



HAWAI'I STATE LEGISLATURE
Ka 'Aha'ōlelo Moku'āina 'Ō Hawai'i

STATE CAPITOL
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96813

33rd LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION OF 2026
JOINT HOUSE and SENATE
COMMITTEES ON CONFERENCE PROCEDURES

The Senate and the House have agreed to the following special procedures for all 2026 Regular Session Committees on Conference. These Conference procedures shall be effective from **8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 20, 2026, until 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2026.**

1. Definitions

For purposes of these procedures:

"Chairs" refers to all of the designated chairs and co-chairs of a Conference Committee.

"Conference Committee" refers to the conference of the House Committee and the Senate Committee assigned by their respective chamber to resolve the differences between the House and the Senate over a particular measure.

"Lead chair" refers to the chair of the House Committee or the Senate Committee who is listed first on the Action Sheets, as provided by the respective chamber.

"Lead committee staff" refers to the staff of the lead chair from the chamber from which the measure in conference originated.

"Managers" refers to all members of the House and Senate assigned to a Conference Committee.

2. Conference Committee Scope and Amendments

The authority of the Conference Committee shall be limited to resolving differences between the Senate and House drafts of a measure.

- a. With the exception of the Executive Budget, the Judiciary Budget, and the Budget of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, a Conference Committee shall not amend a measure by inserting any unrelated or new subject matter.
- b. To assure the integrity of individual measures, the merging of two or more distinct but related measures into one encompassing measure shall not be allowed.

3. Conference Committee Meeting Times and Places

Conference Committee deliberations shall take place only between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

A Conference Committee shall meet in the conference room assigned or reserved, pursuant to the Conference Room Scheduling Procedures and Guidelines and Room Assignment Schedule, as attached.

4. Initial Public-Meeting Notice

The electronic signatures of all chairs shall be obtained before the notice of an initial meeting is posted or distributed. Prior to offering the initial meeting notice for signatures, the chairs shall consult with one another on the information to be included in the notice.

Chairs shall provide at least 24-hours public notice of the first meeting of the Conference Committee and are strongly encouraged to provide more than 24-hours' notice whenever possible. Written notices shall be submitted to the Senate Chief Clerk and the House Sergeant-at-Arms for posting on the Legislature's website and distribution. The lead committee staff shall post the notice adjacent to the door of the assigned conference room at the time of the meeting.

5. Notice of Subsequent Meetings

- a. If agreement is not reached at a duly noticed meeting but the lead chairs of both chambers agree to meet again before 9:00 pm on the same day, the lead chairs of both chambers shall publicly announce at the meeting the time and place at which the Conference Committee will reconvene. A new meeting notice of the reconvening of the Conference Committee on the same day is not required. However, a marked-up copy of the notice indicating the time and place of the subsequent meeting shall be submitted to the Senate Chief Clerk or the House Sergeant-at-Arms as soon as possible for updating individual bill status on the Legislature's website. The lead committee staff shall post a copy of this marked-up notice adjacent to the door of the assigned conference room at the time of the subsequent meeting.
- b. If agreement is not reached at a duly noticed meeting but the lead chairs of both chambers agree to meet on another day, the House lead chair and Senate Chair shall publicly announce at the meeting the date(s), time(s), and place of the subsequent meeting(s), and submit written notice to the Senate Chief Clerk or the House Sergeant-at-Arms for posting on the Legislature's website. The lead committee staff shall post the notice adjacent to the door of the assigned conference room at the time of the meeting.
- c. If agreement is not reached at a duly noticed meeting and the date(s), time(s), and place of future meetings are not publicly announced at that noticed meeting, chairs shall ensure that a written meeting notice, signed electronically by the lead chairs of their respective chamber, is submitted to the Senate Chief Clerk or the House Sergeant-at-Arms for posting on the Legislature's website at least 24 hours in advance of the next meeting of the Conference Committee. The lead committee staff shall post the notice adjacent to the door of the assigned conference room at the time of the meeting.

6. Attendance at Meetings

- a. To convene the initial conference committee meeting only the lead House and Senate chair must be present. All other conference committee managers, especially any co-chair, should attempt to be present.
- b. Once a conference has been opened, reconvening of any subsequent meeting of a conference committee shall require the following:
 - i. For the Senate, the lead chair or a co-chair must be present.
 - ii. For the House, the lead chair must be present.
 - iii. All other conference committee managers, especially any co-chair, should attempt to be present at the convening of and during each meeting.
- c. For decision-making at a meeting, a quorum must be present. "A quorum shall be a majority of the House Committee managers and a majority of the Senate Committee managers and shall include the lead House and Senate chair and majority of the chairs of the Conference Committee for their respective chamber." See Section 9.a of the "Procedures." The lead House and Senate chair of the conference committee must be part of this quorum.
- d. For a fiscal measure, the chair or co-chair representing the House Finance Committee and Senate Ways and Means Committee must be present during decision-making and give their approval.

7. Conference Discussion

Except as authorized by the respective chairs, only the respective chairs may speak during conference. All other managers or other authorized persons shall be recognized by their respective chairs before speaking on any issue.

8. Decorum in Conference Committee Meetings and Courtesy to the Public and to the Managers

- a. Managers shall respect the differing views of other managers and conduct themselves in a courteous manner.
- b. Chairs shall ensure that meetings convene and reconvene at scheduled times. If the House lead chair or Senate Chair of one of the Committees is not present within 15 minutes of the scheduled meeting time, the House lead chair or Senate Chair of the other Committee shall contact the absent chair.
- c. If the absent House lead chair or Senate chair is not present within 30 minutes of the scheduled meeting time, the House lead chair or Senate chair present shall inform the managers and members of the public present that the Conference Committee cannot be convened or reconvened, and that, pursuant to 5c of these Committees on Conference Procedures, a 24-hour advance notice shall be provided for a subsequent meeting of the Conference Committee.

9. Decision-making Meeting

The decision-making meeting of a Conference Committee shall comply with the following open meeting provisions:

- a. A quorum of the Conference Committee shall be present for the decision-making meeting. A quorum shall be a majority of the House Committee managers and a majority of the Senate Committee managers and shall include the lead House and Senate chair and majority of the chairs of the Conference Committee for their respective chamber.
- b. To report a measure out of Conference Committee in amended form, Conference Draft (CD), a majority of the quorum of managers for each respective chamber shall vote in favor of the proposed amendments.
- c. The lead chair (or the lead chair's designee) representing their respective chamber shall call the roll and be the recorder of the quorum and the votes on that measure for that chamber. (Sample attached).
- d. If, after naming a Conference Committee on a measure, the Conference Committee managers representing the chamber from which a measure originated agree to the amendments made by the non-originating chamber, only a quorum of those representing the originating chamber shall vote on the agreement at a duly noticed meeting. For example, if after naming a Conference Committee on a House measure, the House managers of the Conference Committee decide to agree to the amendments in the Senate draft (SD) of the measure, then only the House managers of the Conference Committee shall vote on the measure, returning it to the House in its SD form. For such action, only the lead chair and a quorum of the Conference Committee managers representing the chamber from which the measure originated need to be present. The "Record of Votes of a Conference Committee" sheet detailing the votes of the managers of the originating chamber shall be filed with the appropriate chamber without a Conference Committee Report.

10. Conference Committee Reports

- a. A majority of the House and Senate chairs, respectively, of a Conference Committee shall attest to the action of the Conference Committee by physically signing the Conference Committee Report on behalf of their respective managers; provided that no Conference Committee Report concerning a measure with fiscal implications shall be reported out of a Conference Committee without the physical signature of the chair (or the chair's designee) of each fiscal committee to which the measure is referred. The "Record of Votes of a Conference Committee" sheet detailing the votes of the managers of the Conference Committee shall be attached to the report as a part thereof.
- b. All House measures reported out of Conference Committee shall be filed with the House Chief Clerk, and likewise all Senate measures shall be filed with the Senate Chief Clerk. A document filed in the originating chamber shall be deemed simultaneously filed in the other chamber. Only the original Conference Committee Report, with the attached Record of Votes, and the Conference Draft of the measure shall be required for filing.

- c. If the Conference Committee votes to report the measure out, the Committee must file a Conference Committee Report and Conference Draft with the appropriate chamber's Chief Clerk.

11. Decision-making Deadlines

On the deadline nights for Final Decking of the non-fiscal and fiscal bills:

- a. Conference Committees shall conclude their negotiations by **6:00 p.m.** to allow adequate time for final preparation of the bills and Conference Committee Reports.
- b. To provide all chairs with ample opportunity to review and sign the Conference Committee Reports before filing, all Conference Committee Reports shall be available for review and signature by **9:00 p.m.**
- c. All Conference Committee Reports and Conference Drafts of measures shall be filed with the respective Chief Clerk by **11:30 p.m.**

12. Electronic Transfer

Should a Conference Committee for which the vehicle is a Senate bill decide to use a proposal drafted by the House, the House chair shall have the House proposal electronically transferred to the appropriate Senate office so that the Conference Draft can be prepared. The converse shall apply to House bills with proposals drafted by the Senate that the Conference Committee agrees to.

13. Exceptions to these Deadlines and Procedures

Exceptions to these deadlines and other procedures may be made only with the advance written joint approval of the Senate President and the House Speaker.



Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate

APR 01 2026

Date



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker of the House of Representatives

APR 01 2026

Date

Attachment

