



National Farmworker Jobs Program- Hawai'i

The NFJP is an employment and training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and is 100% Federally funded.

Aloha! From the Hawai'i NFJP Team

Aloha from Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO) and the NFJP Team! What is the NFJP? The NFJP has been around since 1964 under the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The program assists migrant and seasonal farmworkers AND their families attain greater economic stability. The program helps farmworkers acquire the skills they need to retain agricultural jobs or start new careers. MEO is the only grantee in Hawaii, therefore, we service ALL islands.

What does NFJP do?

Career Services - including outreach, skills assessment, labor market information, job search, program eligibility determination and placement assistance, individual employment plans developed through a case management-based service strategy, group and individual counseling, and short term pre-vocational services, such as workplace readiness training. Migrant seasonal farm workers (MSFWs) can also access the other services of the American Job Center.

Training Services - including occupational skills and job training, on-the-job training opportunities, programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, skills upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, and other training activities.

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What does NFJP do?

Youth Services – including tutoring, dropout prevention, paid and unpaid work experiences, occupational skills training, certain education and leadership development opportunities, mentoring, comprehensive guidance and counseling, financial literacy training, and entrepreneurial skills training.

Related Assistance Services - including short-term direct assistance that helps farmworkers and their family members to retain their agricultural employment or to participate in intensive or training services.

Housing Assistance - helps to meet a critical need for the availability and quality of farmworker housing, and supports better economic outcomes for MSFWs and their families. Housing assistance includes direct payments for emergency and temporary housing and for direct investments in housing assistance for MSFWs at their permanent residence. Other indirect assistance includes leveraging services to increase or maintain housing stock available to farmworkers and housing development designed to improve living conditions for underserved farmworker communities.

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“Having the support and encouragement from my case manager helped me become confident in myself to follow my dreams and excel in everything I did! Thank you NFJP—I couldn't have done it without you!”

How to properly wear a mask during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on your mask.
- Put the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fit the mask snugly against the sides of your face, slipping the loops over your ears or tying the strings behind your head.
- If you have to continually adjust your mask, it doesn't fit properly, and you might need to find a different mask type or brand.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.

5 Farm Safety Tips for Spring

Spring is a busy season for Hawaii farms, and there is no better time to keep safety in mind. Follow these five farm safety tips to ensure a successful transition to summer break.

1. Avoid driving tractors and ATVs on the road at dawn and dusk.

This is the peak time for drivers commuting to and from work. If you must be on the road, make sure your equipment has plenty of reflective material, use your headlights, wear your seatbelt and carry your license and insurance cards. When possible, have a friend or family member act as an escort vehicle.

2. Watch where you step.

It's not just the cow pies in the field you should watch out for. When working in potentially risky spaces like manure pits, grain bins or logging areas, pay extra attention to your surroundings to avoid dangerous gases, loose footing or falling hazards.

3. Follow the label.

Whether you are working with pesticides, vaccinations or fertilizers, always follow the label exactly. Be sure to wear the proper personal protective equipment, handle and store materials appropriately, and keep all supplies away from young children.

4. Create a Farm Aid Kit.

While many farmers keep duct tape and baling twine handy during the spring, adding a few other materials can create an essential Farm Aid Kit. Grab a travel bag and add a fire extinguisher, bottles of water and basic first aid materials. Keep an information card on hand that includes emergency contact numbers as well as written directions on how to get to the farm, field and other work areas.

5. Take care of yourself.

Long hours in the field can lead many farmers to neglect basic self-care. Make eating regular meals and getting an adequate amount of sleep priorities this spring to prevent careless accidents. As the temperatures rise, remember to stay hydrated both in and out of the field.



Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs Excellence Award– Agricultural

The NFJP recognizes both farmworkers and employers for their work toward the betterment of their employees and the community. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, MEO nominated Kauai Coffee for its amazing contributions. Below is the nomination that awarded national recognition to Kauai Coffee.

As an employer, Kauai Coffee has a long history in Hawai'i and works with the community to create a culture where everyone feels like 'ohana (family). Kauai Coffee works with its staff to ensure a great sense of pride in the work that is being done and is evident in the product that is being produced. They partner with many organizations including The Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade International which supports closing the coffee gender gap worldwide efforts and certifying that Kauai Coffee meets global sustainability standards. Kauai Coffee staff have the ability to grow within the company and the average employee at Kauai Coffee has a minimum tenure of at least 10 years.

As a partner to the Hawaii NFJP, Kauai Coffee has exhibited its commitment to its employees in so many ways. Recognizing the opportunities and resources available in the community, Kauai Coffee's Admin and HR team are constantly referring their staff to resources that can assist them.

When meeting with NFJP clients employed with Kauai Coffee, the HR and administrative team make it a point to reserve a conference room where programs' staff are able to meet with their clients in confidence. Kauai Coffee also allows its staff to meet with the program staff during work hours as part of their career development. They are dedicated to providing an environment where staff can openly communicate their concerns personal or professional and feel heard. Kauai Coffee is constantly recruiting new clients for the NFJP Program as they recognize the opportunities their employees can benefit from through the program. Kauai Coffee understands that through their partnership with the NFJP in conjunction with their staff development allows Kauai Coffee to build its capacity as well. Several NFJP clients are in the pathway from pickers and roasters to master welders and electricians made possible through internal internships.

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CURRENT EVENTS:

Relating to the Transfer of Non Agricultural Park Lands

The Department of Land and Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture to meet and identify the non-agricultural park lands that should be rezoned as those in the conservation district, requires that agricultural lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources be transferred to the Department of Agriculture not later than 12/31/2023, requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture to meet every five years to discuss transferring remaining lands, and requires the Department of Agriculture to inquire about any easements needed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources before offering a lease.

The intent of Act 90 SLH 2003 was to ensure the long-term productive use of agricultural lands across the islands by transferring them to DOA, which is better equipped to manage agricultural lands. Nearly 18 years later, farmers and ranchers are still waiting for Act 90 SLH 2003 to be fully implemented. The success of ranchers and farmers is critical to the State's goal to double local food production. We believe that DOA is the agency best structured to advance agriculture and make it practical for producers to succeed and provide our communities with what they need. For example, under DOA, lands are appraised on their agricultural value while under DLNR, lands are auctioned for lease at the highest rates possible, which is typically unaffordable for farmers and ranchers. Additionally, DOA's long-term leases make it possible for farmers and ranchers to prudently invest in infrastructure improvement and resource conservation on the leased land.



AFOP Cont.

Kauai Coffee is dedicated to providing equal opportunities for all and celebrates women and their contributions to the global coffee economy, which is often overlooked. In November 2018, Kauai Coffee and its staff were recognized by the State of Hawai'i with the Vocational Rehab Award for their work with the deaf and hearing impaired. Kauai Coffee offers on-the-job training and employment opportunities to all its employees and partners with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) employing clients with specific learning disabilities, physical impairments, deafness and mental illness.

Kauai Coffee is so deserving of the Employer Excellence Award because of its commitment and understanding that if its employees are provided for, heard and given opportunities to better themselves, that it will be reflected through their work. They understand the importance of supporting the "whole person" rather than just the employee which is evident in their staff members' years of service and over 200 years in existence since its first crops with sugar cane under its former name, the McBride Sugar Company.

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