



Regulated Industries Complaints Office

235 S. Beretania Street, Ninth

Floor Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

cca.hawaii.gov/rico

Advertising as a Licensed Professional

- General

- Review and be familiar with the advertising laws and rules that apply to your trade or profession.
- Some of the regulated industries require a current professional or vocational license number in advertisements.
- Some of the regulated industries require current business contact information in advertisements.
- If you reviewed the advertising laws and rules and still have a question about advertising, please contact your industry board, commission or program.

- Print Advertising

- The advertising laws and rules apply to printed newspapers and magazines but, depending on the regulated industry, they may apply to other written media that are used to promote your business or solicit customers, including flyers and business cards.

- Virtual Advertising

- Many of the advertising laws and rules were written before the internet and social media became tools that are used daily. A good rule of thumb is to handle virtual advertising, and advertising on virtual sites, like printed ads.
- The advertising laws and rules can apply to broadcast media too, which was originally television and radio only. Today, live blogs and other interactive virtual media could be considered “broadcast media” advertising too.

- Publisher's Right to Refuse
 - Contracting is a regulated industry where publishers or producers of print or broadcast ads can, in good faith, refuse to run ads where there is no contractor's license number in the ad or no proof that the license number is current and valid.
- Multiple License Holders
 - If a regulated industry requires a current license in ads, and you are the holder of more than one professional or vocational license, read the laws and rules carefully to assure the correct license appears in the ad. For example, if you are a licensed massage therapist who owns and operates a licensed massage establishment, the establishment license number should be in the business's ad.
- Specialized License Holders
 - If a regulated industry has different classifications of licensure, such as contracting, the professional or vocational license number in the ad should correlate to the service being offered. For example, a licensed mason who offers to do stone work should have the specialty licensure classification in the ad.
- Professional Degrees, Accolades and Distinctions
 - The licensing laws and rules may address when licensed professionals can use titles, degrees and designations. Common designations include: "C.P.A." for certified public accountants, "S.W.," "L.B.S.W.," "L.S.W.," and "L.C.S.W.," for social workers, "D.C." for chiropractors, "D.D.S." or "D.M.D.," for dentists, "Dr. or M.D.," for physicians, and "O.D.," for optometrists, to name a few. There could be a licensing violation if a person uses a title or designation without the proper licensure or credentials.
- Unlicensed Persons
 - Those who do not hold a professional or vocational license but advertise or solicit customers for work that requires licensure, are probably in violation of the laws and rules governing the regulated industries.
 - Like most regulated industries, the contracting laws do not permit offering or advertising for contracting work without a license, with one exception: handymen or handypersons. A handyman or handyperson can advertise for and perform small contracting projects that are not more than \$1,500 in labor & materials and do not require a building, electrical or plumbing permit.