

ACT 231

H.B. NO. 399

A Bill for an Act Relating to District Court Judges.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 604-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§604-1 Judicial circuits; district judges; sessions. [(a)] There shall be established in each of the judicial circuits of the State a district court with the powers and under the conditions herein set forth, which shall be styled as follows:

- (1) For the First Judicial Circuit: The District Court of the First Circuit~~[-];~~
- (2) For the Second Judicial Circuit: The District Court of the Second Circuit~~[-];~~
- (3) For the Third Judicial Circuit: The District Court of the Third Circuit~~[-];~~ and
- (4) For the Fifth Judicial Circuit: The District Court of the Fifth Circuit.

~~[(b)]~~ There shall be appointed one or more district judges for each judicial circuit. The district court of the first circuit shall consist of ~~[fourteen]~~ fifteen judges, who shall be styled as first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, ~~[and]~~ fourteenth, and fifteenth judge, respectively. One of the district judges shall hear landlord-tenant and small claims matters~~[-];~~ provided that when in the discretion of the chief justice of the supreme court the urgency or volume of cases so requires, the chief justice may authorize the judge to substitute for or act in addition to or otherwise in place of any other district judge of the district court of the first circuit. The district court of the second circuit shall consist of three judges, who shall be styled as first, second, and third judge, respectively. The district court of the third circuit shall consist of three judges, who shall be styled as first, second, and third judge, respectively. The district court of the fifth circuit shall consist of two judges who shall be styled as first and second judge, respectively. The chief justice may designate a judge in each circuit as the administrative judge for the circuit.

~~[(c)]~~ The district courts shall hold sessions at ~~[such places]~~ any place in their respective circuits and as often as the respective district judges deem essential to the promotion of justice.”

SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 26, 2025.)