



BIOGRAPHY

MAYOR RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.

Maui County Mayor Richard Bissen assumed office in January 2023, following his retirement as Chief Judge of the 2nd Circuit Court on Maui.

Bissen's career of public service spans 34 years, including 17 years of distinguished service on the bench, where he was the first Mental Health Court Judge. He was also a founding member of Maui Drug Court in 2000, when he was Maui County Prosecuting Attorney, and served as First Deputy Hawai'i Attorney General and Acting Director of the Hawai'i Department of Public Safety.

As mayor, Bissen has demonstrated his commitment to making government accessible to all residents by launching Holomua Kākou, an initiative aimed at bringing government services directly to remote areas of the county. This effort has included traveling to Moloka'i, Hāna, and Lāna'i to conduct county business from across Maui County.

A 1979 graduate of St. Anthony High School in Wailuku, where his grandson currently attends, Bissen earned his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Santa Clara in 1983. He then returned to Hawai'i to complete his Juris Doctor Degree at the William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in 1986.

His judicial accomplishments were recognized with the Hawai'i Jurist of the Year Award in 2021. Additionally, after dedicating five and a half years to studying the art of Ho'oponopono—a traditional Hawaiian practice focused on healing and restoring relationships—Bissen completed his studies in 2022, along with six other students.

Mayor Bissen and his wife, Isabella Ka'ihikapulani Eleneki Bissen, have three adult daughters and three grandsons.