



FEMA

September 13, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: Timothy B. Manner
Federal Coordinating Officer
FEMA-4724-DR-HI

THROUGH Robert J. Fenton
Regional Administrator
FEMA Region 9

FROM: William C. Hagmaier
Acting Assistant Administrator
Recovery Directorate

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Date: 2023.09.13
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SUBJECT: Direct Housing Approval for FEMA-4724-DR-HI

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to your recommendation to approve the State of Hawaii's request, dated August 30, 2023, for Direct Housing Assistance for FEMA-4724-DR-HI.

As you note in your recommendation, the Housing Assistance provision of the Individuals and Households Program (IHP), authorized by Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, or "Stafford Act," as implemented in 44 C.F.R. Part 206.117 authorizes FEMA to provide Direct Assistance for temporary housing when eligible applicants are unable to obtain temporary housing with financial assistance due to a lack of available housing resources. FEMA determines the appropriate types of assistance based on considerations of cost-effectiveness, convenience to disaster survivors, and the suitability and availability of the types of assistance to meet the post-disaster housing needs. Direct Housing Assistance may be provided for periods of up to 18 months from August 10, 2023, the date of the President's declaration of a Major Disaster, to February 10, 2025.

The Hawaii wildfires have destroyed homes, land, and communities throughout the island of Maui and have resulted in health and economic impacts throughout Maui County. The west Maui community of Lahaina, population 12,000 and once Hawaii's capital sustained the most fire damage.

FEMA registration data show survivors have a clear need for housing. As of September 6, 2023, 4,208 renters and 1,545 owners have reported to FEMA that their damaged dwelling was destroyed. Of the 5,753 applicants that reported a destroyed damaged dwelling, 2,734 were inspected. 2,471 of the 2,734 were confirmed destroyed and 1,953 were referred for housing assistance. Of the 1,953 referred, 1,889 households meet the Direct Housing eligibility criteria.

Upon review of the information gathered from an initial assessment, the number of eligible applicants projected to have a temporary housing need exceeds the number of available housing

resources within Maui County. Many survivors are longtime Maui residents; their recovery is complicated by the higher cost of housing in other parts of the county. Public Housing is also at capacity.

Maui County and the State of Hawaii continue to evaluate all potentially viable options to address the housing challenges in coordination with the Sheltering and Housing Task Force. The unique housing challenges for this disaster, including the loss of buildable land, the cost and logistics of deploying resources to an island, and building and code requirements, will require innovative direct housing solution(s).

Based on the justification provided by the State of Hawaii, I approve your request for direct housing assistance in the forms of Multifamily Lease and Repair and Direct Lease for Maui County. The Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide (IAPPG) identifies multi-family rental housing as a rental property that contains three or more dwelling units. Due to the significant housing limitations in Maui, I am approving a waiver to this policy to allow FEMA to identify and repair eligible multifamily housing units consisting of two or more dwelling units to increase the number of potential resources.

The use of Alternative Transportable Temporary Housing Units (ATTHUs) may also be necessary to meet the needs of displaced families. I am temporarily holding approval of the use of ATTHUs in abeyance to allow additional research into the suitability, availability, and timeliness of ATTHU options in Hawaii. I will immediately consider approval of ATTHUs once additional information is available and a viable strategy is identified.

If you need any additional assistance from the Recovery Directorate or other Headquarters components in the exploration and development of all available options, or if you have any questions regarding this approval, please contact Dr. Elizabeth Asche, Acting Director, Individual Assistance Division at Elizabeth.Asche@fema.dhs.gov.