DHHL RENTAL RELIEF PROGRAM RECEIVES $2.4M BOOST

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DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DHHL Rental Relief Program Receives $2.4M Boost

(Kapolei, Oʻahu) – The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program has received a funding allocation of $2.4 million as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 to boost and refine the program's implementation.

Under the freshly funded relief program, the Department has partnered with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) as its administrator.

In May 2020, the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) approved the rental program's pilot utilizing Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant (NHHBG) funds made available under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA). The program, initially implemented by Aloha United Way (AUW), was extended in August 2020.

DHHL's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program, pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, will provide eligible renter households with payments for security deposit, rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utilities and home arrears, and other expenses related to housing incurred due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Those qualified may receive assistance for up to 12 months with an additional three-month extension on a case-by-case basis.

Beneficiaries who are currently participating in the Department's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program with AUW will be able to complete that process but may be eligible for assistance beyond security deposit and rental relief under the expanded program with CNHA.

Native Hawaiians on the Applicant Waiting List and Undivided Interested Lessees are eligible under the following Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 criteria:

- Applicant must be on the DHHL Applicant Waiting List or Undivided Interest Lessee in the State of Hawaiʻi
- Applicant is renting in Hawaiʻi
- 18-years-old or older
- Income loss due to:
    - Unemployed or not working for more than 90 days;
    - A reduction in household income; or
    - Homelessness/Housing instability
- Income Qualification:
    - Is less than 80 percent Area Median Income

"The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to cause an evident ripple effect throughout our community," said HHC Chair William J. Ailā, Jr. "As we navigate through a new year, we want

beneficiaries to know that the Department continues to work hard to meet the responsibilities it has to the trust but also to provide relief to those of us who have suffered significant financial hardship as a result of these turbulent times. Our congressional officials worked diligently to secure this $2.4 million allocation that will surely provide applicants and UI lessees the chance to stay on track to accept a homestead lot."

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 made $25 billion available to assist households that are unable to pay rent and utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency Rental Assistance payments were made directly to states, U.S. territories, local governments with more than 200,000 residents, and Indian Tribes and DHHL.

HHC approved DHHL's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program criteria as it relates to the Consolidated Appropriations, Act. 2021 at its January 2021 meeting.

CNHA will begin accepting applications on Monday, Feb. 8, 2021, beneficiaries are required to provide documentation to indicate their need in accordance with the above criteria.

For more information on DHHL's COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program, visit hawaiiancouncil.org/dhhl.

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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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