



## HAWAII EMPLOYERS COUNCIL

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About the Employment & Training Fund (ETF) Program and Forms

#### **The ETF Program**

##### **1. What is the ETF Program?**

In an effort to help keep Hawaii businesses competitive, enhance business growth, and improve the long-term employability of Hawaii's people, the State of Hawaii's Workforce Development Division established the Employment and Training Fund (ETF) program in 1991. Through this program, non-government entity employers can register their employees to receive partially subsidized training through approved training providers such as HEC. The ETF subsidy covers 50% of tuition for approved courses up to \$2,000 per course, tax inclusive. This means Employers only need to cover 50% of the course cost, or up to \$1,000 per course, tax inclusive, plus any amount that exceeds the \$2,000 cap.

##### **2. Why should employers take advantage of the ETF Program?**

There are several benefits of the ETF Program:

- a. *Significant financial assistance:* The ETF program covers up to 50% of the tuition costs (inclusive of taxes and up to a cap), making high-quality training more affordable. With the ETF's contribution, employers and employees can benefit from substantial savings. This makes it easier for companies to invest in their employees' professional development without a heavy financial burden.
- b. *Enhanced workforce skills:* ETF-subsidized training is designed to provide and/or enhance the occupational knowledge and workforce skills by providing employees with a variety of business-specific training and occupational and management skills making employees more valuable and competitive in their roles. This can lead to increased job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities.
- c. *Access to high-quality training:* Approved training vendors, such as HEC, are vetted by the ETF program. Participants can trust that they are receiving valuable and industry-relevant instruction.
- d. *Tailored training opportunities:* Employers and employees can select specific courses that address the unique needs of their business, ensuring that the training is directly applicable and beneficial to their workforce. Employees have the flexibility to choose from a variety of



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courses offered by training vendors, allowing them to find the best fit for their needs and schedules.

- e. *Positive impact on employee retention:* Offering ETF-supported training to its employees demonstrates an employer's commitment to its employees' growth and development. This can lead to higher employee satisfaction and retention, reducing turnover costs.
- f. *Support for small businesses:* The ETF program is particularly beneficial for small businesses that might not have large training budgets. By leveraging ETF funds, small businesses can offer their employees the same high-quality training that larger companies provide.
- g. *Investment in the future:* Participating in ETF-supported training is an investment in both the employees and the company's future. It helps build a stronger, more capable workforce that can drive the business forward.

### **3. How is the ETF subsidy calculated?**

The employer's cost is 50% of the tuition per course, tax-inclusive amount, plus any excess balance that exceeds the \$2,000 cap. For example, if the total tuition for one course is \$200, the employer would pay \$100 of the total tuition. If the total tuition for another course is \$2,200, the employer will pay \$1,000 for its 50% share plus \$200 for the excess amount over the \$2,000 cap, totaling \$1,200.

### **4. Are there any limitations to participating in the ETF Program?**

There are two: (a) Government employees are not eligible for ETF assistance, and (b) the requested ETF training course cannot be the same training that the company already provides.



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### **The ETF Forms**

#### **5. Who fills out the ETF Forms?**

We recommend that an authorized representative of the employer, usually a manager in the company, fill out the forms. The forms require a certification that the employer and employee meet the ETF program eligibility criteria and require the original signature of that authorized representative.

#### **6. Why do I need to fill out the ETF Forms?**

The forms are required because they are the official documents that enable you to access the benefits of the ETF program. The forms help the ETF Office ensure that the company and the employee (the course registrant) are eligible for the ETF program. This is important to ensure that the ETF funds are allocated correctly and that the training is aligned with the state's guidelines. In short, you do not need the ETF Forms to register and participate in an HEC ETF-approved course, but you do need the ETF forms to be eligible for the 50% ETF subsidy.

#### **7. What information do I need to gather before filling out the ETF forms?**

Before starting, ensure you have the following details: your company's Federal ID number, Department of Labor (DOL) number, contact information, and the employee (training participant's) details, including name, job title, and citizenship status.

#### **8. What is the DOL number and where do I find it?**

The DOL number is assigned by the Unemployment Insurance Division for payroll purposes. You can find it in your company's payroll or employment services records.

#### **9. What should I do if an employee is not a U.S. citizen?**

If the employee is not a U.S. citizen, you must attach documentation proving their legal right to work in the United States along with the ETF forms.

#### **10. Who needs to sign the ETF forms?**

Both the employer (or authorized representative) and the employee must sign the Employer Referral Agreement. Additionally, HEC must sign the Course Registration Agreement. The ETF office accepts *original* signatures only.



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### **11. How far in advance should I submit the ETF forms?**

The completed ETF forms must be submitted to the appropriate ETF Office at least ten (10) state working days before the start date of the training class. We recommend, however, that as much as practicable, you complete and submit the ETF forms well in advance of the ten (10) state working days to secure approval for the 50% subsidy from the ETF Office for the registered HEC course. Depending on the volume of forms it is processing, the ETF Office could take up to five business days to approve the forms.

### **12. What happens if my ETF forms are not approved by the ETF Office?**

The employee remains registered for the HEC course and can still attend the training. However, because the registration is not eligible for the ETF 50% subsidy amount, the employer is responsible for 100% of the course price. For this reason, we recommend completing and submitting the ETF forms as early as possible.

### **13. Can I submit the ETF forms to the ETF Office via email or fax?**

Yes, you can submit the forms via email or fax. However, if you do so, it is important to contact the local ETF Office to confirm receipt of your submission.

### **14. What if there's a mistake in the forms after submission?**

If there is a mistake or you need to make a change after submission, the ETF Office requires that you complete and submit a new Employer Referral Agreement and Course Registration Agreement with the correct information at least five (5) state working days before the class starts.

### **15. What are the consequences if an employee does not attend a training after receiving approval from the ETF Office?**

If an employee fails to attend a class without notifying the ETF Office properly, the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations may impose upon the employer and/or the employee a one-year suspension from the ETF Program for the first occurrence and a lifetime suspension for any additional no-shows.



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### 16. Who do I contact if I have questions about the ETF forms, the program, or the status of the ETF Office's approval of my forms?

The best resource is your local ETF Office:

#### Oahu

Honolulu Office  
830 Punchbowl Street, Rm 317  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Phone: (808) 587-3001  
Fax: (808) 587-3021  
Email: [dlir.wdd.etf.honolulu@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.wdd.etf.honolulu@hawaii.gov)

#### Maui/Lanai/Molokai

Wailuku Office  
2065 Main Street, Suite 110  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793  
Phone: (808) 984-2091  
Fax: (808) 984-2090  
Email: [dlir.wdd.maui@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.wdd.maui@hawaii.gov)

#### Hawaii Island

Hilo Office  
1990 Kinoole Street, Rm 101  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720  
Phone: (808) 935-6527  
Fax: (808) 981-2880  
Email: [dlir.wdd.hilo@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.wdd.hilo@hawaii.gov)

#### Kauai Office

Lihue Office  
4444 Rice Street, #302  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766  
Phone: (808) 274-3056  
Fax: (808) 274-3059  
Email: [dlir.wdd.kauai@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.wdd.kauai@hawaii.gov)

Additionally, HEC has created a written instruction guide, a quick guide for ETF registration and an employer's how-to video to anticipate questions you may have to ensure a smoother registration process for employers and employees. You can find these resources on HEC's website.

### 17. Where can I find the ETF forms?

To make it easier for participants registering for an ETF-approved course provided by HEC, email HEC at [registrars@hecouncil.org](mailto:registrars@hecouncil.org) to receive pre-filled and printable forms for the course and the special ETF code you'll need to register for the HEC Course for 50% off the published price. Otherwise, blank ETF forms can be found on the official Hawaii Workforce Development Division (WDD) website [here](#). All forms submitted to the ETF Office must be official forms containing the WDD logo. Unofficial forms will not be accepted or considered.