DHHL EXPANDS COVID-19 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DHHL Expands COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

(Kapolei, O'ahu) – The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) has expanded its COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program to include Undivided Interest (UI) lessees who have lost income or their job as a result of COVID-19.

DHHL's program provides eligible beneficiaries with rental assistance using $7 million in Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant funds that were made available in accordance with the Native Hawaiian Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act and other federal laws.

"Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the Department has launched several initiatives aimed at serving our applicants and lessees," said HHC Chairman William J. Ailā, Jr. "Extending this rental assistance program to UI lessees adds to our pandemic response initiatives."

In 2005, the UI Awards Program was launched to produce more homesteading opportunities to applicants on the DHHL Waiting List. The Department issued 1,434 UI leases that provided an undivided interest on the homelands while beneficiaries prepared for homeownership.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission approved the rental relief program's expansion at its June board meeting to the 814 remaining UI lessees.

DHHL's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program administered by Aloha United Way (AUW) was initially launched on May 11 to eligible native Hawaiians on DHHL's Applicant Waiting List.

In addition to the expanded offering to UI lessees, beneficiaries on the Department's Applicant Waiting List as of Dec. 31, 2018, who have experienced a loss of income or job as a result of COVID-19, are still eligible to apply. Beneficiaries may receive assistance for the payment of their security deposit and/or rent for up to six months.

To apply for the program, beneficiaries will be required to provide a series of documentation to indicate a loss of income or job as a result of COVID-19.

Those interested in learning more should call AUW at 2-1-1. For more information on COVID-19 impacts on DHHL activities, visit dhhl.hawaii.gov/covid-19.

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About the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands carries out Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole’s vision of rehabilitating native Hawaiians by returning them to the land. Established by U.S. Congress in 1921, with the passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, the Hawaiian homesteading program run by DHHL includes management of over 200,000 acres of land statewide with the specific purpose of developing and delivering homesteading.

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