



RELOCATION GUIDE · TEAM RAJA THAT · MOVING TO OAHU

MOVE TO PARADISE, WITH PURPOSE

Everything it takes to get you, your household, your vehicle, and your pets from the mainland to Oahu, tracked against one honest timeline.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS · VEHICLES · PETS · LODGING · SETTLING IN

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 1 The relocation timeline: four phases, one clock
- 2 Shipping your household goods
- 3 Shipping your vehicle
- 4 Getting around until your car arrives
- 5 Relocating with pets, the step most people miss
- 6 Where to stay when you land
- 7 Settling in: license, registration & utilities

■ FOUR PHASES, ONE CLOCK

A move to Oahu runs on a slower, different clock than a mainland relocation, everything ships by ocean, not by truck. Plan backward from that reality and the rest of this playbook falls into place.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- 1 Book movers or ocean freight, 4–6 wks minimum lead time
- 2 Start pet paperwork now if you're bringing one, 4+ months out
- 3 Contact your sponsor or a local contact
- 4 Start the rent-vs-buy house search

IN TRANSIT

- 1 HHG/container ships, 3–4 wks typical, longer for surface HHG
- 2 Vehicle ships, 2–4 wks typical transit
- 3 Track shipment numbers, keep every receipt
- 4 Lock in interim lodging plus a rental car or Turo

ARRIVAL WEEK

- 1 Check into interim lodging
- 2 Pick up your rental car or Turo
- 3 Confirm pet release status if applicable
- 4 Start utility setup, HECO needs about a day's notice

FIRST 30 DAYS

- 1 Register your vehicle + pass inspection, 30-day window
- 2 Get a Hawaii driver's license
- 3 Receive HHG and vehicle, unpack
- 4 Sign a lease or close on a home

■ WHICH CLOCK APPLIES TO YOU

3-4

WEEKS · TYPICAL DOOR-TO-DOOR MOVE IF YOU'RE PAYING YOUR OWN WAY

60-90+

DAYS · TYPICAL SURFACE HHG SHIPMENT IF YOU'RE MOVING UNDER ORDERS

4+

MONTHS · LEAD TIME YOU ACTUALLY NEED IF YOU'RE BRINGING A PET

The single biggest mistake: assuming a Hawaii move behaves like any other mainland move and booking things two to three weeks out. Ocean freight, vehicle shipping, and pet clearance all run on longer, fixed clocks that don't compress no matter how much you're willing to pay at the last minute. Start the sections ahead of you now, not the week you leave.

■ TWO PATHS TO HAWAII

How your household actually gets here depends on whether you're moving on your own or under orders, but the ocean-freight clock applies either way.

MOVING ON YOUR OWN

- 1 Get quotes from full-service movers, or book directly with Matson or Pasha Hawaii
- 2 Book 4–6 weeks ahead, summer sells out fastest
- 3 Choose shared (LCL) space or a dedicated container
- 4 Budget roughly 3–4 weeks door-to-door total

MOVING ON ORDERS

- 1 Schedule your HHG move through DPS
- 2 Consider a partial PPM for anything you want sooner
- 3 Ship a small unaccompanied baggage (UB) load for essentials
- 4 Budget the full move: surface HHG commonly runs 60–90+ days

■ WHAT IT COSTS & TAKES

Starting estimates only, get a current quote before you budget against these.

SHIPPING METHOD	TYPICAL COST	TRANSIT
Shared / LCL container space	From ≈\$2,900	3–4 wks
Dedicated 20-ft container	From ≈\$11,000	3–4 wks
Dedicated 40-ft container	From ≈\$16,000	3–4 wks
Military surface HHG (on orders)	No direct cost	60–90+ days

Plan for the gap, not just the shipment. Whichever path you're on, expect weeks without your furniture. Unaccompanied baggage (UB) covers the essentials for a military move; everyone else typically bridges the gap with Facebook Marketplace, base or local thrift stores, or a quick IKEA run. Don't sign a lease assuming your couch will beat you there.

■ TWO THINGS WORTH DOING BEFORE IT SHIPS

■ PHOTO-DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Walk through and photograph or video every room, closet, and high-value item before the movers touch anything. It's the single easiest thing to skip and the one you'll wish you hadn't if a claim comes up.

■ CONFIRM FULL-VALUE PROTECTION

Standard released-value coverage pays pennies on the dollar for damage or loss. Ask specifically about full-value protection, especially for a long ocean crossing, and keep a written inventory separate from the movers' copy.

■ TWO PATHS, SAME OCEAN

Every vehicle bound for Oahu crosses the Pacific the same way, on a carrier, not on a truck. Who's paying for it depends on your situation.

SHIPPING IT YOURSELF

- 1 Get quotes from Matson or Pasha Hawaii directly
- 2 Drop off at a mainland port: Long Beach, Oakland, or Tacoma
- 3 Vehicle must pass agricultural inspection before release
- 4 Typical cost: roughly \$1,200–\$2,500 for a sedan or SUV

SHIPPING ON ORDERS

- 1 Book through PCSmyPOV, 2–6 weeks ahead
- 2 One vehicle typically ships at no cost to you
- 3 Pick up on Oahu near Honolulu once it clears
- 4 Confirm your installation's current VPC process before you leave

Budget 2–4 weeks door-to-door either way. Ocean transit itself typically runs 1–3 weeks, with port processing adding time on both ends. Hawaii's agricultural inspection is strict, arrange a wash beforehand so a dirty undercarriage or tires don't hold your car at the port.

■ THE SECOND VEHICLE QUESTION

■ SHIP IT

Same process and cost range as above, doubled. Worth it if you need two vehicles from day one and don't want to buy sight-unseen.

■ BUY LOCALLY

Oahu's used market carries a real island premium, but you skip the shipping cost and wait entirely. Common for a household's second car.

■ GO ONE-CAR FOR NOW

Lean on rental, Turo, or TheBus for a stretch and decide once you know your actual commute and routine.

Line up Hawaii auto insurance before the car lands. Hawaii requires no-fault coverage, and you'll need proof of insurance in hand at the DMV counter when you register. Get a quote and have the policy ready to activate the same week your vehicle clears the port, not after.

GETTING AROUND UNTIL YOUR CAR ARRIVES

RENTAL CAR VS. TURO

RENTAL CAR

Familiar and simple, but Oahu's rental market gets expensive and can sell out entirely during peak summer moving season. Book as far ahead as you book your flight, not after you land.

TURO

Peer-to-peer car sharing, often meaningfully cheaper for a multi-week stretch and more likely to have availability when rental counters are sold out. Check the host's insurance coverage and mileage limits before booking a several-week rental.

Book your interim wheels the same week you book your flight. The same seasonal crunch that empties out household-goods shipping capacity also empties out Oahu's rental fleet, arriving without a reservation in June through August is a real risk, not a hypothetical one.

PUBLIC TRANSIT & RIDESHARE

100+

THEBUS ROUTES · ISLAND-WIDE
COVERAGE

\$3

HOLO CARD FARE · PER RIDE, 2.5-HR
FREE TRANSFERS, \$7.50 DAILY CAP

2031

SKYLINE RAIL TARGET · FOR THE
SEGMENT REACHING DOWNTOWN

TheBus is Oahu's core public transit system and a genuinely usable option for daily errands once you're settled. Skyline rail currently runs East Kapolei to Kalihi, it does not yet reach the airport, downtown, or Waikiki, so don't plan an arrival-week routine around it. Uber and Lyft both operate island-wide and are a reasonable fill-in for one-off trips.

DRIVING ON OAHU, A QUICK ORIENTATION

Distances on a map are deceiving here. The island runs on three highways, H-1, H-2, and H-3, and there's no way around traffic during commute windows, a 10-mile drive can easily run 40 minutes at the wrong time of day. Build real buffer into any arrival-week plans, and expect a more relaxed pace behind the wheel than the mainland, letting people merge and waving a thank-you goes a long way here.

This is the single most common thing that derails a move. Hawaii is rabies-free and enforces one of the strictest pet entry programs in the country. Miss one step in the timeline below and your dog or cat can sit in quarantine, at your expense, while you're already unpacking.

■ WHAT THE 5-DAY-OR-LESS / DIRECT AIRPORT RELEASE PROGRAMS REQUIRE

■ TWO RABIES VACCINATIONS

At least 30 days apart, with the most recent dose completed well before your travel date.

■ A PASSING OIE-FAVN TITER TEST

Blood test confirming rabies antibody levels. Valid for 36 months from the lab's receipt date.

■ A MICROCHIP

Required for identification and matched to all submitted paperwork.

■ FORM AQS-279 & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Filed through the Hawaii Pet Owner Portal (HIPOP), needs to arrive at least 10 days before your pet does to qualify for expedited release.

■ WHAT IT COSTS

≈\$185

DIRECT AIRPORT RELEASE ·
HONOLULU, FULLY COMPLIANT
PAPERWORK

≈\$244

5-DAY-OR-LESS · SHORT
QUARANTINE STAY

≈\$165

NEIGHBOR ISLAND INSPECTION · IF
LANDING OUTSIDE OAHU

Start this 4+ months before you travel. The 30-day gap between vaccinations, the titer test, and lab turnaround stack up fast, and non-compliant paperwork triggers higher fees plus daily holding charges of roughly \$14–\$18. Confirm current requirements and fees directly at dab.hawaii.gov before you book anything, this is one area where a quick call to Team Raja That or the Animal Industry Division beats guessing.

WHERE TO STAY WHEN YOU LAND

■ INTERIM LODGING OPTIONS

■ MILITARY: TLA

Hawaii still qualifies for Temporary Lodging Allowance, up to 60 days on arrival plus 10 on departure, since Hawaii is treated as OCONUS for travel allowance purposes. Note the distinction: housing itself runs on standard BAH, not OHA, TLA is only the arrival-window lodging benefit.

■ MILITARY: ON-INSTALLATION BILLETING

Air Force Inns and Navy Gateway Inns & Suites offer arrival-week rooms on-installation, book as early as your orders allow.

■ MILITARY: OFF-BASE TLA-APPROVED HOTELS

The Hale Koa, a military-only Armed Forces Recreation Center hotel in Waikiki, is one option, but there are many TLA-approved hotels off-installation as well. Your sponsor should be sending you options and helping you book, that's part of their job. If you want a second set of eyes or need more help sorting through it, we're happy to step in.

■ EVERYONE: EXTENDED STAY OR CORPORATE HOUSING

The straightforward option for a multi-week stay while you house-hunt, priced by the week or month rather than nightly.

■ EVERYONE: A LEGALLY ZONED SHORT-TERM RENTAL

Only a fraction of Oahu is zoned for stays under 90 days. Book something explicitly listed for a 30+ night stay, or confirm the property sits in a resort zone or holds an active NUC, before you count on it as a short arrival stay.

Time your interim lodging against your HHG delivery window, not the calendar. The most expensive mistake here is paying for lodging and an empty house at the same time because the shipment landed early, or paying for lodging well past your move-in because it landed late. Build in a buffer week on each side rather than booking to the day.

■ RENTING FIRST VS. BUYING IMMEDIATELY

■ RENT FIRST

Buys you time to learn neighborhoods, commute patterns, and school zones before committing. The right call if you're not certain how long you'll be stationed here or which side of the island fits your life.

■ BUY IMMEDIATELY

Can make sense if you've done your homework already, VA buyers especially benefit from locking in a purchase early rather than paying rent on top of a mortgage later. Worth a conversation before you land, not after.

Either path, this is exactly the kind of decision worth talking through before you're standing in a rental office making it under pressure. Reach out and we'll walk through what fits your timeline.

SETTLING IN: LICENSE, REGISTRATION & UTILITIES

■ YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS CHECKLIST

What to knock out once you've landed, roughly in order.

- ☐ Register your vehicle within 30 days of establishing Oahu residency, a current Hawaii safety inspection is required first (about \$25.75, no smog check, renews annually).
- ☐ Get a Hawaii driver's license. New residents are commonly cited around the same 30-day window, confirm the exact current deadline with the DMV rather than assuming.
- ☐ Set up Hawaiian Electric (HECO), Oahu's sole electric provider, service typically activates with about one business day's notice.
- ☐ Set up water through the Honolulu Board of Water Supply.
- ☐ Set up internet: Spectrum (cable) or Hawaiian Telcom (fiber, expanding) are the two main providers, Starlink is a growing backup in underserved areas.
- ☐ Update your mailing address, forward mail, and open a local bank account if you want one.
- ☐ If you're moving on orders, connect with your gaining command's sponsor before you even leave, not after you land.

MOVING TO OAHU?

LET'S BUILD YOUR TIMELINE BEFORE YOU BOOK ANYTHING

Every family's move looks different, orders vs. no orders, pets vs. none, renting vs. buying. Reach out and we'll map your actual timeline against this playbook before you lock in dates.

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