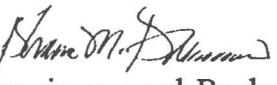


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January 13, 2026

MEMO TO: WASSP-1(15) File

F R O M: Shane M. Sinenci, Chair 
Water Authority, Social Services, and Parks Committee

SUBJECT: **TRANSMITTAL OF INFORMATIONAL DOCUMENT RELATING TO
UPDATE ON EVICTION MEDIATION AND RELATED SOCIAL
SERVICES (WASSP-1(15))**

The attached informational document pertains to Item 1(15) on the Committee's agenda.

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Attachment

Approved by the Governor

on JUL 2 2025

THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025
STATE OF HAWAII

ACT 278

S.B. NO.

825
S.D. 2
H.D. 2
C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EVICTION MEDIATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many Hawaii
2 residents continue to face challenges paying their rent. This
3 is a problem for both housing providers and tenants because
4 tenants risk losing their homes due to nonpayment, and housing
5 providers risk losing their property or not keeping up with
6 their bills because of the nonpayment.

7 Act 57, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021 (Act 57), encouraged
8 communication and facilitated mediation between housing
9 providers and tenants to help encourage collaborative solutions
10 to this common problem and to avoid evictions when possible.
11 Experience shows that the mediation procedures created by Act 57
12 were widely successful in substantially increasing the number of
13 disputes that were settled in mediation without any eviction
14 cases being filed and increased the number of settlements in
15 which the parties agreed that the tenant could continue to
16 reside in the dwelling unit. However, the amendments to the
17 Residential Landlord-Tenant Code by Act 57 have expired.



1 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to encourage
2 landlords and tenants to engage in conversations early, as soon
3 as tenants know they are not able to make their full rent
4 payment, by:

5 (1) Establishing a two-year pilot program that adopts the
6 most effective provisions of Act 57 that:

7 (A) Extends the period for a notice of termination of
8 the rental agreement from five business days to
9 ten calendar days;

10 (B) Requires all landlords, or landlords' agents, and
11 tenants to engage in early mediation and delay
12 filing an action for summary possession if a
13 tenant schedules mediation;

14 (C) Requires landlords, or landlords' agents, and
15 tenants to be responsible for their own
16 attorneys' fees and costs in prelitigation
17 mediation, and allows the landlord or landlord's
18 agent to file an action for summary possession
19 and payment of all attorneys' fees and costs
20 incurred in the prelitigation mediation process

1 if the tenant defaults on a mediated agreement;

2 and

3 (D) Requires landlords and landlords' agents to

4 provide specific information in the

5 ten-calendar-day notice to tenants, which shall

6 also be provided to a mediation center that

7 offers free mediation for residential

8 landlord-tenant disputes; and

9 (2) Appropriating funds to the judiciary for the

10 prelitigation mediation pilot program.

11 SECTION 2. Section 521-68, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended to read as follows:

13 **"§521-68 Landlord's remedies for failure by tenant to pay**

14 **rent**~~[-]~~**; prelitigation mediation**. (a) A landlord or the

15 landlord's agent ~~[may]~~, any time after rent is due, may demand

16 payment thereof and notify the tenant in writing that unless

17 payment is made within a time mentioned in the notice, not less

18 than ~~[five business]~~ ten calendar days after receipt thereof,

19 the rental agreement will be terminated. ~~[If the tenant cannot~~

20 ~~be served with notice as required, notice]~~ Notice may be given

21 to the tenant by posting the same in a conspicuous place on the



1 dwelling unit[-], and the notice shall be deemed received on the
2 date of the posting. If the notice is mailed to the tenant by
3 United States Postal Service, properly addressed and with
4 appropriate postage, the notice shall be deemed to have been
5 received two business days after the date of the postmark,
6 unless the letter is returned to the landlord or landlord's
7 agent as undeliverable. If the tenant remains in default[?]
8 after the expiration of the time stated in the notice, the
9 landlord may [thereafter] bring a summary proceeding for
10 possession of the dwelling unit or any other proper proceeding,
11 action, or suit for possession[-], subject to this section. The
12 notice required by this section need not be given if the action
13 is based on the breach of a mediated agreement or other
14 settlement agreement, or is for a summary proceeding for
15 possession based on matters other than nonpayment of rent. In
16 any action based on the breach of a mediated agreement, the
17 court shall not require any further mediation before trial.

18 (b) The ten-calendar-day notice required under subsection
19 (a) shall include the following:
20 (1) The name of the landlord or landlord's agent and the
21 landlord's or landlord's agent's contact information,



1 including, if possible, phone number, electronic mail
2 address, and mailing address;
3 (2) The address of the dwelling unit subject to the rental
4 agreement;
5 (3) The name and contact information of all tenants listed
6 on the rental agreement, including phone number and,
7 if possible, electronic mail address and mailing
8 address;
9 (4) The current amount of the rent due as of the date of
10 the notice, after applying all rent paid from all
11 sources;
12 (5) Notice that a copy of the ten-calendar-day notice
13 being provided to the tenant is also being provided to
14 a state-funded mediation center for the mediation
15 center to contact the landlord, or landlord's agent,
16 and tenant to schedule a mediation regarding the
17 nonpayment of rent in accordance with subsection (c);
18 (6) Notice that the landlord or landlord's agent may file
19 an action for summary possession if the rent due is
20 not paid and if mediation is not scheduled within ten
21 calendar days after the tenant's receipt of the

1 ten-calendar-day notice, regardless of whether the
2 scheduled mediation session occurs within the ten
3 calendar days;

4 (7) A warning in bold typeface print in substantially the
5 following form: "If mediation is not scheduled within
6 ten calendar days after receipt of this notice,
7 regardless of whether the scheduled mediation session
8 occurs within the ten-calendar-day period, the
9 landlord or landlord's agent may file an action for
10 summary possession after the expiration of the
11 ten-calendar-day period. If mediation is scheduled
12 before the expiration of the ten-calendar-day period,
13 regardless of whether the scheduled mediation session
14 occurs within the ten calendar days, the landlord or
15 landlord's agent shall only file an action for summary
16 possession after the expiration of twenty calendar
17 days following the tenant's receipt of the
18 ten-calendar-day notice unless you (tenant) fail to
19 attend or cancel mediation. If the ten-calendar-day
20 notice was posted on the premises, receipt of notice
21 shall be deemed to be the date of posting. If the



1 ten-calendar-day notice was mailed, receipt of notice
2 shall be deemed to be two business days after the date
3 of the postmark. If filing an action for summary
4 possession, the landlord or landlord's agent shall be
5 required to note, in the summary possession complaint,
6 the status of the mediation or settlement effort and
7 proof of posting or sending the ten-calendar-day
8 notice to the mediation center."; and
9 (8) Notice that the landlord or landlord's agent shall
10 engage in mediation if mediation is scheduled.
11 The judiciary shall prepare a notice form that may be used
12 by landlords and landlords' agents to provide the information
13 required by this subsection and make the form available on its
14 website.
15 (c) A landlord or the landlord's agent shall provide the
16 ten-calendar-day notice to a state-funded mediation center that
17 offers free mediation for residential landlord-tenant matters.
18 All state-funded mediation centers shall offer mediation
19 services to landlords, or landlords' agents, and tenants through
20 in-person and remote means, and shall allow mediation
21 participants to utilize remote appearances, if requested. If a



1 mediation center schedules mediation within the ten-calendar-day
2 period and the tenant participates in the mediation, regardless
3 of whether the scheduled mediation session occurs within the
4 ten-calendar-day period, the landlord or landlord's agent shall
5 only file a summary possession proceeding after the expiration
6 of twenty calendar days from the date of the tenant's receipt of
7 the ten-calendar-day notice, unless the tenant fails to appear
8 at mediation or cancels the mediation. If the tenant schedules
9 mediation, the landlord or landlord's agent shall participate.
10 Mediation shall take place within thirty days from the date that
11 the mediation center makes contact with both the landlord, or
12 the landlord's agent, and tenant. Upon request by the landlord
13 or landlord's agent, the mediation center shall provide copies
14 of a document or documents verifying that the landlord or
15 landlord's agent provided a copy of the required
16 ten-calendar-day notice to the mediation center.

17 (d) The summary possession complaint for nonpayment of
18 rent shall include:

19 (1) A document or documents from the state-funded
20 mediation center verifying that the landlord or
21 landlord's agent provided a copy of the required



1 ten-calendar-day notice to the mediation center or an
2 affirmation from the landlord or landlord's agent that
3 the notice was provided to the applicable mediation
4 center and the means by which the notice was provided
5 to the applicable mediation center. Upon request by
6 the landlord or landlord's agent, the mediation center
7 shall provide copies of the relevant documents to the
8 landlord or landlord's agent; and

9 (2) If mediation is scheduled but has not yet occurred,
10 the date on which the mediation is scheduled.

11 (e) If there is any defect in the ten-calendar-day notice
12 described in subsection (b) provided by the landlord or
13 landlord's agent and the court determines the defect was
14 unintentional or immaterial, the court may allow the landlord or
15 landlord's agent to cure the defect without dismissing the
16 action for summary possession.

17 (f) Nothing in this section shall impact a landlord's or
18 tenant's other rights and responsibilities under this chapter.

19 (g) The mediation may take place using remote
20 communication, in person, or both.



1 (h) Each landlord and tenant shall be responsible for
2 bearing the party's own costs, including attorneys' fees,
3 relating to the mediation; provided that if the tenant defaults
4 on a mediated agreement or fails to attend a scheduled
5 mediation, the landlord or landlord's agent may request payment
6 of all costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred
7 during the pre-litigation mediation process.

8 (i) If the mediation does not result in an agreement, the
9 landlord or the landlord's agent may file an action for summary
10 possession without participating in an additional mediation;
11 provided that:

12 (1) The landlord or landlord's agent shall only file a
13 summary possession proceeding after the expiration of
14 twenty calendar days from the date of the tenant's
15 receipt of the ten-calendar-day notice; and
16 (2) After the filing of the action for summary possession,
17 the court, in its discretion and based on a finding of
18 good cause, may order an additional mediation.

19 [+b+] (j) A landlord or the landlord's agent may bring an
20 action solely for rent [alone] at any time after the landlord



1 has demanded payment of past due rent and notified the tenant of
2 the landlord's intention to bring [such an] the action."

3 SECTION 3. No later than ninety days after the termination
4 of the pilot program established by this Act, the judiciary
5 shall submit to the legislature a report of its findings and
6 recommendations, including recommendations on whether the pilot
7 program should be made permanent, and any proposed legislation.

8 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,250,000 or so much
10 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
11 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
12 2026-2027 for the judiciary to contract for mediation services
13 pursuant to section 2 of this Act.

14 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the judiciary
15 for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 5. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
17 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
18 begun before its effective date.

19 SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
20 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025;

2 provided that:

3 (1) Section 2 shall take effect on February 5, 2026; and

4 (2) This Act shall be repealed on February 4, 2028, and

5 section 521-68, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be

6 reenacted in the form in which it read on the day

7 prior to the effective date of section 2 of this Act;

8 provided further that the amendments made to section

9 521-68(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, by section 2 of

10 this Act shall not be repealed when that section is

11 reenacted on February 4, 2028.



S.B. NO. 825
S.D. 2
H.D. 2
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 2nd day of July , 2025



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI'I

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate
of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2025.



President of the Senate



Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 825, SD 2, HD 2, CD 1

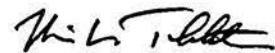
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025.



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives