

## **TRAVEL AGENCY**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: What is a Travel Agency?**

A: A travel agency is a person or business entity that acts, for compensation or other consideration, as an intermediary between a person seeking to purchase travel services and any person selling travel services.

**Q: What is a Charter Tour Operator?**

A: A Charter Tour Operator is a person or business entity selling charter tours. Specifically, one that charters all seats on a plane or ship and operates seven or more charter tours per year with or without related ground transportation or hotel accommodations.

**Q: What is the difference between a Charter Tour Operator and a Travel Agency registration?**

A: A charter tour operator must register as a travel agency and as a charter tour operator. Two registrations are required for a Charter Tour Operator.

**Q: Do I have to be located in Hawaii in order to sell travel services?**

A: No. You must register for a travel agency license if you are selling travel services to clients in Hawaii.

**Q: Do I need to register my branch office(s) also?**

A: Yes. If a branch office deposits consumer funds in the same client trust account as the principal office, then the branch office does not have to obtain its own travel agency registration. If the branch office does not deposit consumer funds into the same client trust account as the principal office then the branch office will have to obtain its own travel agency registration.

**Q: Do I need a client trust account?**

A: All travel agencies are required to submit evidence of the establishment of a client trust account (commonly known as a business checking account) with a federally insured financial institution located in Hawaii.

**Q: Can a third party or agent open a client trust account on our behalf?**

A: Please check with your respective financial institution. There are banks that will allow a third party to hold a client trust account. Requirements may include the agent to sign the signature card on behalf of the travel agency and an agreement between the agent and the travel agency.

**Q: What if I will be selling activities also?**

A: If you will be selling activities in addition to travel services, you must register for an Activity Desk license. See <http://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/programs/activity/>

**Q: Can a Travel Agency sell short-term vacation rentals?**

A: Short-term vacation rentals are not hotel accommodations. A Real Estate Salesman license is required, to sell short-term vacation rentals, if you do not own the property.

**Q: How can I find out if a travel agency is registered?**

A: Visit this website to verify a registration: <http://pvl.ehawaii.gov/pvlsearch/> or call (808) 586-3000.

**Q: How do I file a complaint against travel agency?**

A: The Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO), a statewide agency of the DCCA is the office to contact when you have a complaint against a licensed or unlicensed commercial employment agency.

Please visit RICO's website at [cca.hawaii.gov/rico/](http://cca.hawaii.gov/rico/) to file a complaint online, or call the DCCA Consumer Resource Center at (808) 587-4272.

**Q: What is the renewal period to renew a license or registration?**

A: The travel agency registration expires on December 31 of every odd-numbered year. Online renewals are available approximately eight (8) weeks before the expiration date.

**Q: What happens if the travel agency registration is not renewed before it expires?**

A: If the registration is not renewed by Dec 31 of the odd-numbered year, the registration is forfeited. The travel agency has six months from the expiration date to restore the forfeited registration by submitting all required documents and fees, including a late renewal fee. If the registration is not restored within the six months, the registrant will be treated as a new applicant and shall meet the licensing or registration requirements at the time of application.