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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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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)

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

