



# Charter of the Hawai'i Regional Economic Stewardship and Advancement Policy Board

## **Background and Establishment**

The State of Hawai'i, together with County mayors, executed the **Hawai'i Regional Economic Stewardship and Advancement Economic Development District (HIRESA EDD) Partnership Agreement** (Agreement) to establish the HIRESA Program and its Policy Board. The purpose of the Agreement is to establish a coordinated, intergovernmental mechanism to carry out the activities of an Economic Development District pursuant to the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) program requirements. The Agreement took effect on December 2, 2024, and was later formalized upon the EDA's official designation of the HIRESA EDD on January 16, 2025.

Through the Agreement, the State of Hawai'i Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) was designated by the Counties and recognized by the EDA as District Organization for the HIRESA EDD, as defined in Title 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 304, and was established as administrator of the HIRESA Program. OPSD's Special Plans Branch is charged with implementing the program, while the Agreement establishes the HIRESA Policy Board to provide direction for the program.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the HIRESA Policy Board is to steward statewide coordination and collaboration regarding economic development planning and implementation by and among the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The HIRESA Policy Board provides high-level strategic direction and guidance to advance the Purpose. The direction set by the Board shall be carried out through the HIRESA Program and reflected in the State of Hawai'i Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Through the HIRESA Program, OPSD staff plan, manage, and execute activities to fulfill the Purpose.

The responsibilities of the Policy Board shall include:

- i. Setting strategic priorities and direction for the CEDS, ensuring that it reflects statewide priorities and is aligned across jurisdictions and sectors;
- ii. Reviewing and endorsing the CEDS updates and performance reports;
- iii. Providing recommendations on policy and regional economic development initiatives;
- iv. Holding at least two (2) public meetings per year to allow members of the public the opportunity to provide feedback;
- v. Forming a Strategy Committee and any corresponding sub-committees to conduct research and discussion regarding the development of the five-year CEDS update.

### **Composition, Selection, Term**

The HIRESA Policy Board shall be broadly representative of the principle economic interests of the State of Hawai'i. Pursuant to the **Hawai'i Regional Economic Stewardship and Advancement Economic Development District Partnership Agreement**, the Board shall initially include, but not be limited to, the following sixteen (16) members:

- i. The Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism or the Director's designee, who shall serve as Chair;
- ii. The Mayor of each County or the respective Mayor's designee;
- iii. The Executive Director of each county Economic Development Board or the respective Executive Director's designee;
- iv. A representative of each County Workforce Development Board, who shall be designated by the Chair of the respective board; or, in the event that there is not a County Workforce Development Board, a workforce development representative who shall be designated by the respective County's Mayor;
- v. The President of the University of Hawai'i or the President's designee;
- vi. A representative of a labor organization who shall be selected by the Governor; and
- vii. The Director of the State of Hawai'i's Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, or the Director's designee.

Each of the above members shall serve as an ex-officio voting member of the Policy Board, with a term concurrent with their employment in that role.

The Policy Board may amend the membership from time to time by an absolute majority vote of the members.

### **Meeting Procedures, Quorum, Voting**

The HIRESA Policy Board shall conduct its business in the spirit of Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 92 and comply with the requirements set forth in Title 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 304 (Appendix C).

The Policy Board shall have quorum at all times in order to meet and vote. Quorum is determined by one more than half the number of members.

### **Amendment**

This Charter may be amended or modified by an absolute majority vote of the members.

The Appendices of this Charter shall be included and made a part, and may be updated and maintained by OPSD without requiring formal approval by the HIRESA Policy Board.

### **Code of Conduct**

Pursuant to Title 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 304.2, all members of the HIRESA Policy Board shall comply with all conflicts-of-interest provisions set forth in Title 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 302.17 (Appendix D).

## **Appendix A: Relevant Definitions**

An **Economic Development District (EDD)** is a self-determined, multi-jurisdictional region, federally designated by the EDA to coordinate economic development planning and project implementation.

### EDD Benefits:

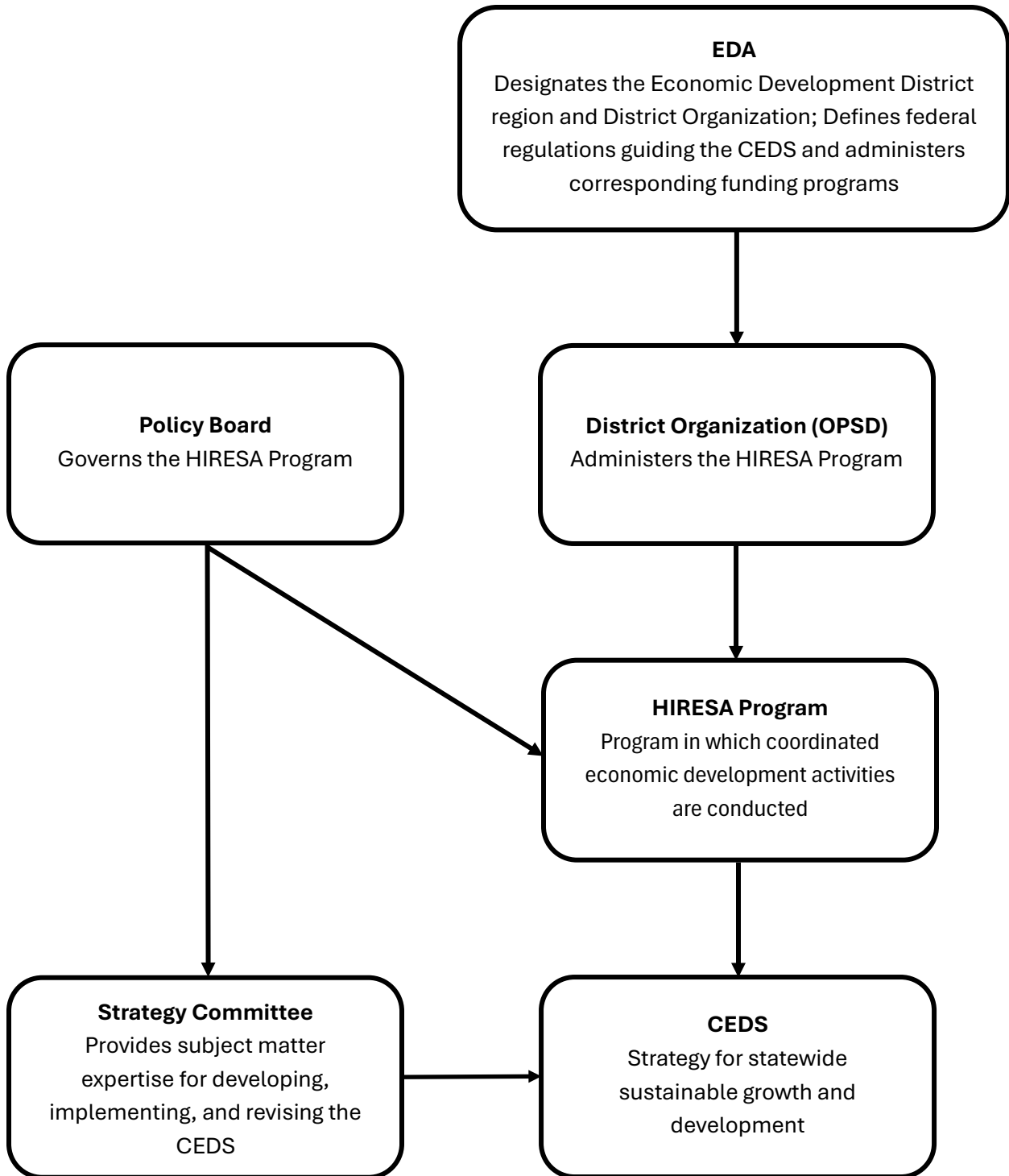
- More competitively positions economic development initiatives across the state for EDA grants;
- Provides annual funding for the administration of the HIRESA EDD to support ongoing coordination and assistance;
- Strengthens Regional collaboration to support the development and implementation of the CEDS.

The **District Organization (Office of Planning and Sustainable Development [OPSD])** is federally recognized and legally responsible for compliance with EDA requirements (Appendix B). OPSD holds administrative, fiscal, and reporting authority for the HIRESA Program and is accountable for the development, maintenance, and implementation of the CEDS. OPSD's Special Plans Branch (SPB) is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and administration of the HIRESA Program. This includes convening partners, managing contracts and grants, preparing reports, supporting the CEDS process, and providing staff support to the HIRESA Policy Board and Strategy Committee.

The **Strategy Committee** is formed by the Policy Board to serve as a technical and advisory body (Appendix B). It is composed of subject matter experts and stakeholders who contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of the CEDS. The Strategy Committee provides feedback and recommendations on CEDS content and updates. It may include one or more sub-committees comprised of the private sector, public officials, and community leaders, among others.

The State of Hawai'i **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** is intended to provide the tools necessary to position Hawai'i for sustainable growth and development, allowing stakeholders to enhance and maintain the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i.

**Appendix B: HIRESA Program Governance**



## Appendix C: Title 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 304

13 CFR Part 304 (up to date as of 5/21/2026)  
Economic Development Districts

13 CFR Part 304 (May 21, 2026)

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This content is from the eCFR and is authoritative but unofficial.

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### Title 13 – Business Credit and Assistance

#### Chapter III – Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce

##### Part 304 Economic Development Districts

§ 304.1 Designation of Economic Development Districts: Regional eligibility.

§ 304.2 District Organizations: Formation, organizational requirements and operations.

§ 304.3 District modification and termination.

§ 304.4 Performance evaluations.

## PART 304—ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

**Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 3122; 42 U.S.C. 3171; 42 U.S.C. 3172; 42 U.S.C. 3196; Department of Commerce Organization Order 10-4.

**Source:** 71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, unless otherwise noted.

### § 304.1 Designation of Economic Development Districts: Regional eligibility.

Upon the request of a District Organization (as defined in § 304.2), EDA may designate a Region as an Economic Development District if such Region:

- (a) Contains at least one geographic area that is subject to the economic distress criteria set forth in § 301.3(a)(1) of this chapter and is identified in an approved CEDS;
- (b) Is of sufficient size or population and contains sufficient resources to foster economic development on a scale involving more than a single geographic area subject to the economic distress criteria set forth in § 301.3(a)(1) of this chapter;
- (c) Has an EDA-approved CEDS that:
  - (1) Meets the requirements under § 303.7 of this chapter;
  - (2) Contains a specific program for intra-District cooperation, self-help, and public investment; and
  - (3) Is approved by each affected State and by the Assistant Secretary;
- (d) Obtains commitments from at least a majority of the counties or other areas within the proposed District, as determined by EDA, to support the economic development activities of the District; and
- (e) Obtains the concurrence with the designation request from the State (or States) in which the proposed District will be wholly or partially located.

[71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, as amended at 79 FR 76131, Dec. 19, 2014]

## § 304.2 District Organizations: Formation, organizational requirements and operations.

- (a) **General.** A “District Organization” is an entity that satisfies the formation and organizational requirements under paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.
- (b) **Formation.** A District Organization must be organized as one of the following:
- (1) A public organization formed through an inter-governmental agreement providing for the joint exercise of local government powers; or
  - (2) A public organization established under State-enabling legislation for the creation of multi-jurisdictional area-wide planning organizations; or
  - (3) A non-profit organization incorporated under the applicable non-profit statutes of the State in which it is incorporated.
- (c) **Organization and governance.**
- (1) Each District Organization must meet the requirements of this paragraph (c) concerning membership composition, the maintenance of adequate staff support to perform its economic development functions, and its authorities and responsibilities for carrying out economic development functions. The District Organization's board of directors (or other governing body) also must meet these requirements.
  - (2) The District Organization must demonstrate that its governing body is broadly representative of the principal economic interests of the Region, which may include the private sector, public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals. In addition, the governing body must demonstrate the capacity to implement the EDA-approved CEDS.
  - (3) The District Organization must be assisted by a professional staff drawn from qualified persons in economic development, planning, business development or related disciplines.
  - (4) The governing bodies of District Organizations must provide access for persons who are not members to make their views known concerning ongoing and proposed District activities in accordance with the following requirements:
    - (i) The District Organization must hold meetings open to the public at least twice a year and also shall publish the date and agenda of such meetings sufficiently in advance to allow the public a reasonable time to prepare in order to participate effectively.
    - (ii) The District Organization shall adopt a system of parliamentary procedures to assure that board members and others have access to an effective opportunity to participate in the affairs of the District.
    - (iii) The District Organization shall provide information sufficiently in advance of decisions to give the public adequate opportunity to review and react to proposals. District Organizations should communicate technical data and other material to the public so they may understand the impact of public programs, available options and alternative decisions.
    - (iv) The District Organization must make available to the public such audited statements, annual budgets and minutes of public meetings, as may be reasonably requested.

- (v) The District Organization and its board of directors must comply with all Federal and State financial assistance reporting requirements and the conflicts of interest provisions set forth in § 302.17 of this chapter.

(d) **Operations.**

- (1) The District Organization shall engage in the full range of economic development activities listed in its EDA-approved CEDS. These activities may include:
  - (i) Coordinating and implementing economic development activities in the District;
  - (ii) Carrying out economic development research, planning, implementation and advisory functions identified in the CEDS; and
  - (iii) Coordinating the development and implementation of the CEDS with other local, State, Federal and private organizations.
- (2) The District Organization may at its option contract for services to accomplish the activities listed in paragraphs (d)(1)(i) through (iii) of this section.

[71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, as amended at 79 FR 76131, Dec. 19, 2014; 82 FR 57054, Dec. 1, 2017]

### § 304.3 District modification and termination.

- (a) **Modification.** Upon the request of a District Organization and with the concurrence of the State or States affected (unless such concurrence is waived by the Assistant Secretary), EDA may modify the geographic boundaries of a District, if it determines that such modification will contribute to a more effective program for economic development.
- (b) **Termination.** EDA may, upon 60 days prior written notice to the District Organization, member counties, and other areas determined by EDA and each affected State, terminate a Region's designation as an Economic Development District when:
  - (1) A District or District Organization no longer meets the requirements of §§ 304.1 or 304.2; or
  - (2) EDA determines that the District Organization fails to execute its CEDS according to the development, implementation and other performance measures set forth therein; or
  - (3) A District Organization has requested termination.
- (c) Prior to terminating a District Organization under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, EDA will consult with the District Organization and consider all facts and circumstances regarding the District Organization's operations. EDA will not terminate a District's designation based on circumstances beyond the control of the District Organization (e.g., natural disaster, plant closure, overall economic downturn, sudden and severe economic dislocation, or other situation).
- (d) EDA may further modify or terminate a Region's designation as a District according to the standards set forth in an FFO.

[71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, as amended at 79 FR 76131, Dec. 19, 2014]

### § 304.4 Performance evaluations.

- (a) EDA shall evaluate the management standards, financial accountability and program performance of each District Organization within three years after the initial Investment award and at least once every three years thereafter, so long as the District Organization continues to receive Investment Assistance. EDA's evaluation shall assess:
  - (1) The continuing Regional eligibility of the District, as set forth in § 304.1;
  - (2) The management of the District Organization, as set forth in § 304.2; and
  - (3) The implementation of the CEDS, including the District Organization's performance and contribution towards the retention and creation of employment, as set forth in § 303.7 of this chapter.
- (b) For peer review, EDA shall ensure the participation of at least one other District Organization in the performance evaluation on a cost-reimbursement basis.

*[71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, as amended at 79 FR 76131, Dec. 19, 2014]*

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## Title 13 – Business Credit and Assistance

### Chapter III – Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce

#### Part 302 – General Terms and Conditions for Investment Assistance

**Authority:** 19 U.S.C. 2341 *et seq.*; 42 U.S.C. 3150; 42 U.S.C. 3152; 42 U.S.C. 3153; 42 U.S.C. 3192; 42 U.S.C. 3193; 42 U.S.C. 3194; 42 U.S.C. 3211; 42 U.S.C. 3212; 42 U.S.C. 3216; 42 U.S.C. 3218; 42 U.S.C. 3220; 42 U.S.C. 5141; 15 U.S.C. 3701; Department of Commerce Delegation Order 10-4.

**Source:** 71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 302.17 Conflicts of interest.

- (a) **General.** It is EDA's and the Department's policy to maintain the highest standards of conduct to prevent conflicts of interest in connection with the award of Investment Assistance or its use for reimbursement or payment of costs (e.g., procurement of goods or services) by or to the Recipient. A conflict of interest generally exists when an Interested Party participates in a matter that has a direct and predictable effect on the Interested Party's personal or financial interests. A conflict also may exist where there is an appearance that an Interested Party's objectivity in performing his or her responsibilities under the Project is impaired. For example, an appearance of impairment of objectivity may result from an organizational conflict where, because of other activities or relationships with other persons or entities, an Interested Party is unable to render impartial assistance, services or advice to the Recipient, a participant in the Project or to the Federal government. Additionally, a conflict of interest may result from non-financial gain to an Interested Party, such as benefit to reputation or prestige in a professional field.
- (b) **Prohibition on direct or indirect financial or personal benefits.**
- (1) An Interested Party shall not receive any direct or indirect financial or personal benefits in connection with the award of Investment Assistance or its use for payment or reimbursement of costs by or to the Recipient.
  - (2) An Interested Party also shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment or other benefit having monetary value, for himself or herself or for another person or entity, from any person or organization which has obtained or seeks to obtain Investment Assistance from EDA.
  - (3) Costs incurred in violation of any conflicts of interest rules contained in this chapter or in violation of any assurances by the Recipient may be denied reimbursement.
  - (4) See § 315.15 of this chapter for special conflicts of interest rules for Trade Adjustment Assistance Investments.
- (c) **Special rules for Revolving Loan Fund ("RLF") Grants.** In addition to the rules set forth in this section:
- (1) An Interested Party of a Recipient of an RLF Grant shall not receive, directly or indirectly, any personal or financial benefits resulting from the disbursement of RLF loans;
  - (2) A Recipient of an RLF Grant shall not lend RLF funds to an Interested Party; and
  - (3) Former board members of a Recipient of an RLF Grant and members of his or her Immediate Family shall not receive a loan from such RLF for a period of two years from the date that the board member last served on the RLF's board of directors.

*[71 FR 56675, Sept. 27, 2006, as amended at 73 FR 62866, Oct. 22, 2008; 79 FR 76129, Dec. 19, 2014]*