiian Home Lands leases run 99 years, and private ground leases in Hawai'i can run for decades. If a lease is signed today for 99 years, the people who get the land back may be your great-great-grandchildren. Most of the people in the room when it is signed will never see it end.



Money today, land tomorrow

Some offers pay a large sum now. Ask what the land will be worth to your family in 20, 50 and 99 years, not only this year.

The land may come back changed

Buildings, cleared forest, fill, or pollution can stay after a lease ends. The lease should say who fixes what.

The investor can change

Unless the lease stops it, the lease can be sold or passed on to people you have never met.

Families grow

A family of 20 today may be 200 later, each with a share of the land. Think about where your children will live, farm and be buried.

This is not about fear. A **fair** lease can be a blessing. The goal is to understand the deal fully, decide together, and get it in writing.

THE CHECKLIST

Eight things to check before you sign

1 Who gets the land back, and in what state?

The lease should say the land returns to your family, and in what condition: cleared of rubbish, chemicals and dangerous buildings.

2 Buildings and improvements at the end

Who owns houses, hotels, roads or crops when the lease ends? Do you have to pay for them? Can the investor remove them, or must they leave them?

3 Selling or subletting without you

Can the investor **assign** (sell) the lease or **sublease** it to someone else? Ask for a clause that needs your written consent first.

4 Rent reviews and inflation

Fixed rent loses value every year. Ask for rent reviews every few years, linked to market value or the cost of living.

5 Premium or yearly rent?

A **premium** is a one-off payment at the start. **Annual rent** keeps coming. Know how much of each, and who receives them.

6 The whole family agrees

Has the whole 'ohana / all co-owners and heirs had a real say, including women, young people and family on the continent? Record it in writing.

7 Independent advice

Get advice from someone who works **only for your family**: NHLHC, Legal Aid, or your own lawyer. Not the investor's lawyer.

8 Everything in writing, copies kept

Promises made out loud are not in the lease. Get the full lease in writing and signed, with a copy for the family. Keep copies in more than one safe place.

Someone offered us a lease: what now?

1 Don't sign on the spot

A fair offer will still be there next week. Say: “Thank you. Our family needs time to talk and get advice.”

2 Gather the family

Call a proper meeting of all owners or their representatives. Include kūpuna, women, youth and family on the continent (a video call works). Write down who came and what was agreed.

3 Get a copy to keep

Ask for the full draft lease, maps and plans, in writing.

4 Check the paperwork

For DHHL land, ask DHHL first. For private land, check the title at the Bureau of Conveyances and get free legal help (see Section 3).

5 Get free legal help

Contact NHLC or Legal Aid, or a lawyer who works only for your family.

6 Compare offers

Ask what similar land earns. Look at other options too: farming, a shorter lease or a joint venture.

7 Negotiate

Every clause can be discussed: the term, rent reviews, jobs for family, return of the land. Ask for changes in writing.

8 Sign only when you are sure

Everyone who must sign has read it or had it explained. Keep a signed copy in your family land folder (page 26).

WATCH OUT

Red flags

If you see one of these, stop and get advice before you go any further.

Pressure to sign fast

“Sign today or the deal is gone.”

Real partners give you time to get advice.

Cash upfront to one person

Money or gifts given to one relative or one ‘representative’ before the family has agreed.

Papers no one explained

Legal wording that no one has explained to you. Everyone signing should understand every page.

No copy left with you

If they take the papers away after you sign, you have no proof of what you agreed. Always keep a copy.

Middlemen and ‘fixers’

Someone says they represent the family but is paid by the investor. Ask who pays them.

Promises not in the lease

“Of course we’ll hire your sons.” If a promise matters, it must be written into the lease.

If you feel pressured, you can simply say: “We will not sign anything until our family and a lawyer have checked it.” That is your right.

Questions to ask the investor

Write down the answers, the date, and who answered. A good partner will answer clearly.

- 1 Who exactly are you? Can we see your company registration?
- 2 What will you build or grow, and on how much of the land?
- 3 Why do you need this many years?
- 4 How much is the rent, how often is it paid, and when will it go up?
- 5 Is there a premium? Who receives it?
- 6 Who can you sell or sublease the lease to? Will you need our written consent?
- 7 What happens to the buildings when the lease ends?
- 8 How will you protect water, reefs, forest, graves and sacred places?
- 9 How many jobs and training places for our family, in writing?
- 10 What happens if you stop paying or leave?
- 11 Will you pay for our independent legal advice?
- 12 Can we see a lease you made with another family, and speak to them?

Red flags from buyers and developers

These are common ways families are pressured. If you see one, stop and get free legal help first.

“Just sign this quitclaim”

A quitclaim deed can give away your share of family land for good. Never sign one you do not fully understand.

Buying out one cousin

Someone buys a small share from one relative, then uses it to ask a court to divide or sell the whole parcel.

Court papers about “quiet title” or “partition”

These cases decide who owns the land. If you are named, the deadline to respond is real.

Offers to “pay your back taxes”

Ask what they want in return. Some offers come with a deed or a share of the land.

Long ground lease, low fixed rent

A lease with no fair rent reviews can lock your family out for generations.

“Sell your homestead lease to me”

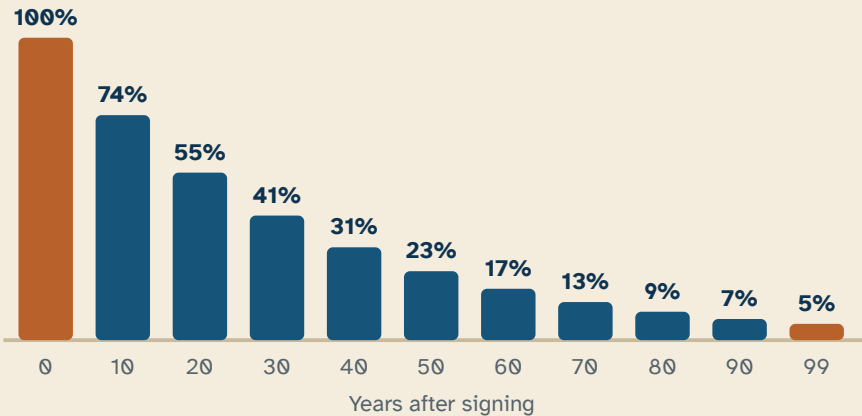
Hawaiian Home Lands leases can only be transferred to qualified native Hawaiians, with DHHL approval.

Sources: HHCA §208(5) (DHHL; Act 305, 1990); HRS §669-1; HRS ch. 668A.

AN ILLUSTRATION, NOT A PREDICTION

How a fixed rent shrinks over 99 years

Imagine a lease where the rent is **fixed** and never goes up, while prices rise **3% a year**. The bars show what that same rent can buy, as a **percentage of what it buys today**.



74%

after 10 years

23%

after 50 years

5%

after 99 years: about
one-twentieth

What helps: rent reviews every 3 to 5 years, linked to the market value of the land or the cost of living; a share of income from the business; and a shorter term with an option to renew.

How we worked it out: 100% divided by 1.03 for each year. Real inflation goes up and down, and is sometimes higher than 3%. This simple example only shows the idea.

Glossary: lease words in plain English

Lease

A written agreement that lets someone use your land for a set time, in return for rent. The land stays yours.

Term

How long the lease lasts, for example 30 years.

Premium

A one-off sum paid at the start of a lease, separate from yearly rent.

Rent review

A set time when the rent is checked and changed, for example every 5 years.

Assignment

When the tenant sells or hands the whole lease to someone else.

Consent

Formal permission, best given in writing.

Lessor / Lessee

Lessor: the side giving the lease (the landowners). Lessee: the side getting it (the tenant or investor).

Renewal / option to renew

A right to extend the lease when it ends. Check who has the choice, and on what rent.

Annual rent

Money paid every year for the use of the land.

Inflation

Prices rising over time, so the same money buys less each year.

Sublease

When the tenant rents out part or all of the land to another person.

Covenant / clause

A promise or rule written into the lease, such as “keep the land clean”.

Glossary (continued)

Improvements

Things added to the land: houses, buildings, roads, fences, trees and crops.

Default / breach

When one side breaks a promise in the lease, such as not paying rent.

Fee simple

Full ownership of land, with no end date.

Recording

Recording a lease or deed at the Bureau of Conveyances (or Land Court), so it is on the public record.

Mortgage

Using a lease or land as security for a loan. If the loan is not repaid, the bank may take the lease.

Independent advice

Advice from someone who works only for you, with no link to the investor.

Reversion / surrender

When the land goes back to the owners at the end, or early by agreement.

Forfeiture / termination

Ending the lease early because of a serious breach, following the steps in the lease.

Leasehold

The right to use land for a set time under a lease. The land itself stays with the owner.

Survey plan

An official map showing the exact borders and size of the land.

Joint venture

When owners and an investor run a business together and share the profits.

Witness

A person who watches you sign and signs too. Ideally, someone the family trusts.

Don't understand a word in your lease? Circle it and ask NHLC, legal aid or your lawyer to explain it. There is no shame in asking. The people who wrote it should be able to explain it simply.

Ask for a fairer lease

1 Shorter terms

Say 20 to 30 years with an option to renew on new terms, instead of 99 years at once.

2 Regular rent reviews

Every 3 to 5 years, linked to market value or the cost of living.

3 A share of the income

A small percentage of turnover or profit, as well as the base rent.

4 Jobs and training, in writing

Set numbers of jobs, apprenticeships or supply contracts for the family.

5 Consent for any transfer

No assignment or sublease without the owners' written consent.

6 Return the land well

A plan and a bond (money held back) to clean up and restore the land.

7 Protect sacred places

Iwi kūpuna (burials), heiau, churches, springs, reefs and wahi pana stay out of the lease.

8 Joint ventures

Owners put in the land as their share of a business and receive a share of the profits and a say in decisions. Get expert advice.

Deciding together

Land decisions belong to the family, not to one person. Our customs of talking together (kūkākūkā, ho‘oponopono) are a strength here.

Who must agree?

For land held by many heirs, every co-owner usually has a say over their own share. Ask a lawyer exactly who must sign.

Include everyone

Women, young people, people with disabilities and family on the continent are owners too. Make sure they can speak and be heard.

Write it down

Keep minutes: the date, who was there, what was offered, what was decided, and who will act. Have them signed.

Share the benefits fairly

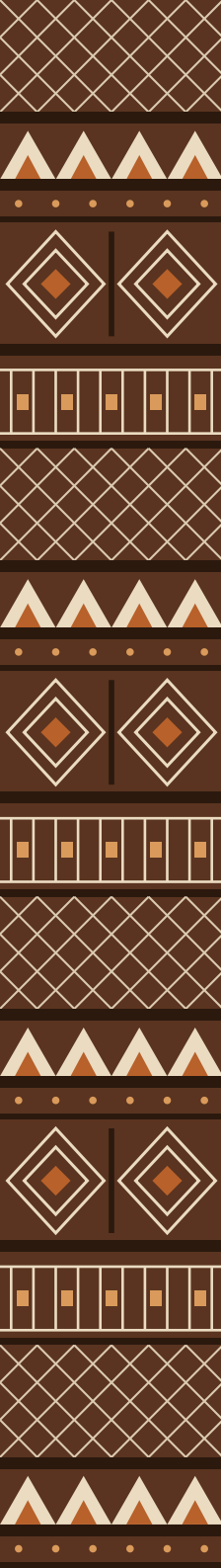
Agree how rent will be shared or used (school fees, a church, a family fund) before the money comes.

Use plain words

Ask for every page to be explained in plain words, by someone who works for your family.

It's okay to say no

“No”, “not yet” or “only for a shorter time” are all respectful answers.



2

How land works in Hawai‘i

Hawaiian Home Lands, kuleana, family land held by many heirs, and leasehold land each follow different rules.

Every fact here comes from an official or legal source, listed on the page and at the back. Where we could not verify something, we left it out.

Hawaiian Home Lands

DHHL

99 yrs

homestead lease term

Nominal

lease rent

199 yrs

maximum total with extension

The **Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920 (HHCA)**, passed by Congress, set aside land for homesteads for native Hawaiians. The **Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)** runs the program.

- ◆ Homestead leases are **99 years at a nominal rent**, for residential, agricultural or pastoral use (HHCA §208).
- ◆ Since **Act 305 (1990)**, DHHL may extend a lease, as long as the total term is **no more than 199 years**. DHHL has a “Request for Extension of Lease Term” form.
- ◆ To apply, you must be at least **18** and at least **50% native Hawaiian** (“not less than one-half part of the blood of the races inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands previous to 1778”).
- ◆ A lessee **cannot sublet** the homestead and can only transfer it to a native Hawaiian, with DHHL approval.

Check with: **DHHL**, 91-5420 Kapolei Parkway, Kapolei • (808) 620-9500 • Applications (808) 730-0279 • **dhhL.hawaii.gov**

Sources: HHCA §208; Act 305, SLH 1990 (doi.gov); dhhL.hawaii.gov/hhc/laws-and-rules; dhhL.hawaii.gov/applications; DHHL extension request form.

Choose your successor

Ho‘oilina

If a lessee dies without an approved successor on file, DHHL has very limited choices, and the lease can be cancelled if no one qualifies.

Who you can name (25%)

Your spouse, children, grandchildren, brother or sister, if they are at least **one-quarter Hawaiian**.

Who you can name (50%)

Your father, mother, widows or widowers of your children or siblings, nieces and nephews, if they are **native Hawaiian** (at least 50%).

File it and get it approved

The designation must be in writing, filed with DHHL and **approved before the lessee's death**. You can change it any time.

If no one qualifies

The lease is cancelled and DHHL pays the appraised value, minus debts owed, to the lessee's estate.

Do it now: check that your designation is on file and up to date. The blood quantum rules for spouses, children, grandchildren and siblings were lowered to 25% at different times (1986, 1997, 2005), so older designations may need updating.

Sources: HHCA §209; DHHL “Designating Successors Q&A” and “How to Request a Designation of Successor(s)”; Haw. Code R. §10-3-61.

Kuleana & family land

Kuleana

Kuleana land means the lands granted to native tenants under the **Kuleana Act of 1850**. Many families still hold kuleana and other ancestral land, often shared among many heirs and never formally passed down in a will or probate.

Each county gives **property tax relief** for kuleana owned by a **lineal descendant** of the original awardee. You must apply, with genealogy proof (OHA or a court order is accepted in Honolulu).

COUNTY Maui	Qualifying kuleana portion is exempt from property tax (if not used commercially). (808) 270-7297
COUNTY Kauaʻi	Flat minimum tax, per OHA. (808) 241-4224
COUNTY Hawaiʻi	Flat minimum tax (the county minimum), per OHA. Exemptions: (808) 961-8201
COUNTY Honolulu	Pay only the minimum property tax, per OHA. (808) 768-3799

Genealogy verification: **OHA** (808) 594-1835. Amounts can change, so confirm with your county before applying.

Sources: Honolulu ROH §8-10.29 and realproperty.honolulu.gov; Maui County Code §3.48.554 (Ord. 5252); OHA “Tax Relief for Kuleana Land Holders”.

Heirs' property & partition

‘Ohana

When land passes down without a will, every heir can end up owning a small **undivided share** of the whole parcel. This is often called **heirs' property**. Any co-owner, including someone who bought a share from one relative, can ask a court for **partition**: dividing the land, or selling it and splitting the money.

Hawai'i's **Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act (HRS ch. 668A)** gives families protections in partition cases filed since **January 1, 2017**:

- ◆ **Buyout first:** if someone asks for a sale, the other co-owners can buy their share at the court-set value.
- ◆ **Divide, don't sell:** the court must divide the land (partition in kind) unless that would cause great prejudice to the co-owners as a group.
- ◆ **Family ties count:** the court weighs how long the family has held the land, ancestral and sentimental value, current use, and who paid taxes and upkeep.
- ◆ If a sale is ordered, it is usually an **open-market sale**, not a quick auction.

Protect your share: keep records of who paid taxes and who cared for the land. Talk with family about a written agreement and wills.

Sources: HRS ch. 668A, §§668A-2, -3, -8, -9, -10, -11 (capitol.hawaii.gov).

Quiet title & adverse possession

A **quiet title** action is a court case that decides who owns land. It is how many kuleana have been claimed by others. If you are named in one, **respond and get help**.

- ◆ **Adverse possession:** someone who has openly used land for **20 years** may claim title to a parcel of **5 acres or less**. For larger parcels, the 20 years must have been completed before **November 7, 1978**.
- ◆ The claimant must show **good faith**, meaning a reasonable belief in title based on inheritance, a written deed, or a court judgment. A person can make such a claim for 5 acres or less **only once in 20 years**.
- ◆ Courts require clear proof that the possession was actual, open, hostile, continuous and exclusive. Against co-owners, Hawai'i courts have required good faith toward the other co-owners, including actual notice in some cases.
- ◆ When a quiet title case involves **kuleana land** and an heir may have died with no one to inherit under probate law, **OHA must be joined** as a defendant.

Free help with family land and kuleana cases: **Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation** (808) 521-2302.

Sources: HRS §669-1 (Justia, 2025); HRS §669-2(e) and Hawai'i Supreme Court SCWC-30475 (2015).

Leasehold & ground leases *Ho‘olimalima*

In Hawai‘i, much land is **leasehold**: the lessee owns the right to use the land (and sometimes the building) for a set time, but not the land itself. The land stays with the **fee owner**.

Rent goes up in steps

Lease rent is usually fixed for set periods, then **renegotiated** by formula, arbitration, law or agreement. New rents may rise a lot.

The surrender clause

At the end of the lease, the lessee may have to give back the land **and the buildings**, without payment.

If your family owns the land

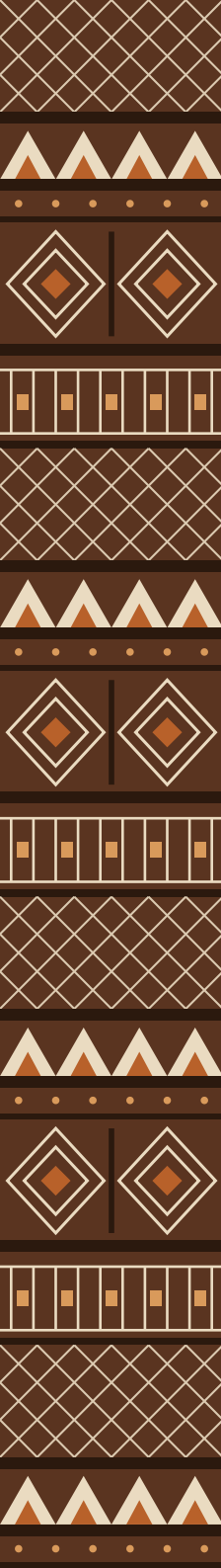
A long ground lease with a fair rent and reviews can earn steady income. A low fixed rent can lose value for decades.

Selling a lease

Leasehold is sold by an **assignment of lease**, which only passes on the lease rights, not the land.

Before signing a ground lease as a landowner, read Section 1 of this guide and get your own lawyer.

Sources: Hawai‘i DCCA Real Estate Branch, Leasehold disclosure exhibit (cca.hawaii.gov).



3

Where to go for help

The most important part of this guide: “I need help with X, so go to Y.”

Every contact was checked on the organization’s own website in October 2026. If a number doesn’t work, use the website.

Hawai‘i

I NEED HELP WITH

**Kuleana, family
land or quiet
title case**

Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation (NHLC)

1164 Bishop St, Suite 1205, Honolulu · Kona: 75-5995
Kuakini Hwy, Suite 312 · (808) 521-2302 ·
info@nhlchi.org · nativehawaiianlegalcorp.org

I NEED HELP WITH

**Free legal help
(low income)**

Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i

924 Bethel St, Honolulu · Intake line Mon–Fri · O‘ahu
(808) 536-4302 · neighbor islands 1-800-499-4302 ·
legalaidthawaii.org

I NEED HELP WITH

**Hawaiian
Home Lands
lease, successor
or waitlist**

Dept. of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)

91-5420 Kapolei Pkwy, Kapolei · (808) 620-9500 ·
Applications (808) 730-0279 · dhhl.hawaii.gov

I NEED HELP WITH

**Genealogy
verification &
Hawaiian
Registry**

Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)

560 N. Nimitz Hwy, Suite 200, Honolulu · (808) 594-
1835 · info@oha.org · hireg@oha.org · oha.org

Before you call: have your TMK (tax map key), lease number or court papers ready. Write down the date, who you spoke to and what they said, and keep it in your land folder.

Hawai‘i

I NEED HELP WITH

Kuleana property tax relief

Your county real property office

Maui (808) 270-7297 • Kaua‘i (808) 241-4224 •
Hawai‘i County (808) 961-8201 • Honolulu (808) 768-
3799 • realproperty.honolulu.gov

I NEED HELP WITH

Find deeds and recorded documents

Bureau of Conveyances (DLNR)

1151 Punchbowl St #120, Honolulu • (808) 587-0147 •
dlnr.hawaii.gov/boc

I NEED HELP WITH

Old land and family records

Hawai‘i State Archives

Kekāuluohi Building, 364 S. King St (‘Iolani Palace
grounds), Honolulu • (808) 586-0329 •
ags.hawaii.gov/archives

I NEED HELP WITH

Birth certificates for genealogy

Hawai‘i Dept. of Health, Vital Records

201 Merchant St, Suite 100, Honolulu • (808) 586-
4539 • health.hawaii.gov/vitalrecords

Other OHA offices: Kaua‘i (808) 241-3390 • Moloka‘i & Lāna‘i (808) 582-0516
• Maui (808) 873-3364 • Hilo (808) 594-1835.

Your family land folder

If the papers are lost, the family can lose its proof. Keep one folder for each piece of land.

1 The lease

Every page, signed, plus any changes (variations) and renewals.

2 Title or land record

Deed or Land Court certificate of title, Bureau of Conveyances document numbers, TMK, DHHL lease number.

3 Survey map

The official plan showing borders and size.

4 Rent receipts

Every payment: date, amount and who received it.

5 Family agreements

Meeting minutes, consent forms and agreements on sharing rent.

6 Official letters

All letters and emails to and from DHHL, the county, the court or the investor.

7 Owner IDs & family tree

A list of owners and heirs, with ID copies, birth certificates and genealogy.

8 Photos of the land

Dated photos of boundaries, buildings and the land's condition at the start.

Prove your family's connection

Mo'okū'auhau

Many land cases come down to paper: who the original awardee was, and how each heir descends from them.

1 • Find the deeds

Hawai'i has one statewide recording system. The **Bureau of Conveyances** records Regular System and Land Court documents and can certify copies.

2 • Build the mo'okū'auhau

Collect birth certificates for each generation, from you back to an ancestor with recorded Hawaiian ancestry (Vital Records, (808) 586-4539).

3 • Verify with OHA

OHA's **Hawaiian Registry Program** verifies Hawaiian ancestry. OHA genealogy verification is accepted for kuleana tax relief in Honolulu.

4 • Search old records

The **Hawai'i State Archives** holds historical records that can help trace your family and land.

Write it down now, while kūpuna can still tell the story: names, dates, places, and who lived on and cared for the land.

Sources: dlnr.hawaii.gov/boc; OHA Hawaiian Registry Program (oha.org/resources/hawaiian-registry); Honolulu ROH §8-10.29.

Scan it, store it, share it

1 • Scan with your phone

Use a free scanning app, the “Scan documents” option in iPhone Notes, or the scan button in the Google Drive app. Scan every page, flat and in good light.

2 • Store it privately

Keep a private shared folder in Google Drive or iCloud. Share it only with trusted family, never publicly.

3 • Name files clearly

Year-month-day, then land, then document: **2026-10-14_TMK-1-2-3-004-005_Lease-signed.pdf**

4 • Two or more keepers

Give access to at least two trusted people, one at home and one off-island, so the papers survive any one loss.

Originals: keep them dry in a sealed waterproof bag, in a hurricane-safe and flood-safe place, off the floor. Make copies before lending papers to anyone.

Key dates tracker

Date	Land / lease	What happens
Start date		
Rent review 1		
Rent review 2		
Renewal deadline		
End date		

FILL IN & KEEP

Our Land Record

Name of land / plot

Ahupua'a, island, district

Owning 'ohana / original awardee

TMK / DHHL lease / BOC doc no.

Size (acres)

Survey plan number

The lease

Lessee (tenant) name

Their contact

Start date

End date

Rent amount & how often

Rent review dates

Premium paid? To whom?

Who receives the rent

Our people

Folder keeper 1 (home)

Folder keeper 2 (off-island)

DHHL / county contact

Lawyer / legal aid contact

Where the originals are kept

Notes

Lease Check

Tick every box **before** anyone signs. If you can't tick one, stop and ask for help (Section 3).

- ☐ We have **not** been rushed. We took time to think and talk.
- ☐ The **whole family** (all owners or their representatives) has met and agreed, and it is written down.
- ☐ We have a **full written copy** of the lease, and every page was explained to us.
- ☐ We checked the **title** (Bureau of Conveyances), or with **DHHL** for homestead land.
- ☐ We got **independent legal advice** (not the investor's lawyer).
- ☐ We know **how long** the lease is, and when it ends or can be renewed.
- ☐ The rent has **reviews** at least every 3 to 5 years.
- ☐ We know about any **premium**, and who receives the money.
- ☐ The tenant **cannot sell or sublease** without our written consent.
- ☐ It says what happens to **buildings** and the **land's condition** at the end.
- ☐ **Sacred places**, graves and water are protected.
- ☐ Promises (jobs, roads, school fees) are **written in the lease**.
- ☐ We will **keep copies** in our land folder, held by two or more people.

General information, not legal advice. Talk to a lawyer, DHHL or legal aid before signing.

A note for the diaspora

Whether you are in Las Vegas, Seattle, Salt Lake or Los Angeles, you can protect home land from far away.

You are an owner too

Moving away does not end your share in family land or your place on a DHHL successor list. Stay in touch and stay informed.

Join by video

Ask for family meetings by video call, so you can hear and speak. Ask for minutes.

Help read the papers

If you understand legal papers, help kūpuna understand them. But leave the decisions to the family.

Fund advice, not pressure

Offer to pay for independent legal advice or a valuation, rather than pushing for one choice.

Be a buyer

Buy family products, and help with online sales, shipping and marketing on the continent.

Be a keeper

Hold a copy of the land folder safely off-island.

THANK YOU

Mahalo nui loa

Our land is not only something we own. It is who we are. Take your time, talk together, ask questions, and choose what is best for the generations still to come.

This guide is free. Please **print it, share it, and read it aloud** at your 'ohana, church and community meetings.



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General information, not legal advice. Talk to a lawyer, DHHL or legal aid before signing. Information was checked in October 2026, but laws and contacts change. Please confirm with the official office.

Sources & notes

Hawaiian Home Lands

Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, §§208, 209 (capitol.hawaii.gov); Act 305, SLH 1990 (doi.gov); DHHL: Laws & Rules, Applications & Wait List, Designating Successors Q&A, Designation of Successor(s) guide, Request for Extension of Lease Term form (dhhl.hawaii.gov); Haw. Code R. §10-3-61 (LII).

Kuleana & taxes

Honolulu ROH §8-10.29 (amlegal) and realproperty.honolulu.gov; Maui County Code §3.48.554, Ord. 5252 (mauicounty.gov); OHA, Tax Relief for Kuleana Land Holders (oha.org).

Partition & quiet title

HRS ch. 668A, Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act (data.capitol.hawaii.gov); HRS §669-1 (Justia, 2025); Hawai'i Supreme Court SCWC-30475 (2015), citing HRS §669-2(e).

Leasehold

Hawai'i DCCA Real Estate Branch, Leasehold disclosure exhibit (cca.hawaii.gov).

Help contacts

nativehawaiianlegalcorp.org (nhlchi.org); hawaiipropertytax.com; kauai.gov; mauicounty.gov; ags.hawaii.gov/archives; health.hawaii.gov/vitalrecords; legalaidthawaii.org; dhhl.hawaii.gov; oha.org/offices; oha.org/resources/hawaiian-registry; dlnr.hawaii.gov/boc.

Websites and contact details were checked in October 2026. oha.org blocks automated checks, so it was checked by hand. The rent example is an illustration only. Points we could not verify from an official source were left out. Free to share; please don't sell it.