

TITLE: Governing Submission and Acceptance of Official Records and Documentation for Licensure

The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) accepts official documentation, such as transcripts, score reports, and verification forms, only when received directly from the issuing institution or an approved, secure third-party electronic delivery service.

Unsealed or unverified documents, including transcripts or verification forms, will not be accepted by the HTSB if uploaded, emailed, faxed, or hand-delivered.

The only documents applicants are permitted to upload are Social Security cards and government-issued identification.

This policy ensures the authenticity and integrity of the documents used for licensure and verification purposes.

Required Submission Method

Starting July 1, 2026, all documents required by HTSB for licensure will be accepted only if submitted through one of the following methods:

1. **Direct Electronic Submission from a Secure Third-Party Vendor (Preferred Method):** The HTSB accepts documents delivered electronically through recognized and secure clearinghouses, such as Parchment, National Student Clearinghouse, or other HTSB-approved digital providers. The document must be delivered from the vendor's secure portal directly to the official HTSB email address or electronic receiving system.
2. **Mailed Submission Directly from the Issuing Institution:** Documents mailed to the HTSB must be enclosed in the original, sealed envelope of the issuing college, university, or verifying agency. The seal must be unbroken upon receipt.
3. **Direct Submission from the Issuing Institution's Secure Email:** The document must be sent directly from an official institutional email address (e.g., registrar@universityname.edu) to the official HTSB email address.

Rationale/Background:

This policy on acceptance of Third-Party Documents is a critical measure implemented to uphold the integrity of the teacher licensing process and address documented national concerns regarding academic fraud.

- **Combating Forgery and Fraud**

The primary rationale is the need to mitigate the risk of accepting fraudulent or falsified documents. When applicants handle their own transcripts or verification forms, they are vulnerable to the alteration of grades, degrees, or experience. The HTSB must ensure the credentials of all licensed educators are authentic and accurate.

- **National Licensing Standards**

This policy aligns with the best practices recommended by state licensing boards and organizations, such as the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). A national concern exists across state lines regarding the use of forged transcripts and "diploma mill" degrees to obtain professional licenses. Direct submission is the universally accepted method to prevent license-by-fraud.

- **Maintaining Public Trust**

The HTSB has a public mandate to license only qualified professionals. Relying on an official, secure chain of custody (directly from the institution or an approved third-party vendor, such as Parchment) is the only way to guarantee the validity of the academic record and, by extension, the competency of the licensed teacher.

Cost:

All costs are included in the current staff job duties/responsibilities.

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Referred to: Teacher Standards Committee