



# BBB News Release

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## **BBB ALERT: BUSINESS COMPLIANCE SOLICITATIONS**

Honolulu (February 26, 2015) – Hawaii’s Better Business Bureau® (BBB) and the Business Registration Division of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) want to warn local businesses about solicitations being sent out by Annual Business Services, a Florida based company with 27 complaints and a BBB rating of F.

Annual Business Services has been sending mailings to a number of businesses in Hawaii, urging them to fill out an included form and to send Annual Business Services \$125 to process the form. The mailings cite Hawaii statutes and appear so “official” that a number of Hawaii businesses have already mistaken them as official state notices..

Even though the company is located in Florida, the solicitation lists a return address of:

1050 Bishop St., Ste. 167  
Honolulu, HI. 96813

The address is a local mail box drop. The local address along with the form and content of its mailings have caused confusion that the mailing is an official correspondence from the State of Hawaii, when, in fact, it is not.

We are alerting the public to be wary of the Annual Business Services solicitations. The mailings are confusing in form, tone and information. The company is also not legally transacting business in the State since it has not registered with the Business Registration Division at the DCCA or the Hawaii Department of Taxation.

*“They are targeting newly registered LLCs who may not be aware of the rules they need to follow,”* Said Gregory D. Dunn, CEO of Hawaii’s BBB. *“We are encouraging businesses to read solicitations carefully to determine if they are from a government agency and require a response.”*

When reading the fine print, there are subtle variations of language that state Annual Business Services is not a government agency. Some solicitations do not include headings that appear to come from the state, but they include details about the entity, officers and directors and warnings about penalties and fines that could lead the recipient to believe they are official.

*"We want to dispel the confusion. The State requires corporations, partnerships and LLCs to file only annual reports, never minutes," said Tung Chan, the head of the state's Business Registration Division. "In addition, annual filings in Hawaii are actually very easy and inexpensive to do directly with the State. Hawaii has one of the best online business filing sites in the country. If you have your file number, you can renew your annual filing in under 5 minutes and it costs \$15, not \$125."*

The state's Business Registration Division does not send out mailings promoting the services of Annual Business Services or any other independent third-party filer. Businesses can send annual filings to the Business Registration Division via postal mail or through the [online government portal at hbe.ehawaii.gov/annuals](http://hbe.ehawaii.gov/annuals).

If you are ever unsure about the legitimacy of a notice you receive regarding business filings, we strongly encourage you to check with BBB and the state's Business Registration Division before responding to the notice. If your business has been misled by Annual Business Services, you can file a complaint with Hawaii's BBB at [bbb.org](http://bbb.org) or call 808.536.6956.

For more than 100 years, Better Business Bureau has been helping people find businesses, brands and charities they can trust. In 2013, people turned to BBB more than 132 million times for BBB Business Reviews on more than 4.5 million businesses and Charity Reports on 11,000 charities, all available for free at [bbb.org](http://bbb.org). The Council of Better Business Bureaus is the umbrella organization for 112 local, independent BBBs across North America, as well as home to its national programs on dispute resolution, advertising review, and industry self-regulation

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