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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WOMEN'S COURT.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there has been a  
2 significant increase in the number of women in Hawaii jails and  
3 prisons over the past forty years, resulting in a higher  
4 proportion of women who are incarcerated. Research reflects  
5 that for women, histories of abuse, trauma, poverty, mental  
6 illness, substance use disorders, and unhealthy relationships  
7 intersect with their entry into criminal behavior. Women  
8 offenders also face unique barriers to success after  
9 incarceration. They are more likely to be primary caregivers  
10 for young children, have lower educational attainment, lack  
11 stable work history, and experience economic or social  
12 marginalization, which prevents them from having more positive  
13 outcomes.

14           The purpose of this Act is to establish a three-year  
15 women's court pilot program in the circuit court of the first  
16 circuit, which is intended to acknowledge the distinct pathways



1 that lead women into the criminal justice system and address  
2 their individualized needs.

3 SECTION 2. (a) There is established within the first  
4 circuit of the judiciary the women's court pilot program. The  
5 pilot program shall implement trauma-informed and evidence-based  
6 practices, employ gender-responsive programming, collaborate  
7 with stakeholders, and provide services to women in the court  
8 system with the goal of diverting participants from  
9 incarceration, supporting their success in the community, and  
10 reducing recidivism.

11 (b) The services offered by the program shall address the  
12 following areas:

- 13 (1) Trauma and mental health treatment;
- 14 (2) Family support, including parenting, education, and  
15 relationship improvement;
- 16 (3) Life-skills training;
- 17 (4) Education and vocational training;
- 18 (5) Domestic violence prevention;
- 19 (6) Medical services and health education;
- 20 (7) Substance abuse detection, prevention, and treatment;
- 21 (8) Mentoring; and



1 (9) Housing support.

2 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
3 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
4 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for  
5 equipment; mental health, substance abuse treatment, and other  
6 services; and the establishment of seven temporary positions as  
7 follows:

8 (1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) social worker V  
9 position (\$ );

10 (2) Four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) social worker IV  
11 positions (\$ each);

12 (3) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) circuit court clerk  
13 II position (\$ ); and

14 (4) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) judicial clerk  
15 position (\$ );

16 for the women's court pilot program established pursuant to  
17 section 2 of this Act.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary for  
19 the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 4. The judiciary shall submit a report of its  
21 findings and recommendations, including any proposed



1 legislation, to the governor and the legislature no later than  
2 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of  
3 2023, 2024, and 2025, regarding:

- 4 (1) The status of the women's court pilot program;
- 5 (2) The number of women accepted into the pilot program;
- 6 (3) The number of women who were eligible to participate  
7 in the pilot program but who could not be accepted  
8 into the program because of program limitations;
- 9 (4) The number of women completing the pilot program;
- 10 (5) The number of women who were removed from the pilot  
11 program; and
- 12 (6) Recommendations as to whether the women's court pilot  
13 program should:
  - 14 (A) Continue as a pilot program;
  - 15 (B) Expand to include additional participants;
  - 16 (C) Provide additional services; or
  - 17 (D) Be discontinued.

18 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022, and  
19 shall be repealed on June 30, 2025.

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# H.B. NO. 2421 H.D. 1

**Report Title:**

Women's Court Pilot Program; Temporary Positions; Report;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a three-year women's court pilot program within the judiciary's first circuit. Establishes temporary positions. Requires a report. Appropriates funds. Repeals 6/30/2025.  
(HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

