

# MORRIS MINORU ATTA

Attorney at Law

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

### State of Hawaii

#### Department of Agriculture

#### Office of the Chairperson

Honolulu, Hawaii:

2019 to Present

#### Deputy to the Chairperson:

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as the principal assistant to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, assist in the direction and coordination of day-to-day activities of the Department; relieve the Chairperson of administrative details as assigned; and assume active direction of the Department in her absence. Formulates, reviews, and recommends departmental policies, administrative rules, regulations, and procedures; Oversees and maintains effective working relationships between the Department, the Governor, the legislature, other government officials, and the general public; Conducts special studies; Plans and coordinates departmental annual reports for coverage, content, design, organization, and distribution; Maintains departmental operational efficiency; Reviews and investigates grievances; Reviews and coordinates legislative proposals; Prepares digests and attends legislative committee hearings; Directs the preparation of the departmental budget and program; Reviews and screens all legal documents, agreements and contracts; Directs and supervises compliance action; Attends meetings of policy boards and legislative, industrial, and civic groups; Prepares or reviews speeches and news releases; and Develops and directs a continuing public relations program.

#### Acting Agricultural Loan Division Administrator:

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as Administrator of the Agricultural Loan Division to ensure that the State's financial safety net for farmers and ranchers continues to remain viable to support Hawai'i's agricultural industry. The program serves as a lender of last resort for struggling farmers and a source of emergency loans during times of disaster. The administrator's responsibilities include, without limitation: (1) program administration; (2) statutes, rules, policies and procedures review; (3) budget oversight; (4) loan negotiation; (5) legislative, interagency and intra-agency committee, working group and task force participation; (6) media and public inquiry management; and (7) personnel, revenue development, and information systems oversight.

#### Acting Title VI Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as the Department's Nondiscrimination Coordinator to ensure department-wide compliance with federal and state civil rights and other nondiscrimination laws. Responsibilities include without limitation: (1) program management; (2) statutes, rules, policies and procedures review; (3) receipt and coordination of discrimination complaints; and (4) establishing and enforcing nondiscrimination procedures and protocols.

#### Agricultural Land Program Manager:

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as Program Manager of Agricultural Land Program for the Agricultural Resource Management Division to ensure economical and productive management of State-owned agricultural lands by promoting and supporting effective planning, acquisition, disposition, development, and use of the State's agricultural land resources. More specifically to oversee the day-to-day management and operations of Land Program, including without limitation: (1) public lands management; (2) statutes, rules, policies and procedures review; (3) operating and CIP budget oversight; (4) land transaction negotiation; (5) legislative, interagency and intra-agency committee, working group and task force participation; (6) media and public inquiry management; and (7) personnel, revenue development, and information systems oversight.

**Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation  
City & County of Honolulu**

Honolulu, Hawaii

2013 to 2017

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Deputy Director, Right-of-Way:**

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as head of land acquisition for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project and oversees right-of-way acquisition, real property management, and compliance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Responsibilities include: (1) right-of-way acquisition; (2) relocation of displaced occupants; (3) project asset management; (4) statutes, rules, policies and procedures review and compliance; (5) oversight and management of right-of-way budget; (6) legislative, interagency and intra-agency committee, working group and task force participation; and (7) media and public inquiry management.

**State of Hawaii**

**Department of Land and Natural Resources**

**Land Division**

Honolulu, Hawaii:

2004 to 2013

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**State Lands Administrator:**

Areas of Responsibility: Serve as administrator of Land Division to ensure economical and productive management of State-owned lands by effective use and planning, acquisition, disposition, development and management, as well as protection and preservation of resources. Support the State's priorities to support agriculture, increase renewable energy production, protect natural resources and the environment, and perpetuate Hawaii's unique cultural identity. More specifically to oversee the day-to-day management and operations of Land Division, including without limitation: (1) public lands management; (2) statutes, rules, policies and procedures review; (3) operating and CIP budget oversight; (4) land transaction negotiation; (5) legislative, interagency and intra-agency committee, working group and task force participation; (6) media and public inquiry management; and (7) personnel, revenue development, and information systems oversight.

**Special Projects Coordinator:**

Areas of Responsibility: Coordinate and manage various special projects and issues regarding public lands, including without limitation: (1) oversight and management of shoreline certifications and appeals, agricultural leasing, coastal resources, commercial activities, water and mineral resources, agricultural resources, ocean resources, natural hazards, environmental hazards, dam safety, emergency and disaster response, renewable energy issues, contested cases; (2) provide general legislative research and support; (3) participate in legislative, interagency and intra-agency committees, working groups and task forces; and (4) assist in the management of the Division in the absence of the Administrator.

**Hawaii State Senate**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1996, 1997, 1998, 2001, and 2004 Legislative Sessions

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Senate Majority Research Office**

**Research Attorney**

Areas of Responsibility: General legislative research, statutory drafting, and legal advice, primarily in the areas of Land, Water, Agriculture, Health, Energy, and the Environment.

**Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Senior Staff Attorney**

Areas of Responsibility: General legislative research, statutory drafting, and legal advice, primarily in the areas relating to courts; crime prevention and control, including juvenile justice matters; criminal code revision; statutory revision; campaign spending and elections; constitutional matters; programs of the Attorney General, Public Defender and Judiciary; government records and information practices; individual rights and civil liberties; and programs relating to public safety and corrections.

**State of Hawaii**

**Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Professional and Vocational Licensing Division**

**Real Property Branch**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1998 to 2000

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Condominium Law Specialist**

Areas of Responsibility: Real Estate Commission research support, provide general advice and information to the public, develop and maintain an alternative dispute resolution program for condominium issues.

**Morris M. Atta**

**Attorney at Law**

**Private Practice**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1990 to 2004

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

Areas of Practice: General Practice with emphasis in Real Property, Environmental, Land Use, Health, Intellectual Property, Estate Planning, General Business, and Nonprofit Law.

**Muranaka Environmental Consultants, Inc.**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1989 to 1990

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Director, Vice President, Secretary & General Counsel**

Areas of Responsibility: Environmental Compliance, General Corporate and Business Management, Labor and Personnel Management, and Legal Matters Oversight.

**Bishop Trust Company, Ltd. and**

**American Trust Company of Hawaii, Inc.**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1987 to 1989

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Corporate Counsel**

Areas of Responsibility: Environmental, Real Property, Employee Benefits, Personal Trusts, Probate, Tax, Labor, General Business and Corporate Law.

**Bays, Deaver, Hiatt, Kawachika & Lezak**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1986 to 1987

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Associate Attorney**

Areas of Practice: Real Property, Land Use, Construction, Banking and Finance, General Business and Corporate Law.

**Moon, O'Connor, Tam & Yuen**

Honolulu, Hawaii

1984 to 1986

Full Time (40 to 60 hours per week)

**Associate Attorney**

Areas of Practice: Real Property, Banking and Finance, Bankruptcy, and General Business Law.

## **BAR ADMISSIONS:**

### **State of Hawaii**

October, 1984

### **United States District Court**

#### **District of Hawaii**

October, 1984

## **EDUCATION:**

### **New York University School of Law**

New York City, New York

Juris Doctor - May, 1984

### **Yale University**

New Haven, Connecticut

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology - May, 1978

### **Roosevelt High School**

Honolulu, Hawaii

Diploma - June, 1974

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

### **Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture**

#### **University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

Board Member, 2020 to Present

### **National Asian Pacific American Bar Association**

Member, 2018 to Present

### **Hawaii State Bar Association**

Member, 1984 to Present

Section Memberships: Natural Resources, Vice Chair – 2011-2012; Corporate Counsel, Secretary - 1989; Government Lawyers; Real Property & Financial Services; Probate & Estate Planning; Labor Law.

### **American Bar Association**

Member, 1984 to 2004

Section Memberships: Natural Resources, Energy, and Environmental Law; Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice; Construction Industry; Business Law; Real Property, Probate and Trust Law.

### **American Industrial Hygiene Association - Hawaii Chapter**

Legal Advisor, 1993 to 1996

### **National Association of Environmental Professionals / Hawaii Association of Environmental Professionals**

Member, 1991 to 1996

### **American Corporate Counsel Association**

Member, 1989 to 1991

Committee Memberships: Environmental Law; Young lawyers.

**Non-profit Corporation Legal Assistance Program**

Participating Attorney, 1988 to 1990

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND NONPROFITS:

### **American Diabetes Association Advocacy Committee**

Member, 2012 to 2021 Chair 2016 to 2021

### **Community Leadership Board**

Member, 2016 to 2021

### **ADA National Legislative & Regulatory Subcommittee**

Member, 2017 to 2021, Vice Chair, 2020 to 2021

### **Volunteer Resource Center of Hawaii**

Board of Directors: Director, 2002 to 2008; President, 2002 to 2006

### **Downtown Art Center**

Board of Directors: Director, 2022 to Present

### **Creative Arts Experience**

Board of Directors: Director, 2015 to Present

### **Honolulu Printmaking Workshop**

Member, January 1990 to 2004

Board of Directors, Director - 1991-1993

### **Hawaii Youth Opera Chorus**

Board of Directors: Director, 2008 to 2010

### **Honolulu Boy Choir**

Board of Directors: Director, 2001 to 2006

### **Hawaii State Parent Teacher Student Association**

Pro Bono Legal Advisor and Lecturer on nonprofit legal issues, 1998 to 2001

### **Oahu Teen Line Peer Listener Project**

Advisory Committee, 1994 to 1995

### **Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce**

Member, Cherry Blossom Festival - Taishu Engeki Co-Chairperson, 1991 to 1992

### **Association of Apartment Owners of Pu`uwai Place, Phases I & II**

Board of Directors: Director & President, 2019 to Present

### **Association of Apartment Owners of Cliffside Villages**

Board of Directors: Director & President, 1988 to 1990

### **Young Buddhist Association of Honolulu**

Board of Directors: Director, 1984 to 1990; President, 1987 to 1989