

REPRESENTATIVE NICOLE LOWEN

COVID-19 Information and Resources

Kailua-Kona • Holualoa • Honokohau • Kalaoa



*Aloha
Neighbors,*

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a very challenging time for all of us. Although we are mostly working from home, my staff and I are still here for you. We share your concerns and we are working to keep you informed as we navigate this situation together.

Please review the enclosed information to learn more about the various resources available to you. You can also sign up for my email list so you can receive updates as this situation evolves.

As always, please reach out if we can assist you in any way!

Mahalo nui loa,

Nicole

Rep. Nicole Lowen

How To Stay Informed During COVID-19

For the past couple months, we have all been experiencing a situation unlike any to ever happen in our lifetimes. As government authorities figure out how to implement an adaptive response to a situation that changes every day, it's hard to keep up with the latest emergency proclamations, relief programs, unemployment updates, and other information. The best way to stay informed about all of this is to sign up for **Rep. Lowen's e-newsletter** at <https://mailchi.mp/capitol/replowen>. Our office is reviewing all the information, press releases, and notices from state agencies and private organizations, compiling relevant information, and sending it out so that you can receive current updates as they become available. You can unsubscribe from emails at any time.

The state has also created a new website to connect individuals and businesses to COVID-19 related resources and information at recoverynavigator.hawaii.gov.



Sign up for e-newsletters at:

mailchi.mp/capitol/replowen

Stay-at-home order extended to May 31st

The statewide stay-at-home order has been extended to May 31st. However, the Governor has announced that there will be consideration of allowing **some activities and businesses to resume throughout the month of May**. Thorough hygiene, social distancing and wearing face masks will still be required.

As of the time of this newsletter going to print, the list of re-openings included landscapers, florists, astronomical observatories, auto dealers (by appointment), pet grooming (by appointment), car washes, real estate showings (by appointment), retail stores and shopping malls (pickup and delivery encouraged), non-profit organizations, and wholesale & warehousing businesses.

The good news is that the efforts that have been made over the last several weeks have been successful in preventing further spread of COVID-19. Mahalo for your kokua!

COVID-19 FAQs AND
RESOURCES INSIDE



Unemployment Insurance/PUA

With tourism at a standstill and many businesses closed, the number of unemployment claims has skyrocketed and the UI system has been overwhelmed. Work is ongoing to improve the system. We deeply regret that many of you have been unable to get through on the phone or website to file claims and have had to experience so much frustration to be able to access your benefits. **You will still be covered from your date of eligibility, even if you have had trouble accessing the system to file on time.**

- ⇒ For information on state unemployment insurance and the federal PUA program, visit labor.hawaii.gov.
- ⇒ We have also created our own list of FAQs on unemployment questions at bit.ly/LowenUIFAQ.
- ⇒ For a step-by-step guide on how to file, visit labor.hawaii.gov/blog/main/covid-19-how-to-obtain-unemployment-ins-benefits.
- ⇒ For self-employed, contractors, and gig workers who do not qualify for regular unemployment, go directly to pua.hawaii.gov to apply.

Small Business Assistance

Small businesses have been hit hard by COVID-19. Below are links to sites that are good sources of information.

- ⇒ The Small Business Administration has several resources available to businesses that are experiencing hardship due to COVID-19. Visit sba.gov for more information.
- ⇒ Chamber of Commerce Hawaii COVID-19 Response Hub provides guides to government resources and important business community updates: covid19.cochawaii.org.
- ⇒ The Hawaii Economic and Community Navigator at recoverynavigator.hawaii.gov provides information and resources for residents and business owners.

Health Insurance

- ⇒ If you recently lost health insurance through your employer, you may be eligible for **Med-QUEST**. To determine your eligibility or to apply for benefits, visit medical.mybenefits.hawaii.gov.
- ⇒ You may qualify for **special enrollment through the ACA** due to recent unemployment or loss of employment-based health insurance due to COVID-19. Apply online at HealthCare.gov or call 1-(800) 318-2596.

Driver's Licenses, Safety Checks, Registration

- ⇒ Deadline to obtain a **Goldstar Real ID** has been extended to October 1, 2021: tsa.gov/coronavirus
- ⇒ **Driver's licenses or State IDs** that expire between March 15th and May 31st will be valid for an additional 90 days past their expiration date.
- ⇒ **Safety checks** that expire on or before May 31st will be valid until August 31, 2020. All other safety checks that expire in 2020 will be valid for an additional 3 months after expiration.
- ⇒ **Vehicle registrations** can still be renewed via mail, at the DMV kiosk at Kona Safeway, and online at mvr.ehawaii.gov/renewals/lookup.html?county=hawaii.

Student and Family Resources

Schools will remain closed for the rest of the school year, and we encourage parents and students to check the DOE website at hawaiipublicschools.org for updates from the Department of Education (DOE).

- ⇒ Details about **alternative graduation ceremonies** for the class of 2020 will be posted on the DOE website at hawaiipublicschools.org.
- ⇒ DOE has created a **resource hub** at bit.ly/HIDOEVirtualLearningParentResource to provide support for parents and students of all ages.
- ⇒ The Hawaii State **Public Library System** has digital resources that students can access. Visit librarieshawaii.org.
- ⇒ The **Executive Office on Early Learning** has created a resource list with subsidy information and activities for young children at sites.google.com/eoel.hawaii.gov/covid-19/home.



Rents, Mortgages & Eviction Moratorium

- ⇒ The Governor has issued a **moratorium on any residential evictions** for non-payment through May 31st. More info at: cca.hawaii.gov/ocp/landlord-tenant-faqs.
- ⇒ Homeowners with **federally-backed mortgages may be eligible for a suspension** on payments, and should contact their mortgage servicer to ask. Homeowners with privately held mortgages who are experiencing difficulty making payments are advised to contact their mortgage servicer to discuss options.
- ⇒ The Hawaiian Homes Commission authorized emergency **postponement of DHHL mortgage payments**. For more information, call (808) 620-9500.
- ⇒ Visit cca.hawaii.gov/ocp/covid19 for a list of **landlord-tenant FAQs** and other consumer resources.

Food and Meals Assistance

- ⇒ The Hawaii Department of Education continues to offer free **DOE grab-and-go breakfast** and lunch service for children under 18 on weekdays. Visit hawaiipublicschools.org for more info and an up-to-date list of locations.
- ⇒ **The Food Basket** is offering assistance to those who need. Visit hawaiifoodbasket.org for a full list of sites.
- ⇒ You may be eligible for the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** benefits (aka food stamps). To determine eligibility and for application instructions, visit humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/snap.

Continuity of Utility Services

- ⇒ **Hawaiian Electric** has suspended any service disconnections through June 30, 2020. If you are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19, contact HELCO to discuss payment options at (808) 329-3584.
- ⇒ **Dept. of Water Supply** will not disconnect service during this crisis. Through May 31st, DWS will only accept payment by phone, online, auto-pay, or mail. Visit hawaiidws.org to pay online, or call (844) 216-1994.





REPRESENTATIVE

NICOLE LOWEN

415 S. Beretania St., #425

Honolulu, HI 96813

**Sign up for Rep. Lowen's e-newsletters
at mailchi.mp/capitol/replowen**

During this time it seems there is new information and changes every day. To stay informed, please add your email to our e-newsletter list.

Protect Yourself and Others

E Mālama Kekahi I Kekahi

