
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE LANDLORD TENANT CODE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that rental housing is a
2 vital source of housing for many working families and residents
3 in Hawaii, with 38.2 per cent of Hawaii residents living as
4 renters, according to the University of Hawaii economic research
5 organization's 2024 Hawaii Housing Factbook. Increasing the
6 availability of rental housing is essential to addressing
7 Hawaii's housing shortage and ensuring stability for residents.

8 The legislature further finds that landlord-tenant
9 relationships are governed by various federal and state laws,
10 which require clear understanding and compliance to ensure fair
11 and equitable treatment for landlords and tenants. The
12 increasing complexity of these laws and navigating the court
13 process can also create difficulties for landlords and tenants.

14 The legislature further finds that making improvements to
15 the Residential Landlord-Tenant Code may help landlords have
16 more certainty and confidence in their ability to rent their
17 properties and provide Hawaii residents with much needed



1 housing. In addition, clarifying the Residential Landlord-
2 Tenant Code will reduce the number of cases that are brought to
3 court, thus alleviating the burden placed on the judicial
4 system.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
6 three-year working group to research and improve the Residential
7 Landlord-Tenant Code and address any other relevant landlord-
8 tenant issues and provide an opportunity for collaboration among
9 key stakeholders to identify concerns, evaluate potential
10 solutions, and recommend best practices for the State's rental
11 housing market.

12 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a three-year
13 residential landlord-tenant code working group within the
14 department of the attorney general to:

- 15 (1) Evaluate the challenges faced by landlords and
16 tenants, including legal, financial, and procedural
17 issues that are barriers to offering or obtaining
18 rental housing;
- 19 (2) Identify best practices and potential Residential
20 Landlord-Tenant Code or other regulatory improvements
21 for property managers, property owners, and tenants;



- 1 (3) Determine problem areas that impact property managers,
2 property owners, and tenants and whether educational
3 resources or other solutions can help address those
4 challenges; and
- 5 (4) Explore any other feasible ideas or relevant
6 solutions, pursuant to the discretion of the working
7 group.
- 8 (b) The working group shall consist of the following
9 members:
- 10 (1) The attorney general, or the attorney general's
11 designee, who shall serve as the chairperson of the
12 working group;
- 13 (2) The president of the senate, or the president's
14 designee;
- 15 (3) The speaker of the house of representatives, or the
16 speaker's designee;
- 17 (4) A representative from the judiciary with experience in
18 landlord-tenant cases;
- 19 (5) An attorney specializing in landlord-tenant laws, to
20 be invited by the chairperson;



- 1 (6) One member who owns and manages a property, but is not
2 a real estate licensee, to be invited by the
3 chairperson;
- 4 (7) Two members from organizations representing
5 professional property managers, to be invited as
6 follows:
 - 7 (A) One member to be invited by the president of the
8 senate, or the president's designee; and
 - 9 (B) One member to be invited by the speaker of the
10 house of representatives, or the speaker's
11 designee;
- 12 (8) Two members from organizations representing tenant
13 concerns, to be invited as follows:
 - 14 (A) One member to be invited by the president of the
15 senate, or the president's designee; and
 - 16 (B) One member to be invited by the speaker of the
17 house of representatives, or the speaker's
18 designee; and
- 19 (9) Any other member deemed necessary by the working group
20 who provides the appropriate special expertise,
21 including representatives from organizations with



1 experience in landlord or tenant issues, upon approval
2 by the chairperson.

3 (c) The members of the working group shall serve without
4 compensation.

5 (d) No member of the working group shall be subject to
6 chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, solely because of the
7 member's participation in the working group.

8 (e) The working group shall submit an initial report of
9 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
10 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
11 to the convening of the regular session of 2026, and a final
12 report of its findings and recommendations, including any
13 proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than July 1,
14 2028.

15 (f) An initial meeting of the working group shall be
16 convened no later than July 1, 2025.

17 (g) The working group shall be dissolved on July 1, 2028.

18 SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
19 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
20 begun before its effective date.



1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Landlord-Tenant Code; Working Group; Department of the Attorney General; Reports

Description:

Establishes a three-year Residential Landlord-Tenant Code Working Group within the Department of the Attorney General. Requires an initial report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026 and a final report no later than 7/1/2028. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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