

## **What is the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program and what is its goal? (Updated 100623)**

The goal of the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program is to pair Maui residents displaced by the August wildfires with Hawai'i homeowners willing to assist by offering unoccupied rooms, units or houses on a temporary basis at no or nominal cost.

### **How is the State going about this?**

Since mid-August, HHFDC has been assembling a database of available and unoccupied rooms, vacation rentals, 'ohana or accessory dwelling units, houses or other units that can be provided to those whose homes were lost or significantly damaged as a result of the tragic fires.

Governor Green and HHFDC urges private homeowners with an unoccupied spare bedroom, 'ohana or accessory dwelling unit (ADU), vacation rental unit or house to join other homeowners, landlords and property management agencies in helping some of the thousands of Maui residents who have been displaced.

### **I have a spare unit or house and would like to help a family out. What should I do?**

Thank you for helping! Please fill out the Property Information Form that's on the HHFDC website. The information you provide will be included in a database that displaced families and individuals will be able to view and determine if your arrangement meets their needs.

(NOTE: We are asking for personal information including your names and addresses of available units. For privacy and security reasons, this information will **not** be made public. Whether you would like a prospective dweller to contact you by telephone is up to you, but we do ask that you at least share an email address.)

If you are unable to access the form electronically, either call our hotline at 808-587-0469 or email [hawaiifirereliefhousing@hawaii.gov](mailto:hawaiifirereliefhousing@hawaii.gov) and leave a message with your contact information.

### **Will I be compensated for opening up my unit or home for rental to a displaced individual or family?**

No, not directly through the Hawai'i Housing Fire Relief Program.

A program started in October by the nonprofit Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Maui County (through support by the American Red Cross and the Hawai'i Community Foundation) provides a monthly subsidy to those who rent units directly to Maui residents displaced by the fire.

Additionally, landlords who rent to eligible persons displaced by the fires through a rental agency may be eligible to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Administration's Direct Lease program which pays property owners market rent to lease units to be used for housing Maui displaces. Owners must commit to a minimum period of 18 months.

**I was displaced as a result of the recent brushfires and need help. What should I do?**

Please see the database on HHFDC's Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program landing page showing available units and houses both on Maui and outside Maui. You are free to contact the landlords or management companies with the information provided. If you are unable to access the HHFDC website, either call our hotline at 808-587-0469 or email [hawaiifirereliefhousing@hawaii.gov](mailto:hawaiifirereliefhousing@hawaii.gov) and leave a message including your contact information.

**How much are landlords and management companies allowed to charge dislocated Maui residents?**

We urge landlords and property managers to charge only a nominal rent or no rent at all for their accommodations. However, this program sets no requirements on rent prices. The program's purpose is to provide quick, available housing to what is expected to be a large number of displaced Maui residents.

**Are landlords and property managers being asked to rent their properties for any minimum amount of time?**

We are asking landlords and property managers to make their units available to displaced Maui residents for a minimum of one month. There is, however, a growing need for longer-term arrangements of at least 18 months.

FEMA's Direct Lease Program provides financial compensation for qualifying landlords who commit to renting for a minimum of 18 months and conduct these transitions through a pre-approved management company.

**There were no fires outside of Maui and Hawai'i Island so why are you asking homeowners and landlords on other islands to participate? And will you provide transportation for displaced workers to travel to another island?**

Thousands of Maui residents are in need of help finding somewhere to live in the longer term. We want to offer them as many options as possible. We do not have funding to pay for interisland travel.

**How often is the list of available units updated?**

The list is currently being updated daily -- if there are changes to be made.

**Are you verifying if a property is actually available for rent by a property owner?**

HHFDC will make some attempts to verify the truthfulness of those seeking applicants but we are hopeful that Hawai'i residents recognize the severity of Maui's housing crunch and not abuse the informal nature of this program.

**I see that there are other organizations sharing similar listing databases. Should I list my property with yours or theirs?**

Both. Listing your property on multiple platforms will increase the chance of it being seen by displaced families, couples or individuals.

The benefit of listing with the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program, though, is that we can provide information on Federal and State assistance that may become available.

**Will HHFDC screen those claiming to be displaced?**

No. The Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) does not make any representation or warranties as to the qualifications or eligibility of any potential tenant. HHFDC will not be conducting any screening of potential tenants -- it is the homeowner's sole responsibility to do so.

In submitting this form and participating in the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program, the homeowner hereby releases HHFDC and the State of Hawai'i from and waives any and all claims arising out of or relating to the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program.

**Are potential renters required to produce proof of identification and residency?**

As stated earlier, rent and other terms of occupancy are private contractual agreements between the owners and tenants.

However, because landlords who rent to eligible persons displaced by the fires may be eligible for Federal or State funds, they may request proof of identification (ID) and residency, and potential renters should anticipate being asked for proof of ID and residency.

**What can you tell us about those offering up their rooms, units and houses?**

The Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) does not make any representation or warranty as to the habitability or suitability of any property listed herein.

It is the responsibility of potential renters to make such a determination. HHFDC and the State of Hawai'i (State) does not assume any liability for information provided herein and those who may rent one of the properties waive and release HHFDC and the State from any and all claims related to the HHFDC Fire Relief Housing Program.

**Can people from the Compacts of Free Association nations (the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau) participate in the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program? I've heard that they are not eligible for FEMA programs.**

The Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program is not a FEMA program and is open to all who were directly impacted by the recent Maui fires. This includes those from the COFA nations.

The objective of this program is to match persons displaced by the recent wildfires with property owners offering accommodations. Terms of occupancy are private contractual arrangements between the property owners and tenants.

Persons with questions about citizenship requirements for FEMA programs should visit this site: [Eligibility Criteria for FEMA Assistance | FEMA.gov](#).