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HAWAI'I HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



DEAN MINAKAMI
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For Immediate Release: November 21, 2023

Governor Green renews call for homeowners to help Maui fire survivors by joining the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program

HONOLULU – State housing officials announced today that the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program has helped find more permanent housing for more than 500 Maui families who lost their homes due to the August wildfires.

Governor Josh Green, M.D., and the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC), which is administering the program, are now renewing their call for homeowners to help, noting that thousands more survivor families are still in temporary shelters.

"We are grateful for the empathy and generosity that many Hawai'i homeowners displayed by providing safe and secure havens for those most affected by the tragedy in Lahaina," Governor Green said. "But we still need many other property owners to step up to the plate to offer longer-term housing opportunities for those who need it."

HHFDC Executive Director Dean Minakami is recommending that those offering up their properties be able to maintain the rental arrangements for a minimum of 18 months.

"This is a critical time as many survivors seek to transfer out of temporary housing into more stable, longer-term living arrangements as they try to regain some normalcy and routine to their lives," Minakami said.

The purpose of the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program is to gather a list of homeowners from across the state who are willing to assist by offering unoccupied rooms, units or houses to those in need. After HHFDC staff confirms the information and validates the available units, they are placed on a searchable list and interactive map for the Maui fire survivors to see.

The list and map are available publicly on the HHFDC website and are updated daily. As of today, 575 surviving families have been placed: 410 on Maui, 107 on O‘ahu, 44 on Hawai‘i Island and eight on Kaua‘i. Six were placed out of state.

“If you have an available extra room, ‘ohana unit or accessory dwelling unit (ADU) , or a vacation rental, please consider helping,” Minakami said.

HHFDC does not provide any financial support to either property owners or renters.

However, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will pay fair market rent for fire survivors and also has established a Maui Direct Lease Program in which FEMA will rent properties directly for a period of time, provided they are available through a registered property management company.

Meanwhile, the HOST Housing Support Program has been established by the nonprofit Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Maui County, with funding from the American Red Cross and the Hawai‘i Community Foundation. Homeowners who are “host families” across Hawai‘i may receive financial assistance of up to \$375 per month for each person they assist, up to \$1,500 a month per host.

More information on the programs can be found at the HHFDC Hawai‘i Fire Relief Housing web page: <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/hawaii-fire-relief-housing-program/>.

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About the Hawai‘i Housing Finance and Development Corporation

HHFDC’s primary mission is to advance affordable housing opportunities for the people of Hawai‘i. Additional information is available at dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/.

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