

How to fill out a Hawaii title

Certificate of Title · 7 of 10 boxes are the seller's · rules as of 2026-08-23

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/forms/hawaii/certificate-of-title/

This sheet is not the title. It is the checklist to keep beside one. A certificate that is defaced or mutilated is finished: the legal owners on record must apply for a duplicate before anyone can sign anything. Honolulu and Maui describe the same document independently and agree on every section: the registered owners sign off in Section A on the front, a lienholder releases in Section B on the reverse, the new registered owners apply in Section D and a new lienholder in Section E, and the notice of transfer is detached from the top and mailed within ten days.

Who has to sign

Every registered owner named on the certificate	In Section A, on the front. Honolulu's instruction is three verbs long and repeats for joint owners: date, print and sign your name; if there are joint owners, both owners must date, print and sign their name.
The lienholder, in Section B on the back	If a lender is printed on the certificate it releases there. Where the lienholder did not complete Section B, the counties accept a lien satisfaction letter instead, and on an out-of-county or out-of-state certificate the original cancelled contract stamped PAID IN FULL will also do.
The seller again, on the strip across the top	The notice of transfer needs the seller's printed name, signature and address as well as the new owner's name and address, and it goes to the county where the vehicle was LAST REGISTERED - which is not necessarily the county you live in now.
The buyer, in Section D on the back	The application for transfer by the new registered owner. Both parties must sign it if the vehicle is to be jointly registered, and the buyer signs nothing on the front.
A new lender, in Section E	Only if the buyer is financing. It is also the section an owner completes for themselves when a loan is paid off and they want to be recorded as both registered owner and lienholder.
An attorney-in-fact, with a notary behind them	Honolulu's seller power of attorney appoints someone to sign any application for original registration, certificate of title, duplicates or other certificates issued by the Director of Customer Services - and it makes the owner state the odometer reading on the form itself, so the agent signs the mileage disclosure exactly as the owner disclosed it.
A company, through a letter of authorization	A business-owned vehicle needs an LOA on file naming the individuals authorised to act. The county limits them by what the letter says: an authorization only to sell lets those individuals only release ownership or apply for a duplicate title.

Every box, in the order you meet it

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
0	YOU	Before any pen: check the safety check and the registration	This is the step that decides whether the rest of the page matters. The county will only complete a title transfer once the vehicle is current on both motor vehicle registration and safety inspection, so look at the emblem on the back of the car and the expiry on the registration certificate before you agree a date with anyone. Watch out: The safety check needs a valid Hawaii insurance identification card at the station, so cancelling your policy early can lock you out of the inspection you need to sell. Sort the inspection out first, then advertise.
1	YOU	Detach the notice of transfer from the top of the certificate	The strip across the head of the sheet is a form, not decoration. Tear it off, and fill in the plate number, make, type, date of transfer, vehicle identification number, the new owner's name and address, and your own printed name, signature and address. Watch out: Do this before the buyer is standing in front of you. Hand over the certificate whole and your notice of transfer is now in their glovebox - which is recoverable, because each county publishes a replacement, but only if you notice.
2	YOU	Section A, front: the odometer reading	Write the mileage in whole miles - every Hawaii form prints NO TENTHS beside the blank - for any vehicle of the 2011 model year or newer. A 2010-or-older vehicle needs no reading and there is no exempt box to tick. Watch out: Two tick boxes sit under the reading and both are confessions: one for mileage in excess of the odometer's mechanical limits, one for a reading that is not the actual mileage. Ticking neither is a positive statement that the number is true.
3	YOU	Section A, front: date it	The date of transfer you write here is the date both clocks run from - your ten days for the notice, and the buyer's thirty days to bring the certificate to a satellite city hall. Watch out: Put the same date on the strip you detached. If the two disagree, the counter has to decide which one starts the buyer's penalty clock, and that conversation happens without you in the room.
4	YOU	Section A, front: print your name, then sign it	Both, in that order, and both from every registered owner on the face of the certificate. The clerk compares the signature against the one already on file for the record. Watch out: If your signature has changed since the car was registered, or the transfer will be recorded in a different county from the one that issued the certificate, a notary is optional and cheap insurance - the county names those two situations itself.

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
5	LENDER	Section B, back: the lender releases	If a lienholder is printed on the certificate, it signs and stamps Section B. Nothing you do in Section A moves the car while an unreleased lien sits on the back of it. Watch out: A lender that has already sent the certificate to you may not want to re-endorse it. The counties accept a lien satisfaction letter in place of the Section B endorsement, so ask for one in writing rather than posting the title back and forth.
6	BUYER	Section D, back: the buyer applies	The application for transfer by the new registered owner. If the vehicle is to be jointly registered, both of the new owners sign here. Watch out: Watch the buyer complete it. Everything that goes wrong for a Hawaii seller after this point - renewal notices, citations, a record still in your name - traces back to a buyer who never took Section D to a counter.
7	LENDER	Section E, back: only if the buyer is financing	The application for transfer by a new lienholder. It is also the box an owner fills in for themselves when a loan has been paid off and they want to appear as both registered owner and lienholder on the new certificate. Watch out: It is not your section and not your problem, but leaving it blank on a financed sale means the buyer's lender is not recorded - and the buyer will be back asking you to sign something. Let them complete their own half at the counter.
8	YOU	Hand over three documents, not one	The endorsed certificate of title, the last-issued certificate of registration, and the current State of Hawaii safety inspection certificate. A company-owned vehicle adds a letter of authorization. Watch out: The registration certificate is the one people forget, because it normally lives in the car. Without it the buyer cannot complete the transfer, and you will be posting it to a stranger.
9	YOU	File the strip within ten days	Send the notice of transfer to the county where the vehicle was LAST REGISTERED. On Oahu that is the Division of Motor Vehicle, Licensing and Permits at P.O. Box 30330, Honolulu; on Hawaii Island it is the Department of Finance VRL Division in Hilo. Watch out: The fine for not filing runs up to \$100, but the real cost is slower: until the county records the notice, every citation the buyer collects lands on your record and your renewal notice keeps arriving.

Six rules for the pen, on a document that carries its own notice of sale

- **Tear the strip off first, before anything else** — The notice of transfer sits at the top of the certificate and it is yours. Detach it, fill it in and set it aside before you start on Section A, because the alternative is remembering to ask a stranger for the top of a document you have just given away.
- **Everything in ink, and typed if you can** — Every Honolulu form in this set opens with the same line - type or print in ink, an improperly filled application will not be accepted - and the certificate is held to the same standard. A pencilled odometer reading is not a reading.
- **Both owners date, print AND sign** — The county spells out three actions and repeats them for joint owners: date, print and sign. A signature on its own, with no printed name beside it, is the commonest reason a Hawaii clerk hands a certificate back for signature comparison.
- **Do not correct the mileage in place** — There is a form for a wrong reading and it is one page long. Scratching out a figure or ticking a box you meant to leave alone turns a valid certificate into a defaced one, and a defaced certificate has to be replaced by the legal owners before the sale can move.
- **Write the date of transfer once and use it everywhere** — The date you put in Section A is the date the buyer's thirty days run from and the date your ten days run from. Put the same date on the notice of transfer strip. Two different dates on two halves of the same sheet is a discrepancy the counter will ask about.
- **Keep a copy of the strip before you post it** — The notice is a small piece of paper carrying the buyer's name, the date and the plate number, and once it goes to the county you have no record of what you told them. Photograph it. If a renewal notice or a citation turns up months later, that photograph and the county's email address are the whole of your defence.

HAWAII CERTIFICATE OF TITLE — WHERE THE SECTIONS SIT

issued by your county's director of finance — four lettered sections and a strip you tear off

Honolulu and Maui describe this document independently and agree on every part of it: the seller signs Section A on the FRONT, a lender releases in Section B on the BACK, the buyer applies in Section D and a new lender in Section E, and the notice of transfer is detached from the TOP and filed within ten days. No county names a Section C, so none is drawn here.

THE FRONT

the strip across the top, the county's printed panel, and the one section that is yours

1 NOTICE OF TRANSFER — PRINTED ACROSS THE TOP, AND DETACHABLE

WRITE

LICENSE PLATE NUMBER · MAKE · TYPE · DATE OF TRANSFER · VIN · NAME AND ADDRESS OF NEW OWNER · NAME, SIGNATURE AND ADDRESS OF SELLER

Not a section — a form. Honolulu tells the seller to detach the notice of transfer located on the top of the certificate of title, complete it, and submit it within 10 days to the county where the vehicle was last registered. Its nine fields are transcribed from CS-L(MVR)53, the county's own reprint of this strip. Tear it off before the certificate leaves your hands.

THE COUNTY'S PRINTED PANEL: VEHICLE, REGISTERED OWNER, LIENHOLDER

Printed when the certificate was issued and never written on. Read two things here before any pen: the spelling of every registered owner's name, because the clerk compares your signature against the one on file, and whether a lienholder is printed at all — one that is printed has to release on the back before anything you do on the front matters.

SECTION A — ASSIGNMENT OF TITLE BY SELLER

WRITE

The county's own name for it, from the Transfer by Mail list, where it is marked required. Three entries, below, and they are the whole of a Hawaii seller's job on the document itself.

2 A — ODOMETER READING

WRITE

(NO TENTHS) · MILEAGE IN EXCESS OF MECHANICAL LIMITS · NOT ACTUAL MILEAGE

Whole miles for any 2011-or-newer vehicle; a 2010-or-older one needs no reading and there is no exempt box to tick. The two exception boxes are the same pair CS-L(MVR)40 and CS-L(MVR)1 print, and both are confessions rather than defaults.

3 A — DATE OF TRANSFER

WRITE

The date the buyer's thirty days to bring the certificate in run from, and the date your ten days for the notice of transfer run from. Put the same date on the strip you detached — two dates on one sale is the discrepancy a counter has to resolve without you.

4 A — PRINT YOUR NAME, THEN SIGN IT

WRITE

Honolulu's instruction is three verbs long and repeats for joint owners: date, print and sign your name; if there are joint owners, both owners must date, print and sign their name. Notarising is optional — the county says so — and prevents rejection for an irregular signature or where the transfer will be recorded in another county.

X _____

THE BACK

three lettered sections, and none of them is yours to complete

5 SECTION B — RELEASE OF LIEN

If a lienholder is printed on the certificate it signs and stamps here. Where it did not, the counties accept a lien satisfaction letter in lieu of the endorsement, and on an out-of-county or out-of-state certificate the original cancelled contract stamped PAID IN FULL will also do.

X _____

6 SECTION D — APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER BY NEW REGISTERED OWNER(S)

The buyer's half, and the county marks it required. If the vehicle is to be jointly registered, both parties must sign it. Everything that goes wrong for a Hawaii seller afterwards — renewal notices, citations, a record still in your name — traces back to a Section D that never reached a counter.

X _____

7 SECTION E — APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER BY NEW LIENHOLDER

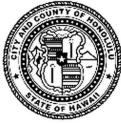
Only where the buyer is financing. It is also the section an owner completes for themselves once a loan is paid off and they want to be recorded as both registered owner and lienholder on the new certificate.

X _____

NO SECTION C IS DRAWN, BECAUSE NOTHING NAMES ONE

Honolulu names A, B, D and E. Maui names A, B, D and E. The County of Kauai's and County of Hawaii's pages could not be read from here at all. Rather than invent a letter, this diagram leaves the gap where the sources leave it.

Drawn from the City and County of Honolulu's Motor Vehicle Transfer page, which places each section on its face and names all four in full in its Transfer by Mail list; from the County of Maui's ownership-transfer pages for sellers, buyers and release of lienholder, which name the same sections independently; and from CS-L(MVR)53, the reprint of the strip across the top. The certificate's proportions, typography, colour and security printing are not reproduced here, and no Hawaii county publishes a specimen to show instead — the five searches behind that statement, and the two county websites that could not be reached, are recorded at the top of make_hi_title_diagram.py.



**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES • DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES
P.O. Box 30330, Honolulu, HI 96820-0330**



NOTICE OF TRANSFER

Notification must be made on this official form within TEN DAYS from the date of transfer or sale. Penalty for failure to comply is a fine up to \$100.00. Deliver properly endorsed Certificate of Title and validated Certificate of Registration to new buyer or owner.

DESCRIPTION OF MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE PLATE NUMBER KHM 274

Make Honda Type 4DSD Date of Transfer 08/14/2026
MONTH DAY YEAR

Vehicle Identification Number 2HGRM4H57EH715204

You are hereby notified that I (we), the undersigned owner(s) of the motor vehicle described above, sold or transferred my (our) interest in said motor vehicle to a new owner.

TYPE OR PRINT NAME OF NEW OWNER Dean T. Kahananui

TYPE OR PRINT ADDRESS OF NEW OWNER

87-1052 Hakimo Road, Waianae, HI 96792
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

TYPE OR PRINT NAME OF SELLER(S) Malia K. Nakagawa

SIGNATURE OF TRANSFEROR(S) OR SELLER(S) Malia K. Nakagawa

TYPE OR PRINT ADDRESS OF TRANSFEROR(S) OR SELLER(S)

2914 Kilihau Place, Honolulu, HI 96819
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

**MAIL COMPLETED NOTICE TO: DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE • LICENSING AND PERMITS
P.O. BOX 30330, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96820-0330**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You are required by law (Section 286-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes) to immediately notify the Division of Motor Vehicle, Licensing and Permits when you sell or otherwise dispose of a vehicle. This form is provided for use in reporting the sale or transfer to the Division and does not constitute application for transfer of ownership.

YOUR LIABILITY FOR THE VEHICLE WILL NOT BE RELEASED IF YOU SUBMIT ILLEGIBLE OR INCOMPLETE INFORMATION.

TO REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM THE DIVISION'S RECORD, THE NEW BUYER MUST APPLY FOR TRANSFER USING THE ENDORSED CERTIFICATE OF TITLE AND VALIDATED CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION RECEIVED FROM YOU.

When the information contained on this form is recorded by the Division of Motor Vehicle, Licensing and Permits (see WARNING below), liability for parking and/or traffic violations and civil litigation resulting from operation after the date of sale becomes the responsibility of the subsequent purchaser(s).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

WARNING: ANY INCOMPLETE, INACCURATE OR ILLEGIBLE INFORMATION WILL PREVENT THE RECORDING OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE NOTICE AND RESULT IN NONCOMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW.

1. This form is for registered owner transfers only. Do not submit for lienholder (legal owner) transfers.
2. Enter your license plate number in the space at the upper right area of the form.
3. Enter MAKE of vehicle (Chevrolet, Ford, etc.) and TYPE of vehicle (2DSD, 4DSD, etc.)
4. Enter vehicle identification number.
5. Enter date (month, day, year) you sold or transferred the described vehicle.
6. TYPE or PRINT new owner's name and complete address on the appropriate line.
7. TYPE or PRINT your name(s) as seller(s) on the appropriate line.
8. SIGN your name immediately below the printed name of seller(s) line.
9. Enter your complete address below your signature.

CSD_DMV_CS-L(MVR)53 (02/2026) ec