



Hawai'i Department of Human Services

*One Year of Progress:
Recovery and Healing from
the Maui Wildfires*

August 5, 2024



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Introduction from the Department of Human Services Director's Office and Report Overview

On August 8, 2023, strong winds drove wildfires out of control on Maui– resulting in the worst natural disaster in Hawai'i's history and one of the [worst American wildfires](#) of the last century. Nearly all of the town of Lahaina was destroyed, and Kula was significantly damaged. 3,971 properties, including homes, businesses, and schools, making up the fabric of our communities, were destroyed. The property damage was [estimated](#) to be as high as \$6 billion. A staggering 102 lives were lost.

This terrible tragedy forever changed our community. August 8th is a day that we must remember and honor those we lost, while we also continue to help our 'Ohana recover– and plan for the future.

At the [Hawai'i Department of Human Services](#) (DHS), we are dedicated to our mission of supporting the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawai'i, with the goal of helping the people of Hawai'i to thrive. Following the Maui wildfires, and at Governor Josh Green, M.D.'s direction, DHS has focused on helping lead the state's response and the community's recovery. Each day, we work to support and rebuild the fabric of our communities, provide essential support to survivors including access to nutrition support, temporary housing, support services for disaster relief, financial support, medical and mental healthcare, and comprehensive disaster case management services.

While there is still a long road ahead, we are honored to provide for and help our community in this time of need. We are proud of the progress made and continue to focus on rebuilding our future. We are enormously grateful to Governor Green for his leadership in this work, to our many partners in helping to serve our community, and to each member of the DHS team for their tireless work and commitment to make a difference for the people of Hawai'i each day.

This progress report captures DHS' actions in the year since the Maui wildfires and our impacts on people's lives and outcomes in our community as a whole. Data included in this report has been collected directly from local, state, and federal sources and personal



accounts from survivors and community members. All of the data included in this report is current through July 15, 2024.

Thank you,

Ryan Yamane, DHS Director

Joseph Campos, DHS Deputy Director

Trista Speer, DHS Deputy Director

DHS Maui Wildfire Response Fast Facts

DHS has worked diligently throughout the past year to help thousands of Maui households and individuals in their recovery from the wildfires. DHS' work to support survivors and local communities has been at the direction of Governor Green and built on a foundation of the department's experience and subject matter expertise, coupled with local, state, federal, non-profit, and private partners — leveraged quickly and at scale.

This includes the following actions, programs, and outcomes:

- In the two weeks following the fires, **DHS was able to help 976 survivors move from shelters into hotel rooms across Maui.** In total, working with local, state, federal and non-profit partners, **7,796 survivors were moved into hotel rooms in these crucial first two weeks, along with an additional 662 survivors moved into donated Airbnbs.**
- Hawai'i submitted its application for the federal Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP) within six weeks and built and launched an independently funded interim program to expedite aid while awaiting FEMA approval. **DHS is proud to share that, to date, the DCMP has served more than 3,500 individuals.**
- To help people who were homeless before the wildfires and without additional resources or the ability to meet eligibility requirements for non-congregate shelter, **DHS created and launched the Pu'uhonua o Nēnē facility, which has provided shelter and support services to a total of 390 individuals.**



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- In close coordination with federal partners, **DHS helped to expand access and provide support through the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP), which provided assistance to more than 3,200 households and the Maui Relief Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program, which has provided more than \$11 million in funding for crucial support to families.**
 - **DHS conceived and launched the state’s innovative Rental Assistance Program (RAP), a first-of-its-kind program utilizing the local short-term rental market to secure longer-term housing solutions for 302 households, totaling 842 individuals.**
 - The Ka La’i Ola housing project is the first government housing solution on Maui to break ground. In the coming weeks, **DHS will be welcoming the first residents to Ka La’i Ola, which will help house up to 1,200 survivors in temporary units for up to five years.**



This chart details the reach of the department’s varied supports and services and associated federal programs:

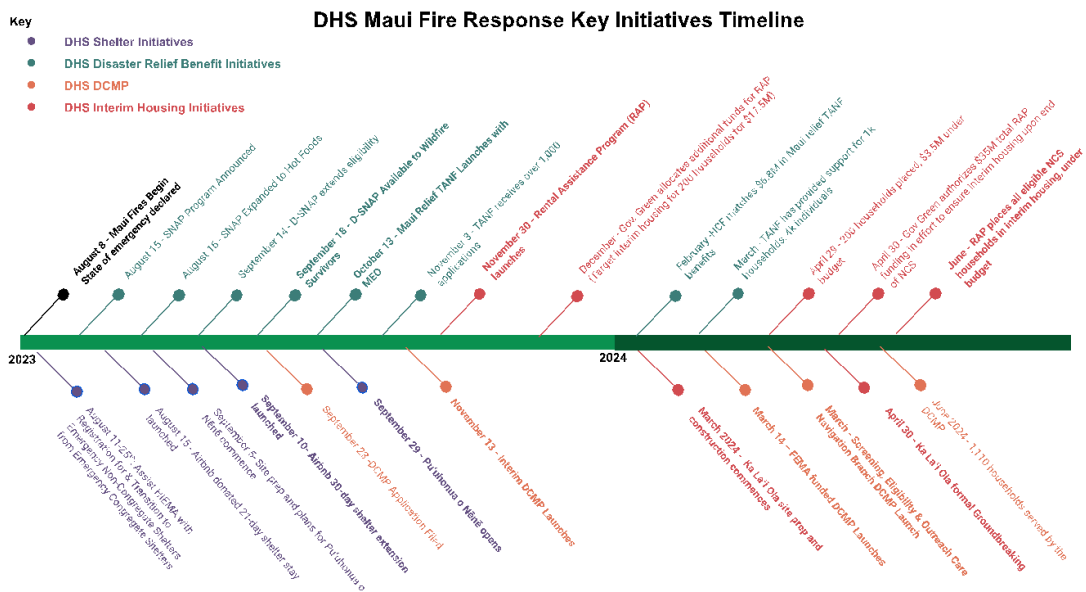
Program/ Services	Individual or Household Impact
Airbnb.org partnership	Approximately 3,000 individuals were able to stay in local Airbnb listings, totaling more than 97,500 nights, funded by Airbnb.org, the generosity of Airbnb hosts, and the state
Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)	3,222 households representing 8,616 individuals received D-SNAP benefits
Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP)	To date, more than 3,500 individuals have been served. This includes 1,102 active cases: 236 cases are with the Screening, Eligibility, and Outreach Care Navigator Branch (SEOCN) Branch and 866 cases are being served by the Disaster Case Manager Branch
Interim Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP)	700 households assisted during interim program
Ka La’i Ola housing project	450 temporary units, providing housing for up to 1,200 total survivors
Maui Relief Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program	1,851 households representing 5,409 individuals received Maui Relief TANF assistance funds, totaling more than \$11 million in aid for rental assistance, mortgages, transportation, utilities, clothing, school supplies and more
Pu’uhonua o Nēnē	390 individuals assisted in total, including 122 residents currently living on site
Rental Assistance Program (RAP)	Longer-term housing solutions found for 302 households, totaling 842 individuals



Disaster Response Timeline

For the purposes of this report, disaster response efforts are organized by topic and/ or program. However, to best understand DHS’ comprehensive response, it is important to note that our efforts were (and still are) happening concurrently. The below timeline captures the actions and sequencing of all of DHS’ disaster response and recovery efforts.

Please note that this timeline, and report as a whole, includes only DHS’ role and does not include the full scope of the ongoing disaster response and recovery efforts.



*A full-size chart is available in the report’s appendix on page 23.

A People-focused Disaster Response

Recognizing the need for immediate assistance, Governor Green’s administration declared a state of emergency while the fires were still burning and began deploying the state’s resources, including the [Hawai’i Emergency Management Agency](#) (HI-EMA) and the [Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services](#), and coordinating with Maui County officials, the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA) and the [American Red](#)



[Cross](#). Within two days, a [Presidential declaration of a major disaster](#) for the state was issued, making federal funds for disaster relief available.

Governor Green immediately prioritized the human element of the state's work, understanding that the impact on our community would not be limited to physical damage, and that people's needs must drive our response efforts. DHS deliberately led our response and recovery efforts with a trauma-informed approach, meaning we integrate critical care principles such as safety, transparency and peer support into all of our services and in accordance with Governor Green's [leadership and guidance](#).

The scale and scope of this disaster also made it deeply personal for the entire community, including DHS team members who were directly impacted or close to someone who had been affected by the wildfires. In every aspect, this connection is reflected in the quality of support provided, the speed at which the department moved to deploy resources, innovation applied in solving unique and complex challenges, and the sustained efforts to serve our community long-term.

With our people-focused approach, the Department of Human Services was well-positioned to help lead the disaster response efforts. This work focused on crucial areas of need for survivors, including:

1. Shelter
2. Access to nutrition
3. Recovery support overall, including financial assistance

DHS leadership immediately mobilized on Maui, setting up information and service hubs and coordinating with local and federal assets to expedite support to survivors. In conjunction with HI-EMA, DHS took the lead in convening and driving daily State Emergency Support Function-6 (SESF-6) coordination calls among local, state, and federal government agencies as well as support groups and individuals. With more than 150 entities typically participating, these calls were a crucial cross-functional connection point, with DHS



identifying priorities, aligning efforts, and deploying resources in real-time to meet survivors' evolving needs.

As local, state, federal and community-based organizations raced to meet the enormous needs of the Maui community in the wake of the fires, DHS also worked behind the scenes to secure the comprehensive data-sharing agreements needed to create a database to securely locate, track, and assist all survivors. In capturing and tracking this information, DHS is able to stay connected with survivors (which is particularly important given the connectivity challenges many continue to face with the destruction of property and infrastructure on Maui), assess needs and eligibility, and identify trends to help assist in planning for additional support and programs.

Creating Innovative Emergency Shelter and Housing Solutions

Housing in Hawai'i, and particularly on Maui, has long been a complex and challenging issue. [Home prices across the state are three times the national average and have risen by 1,200% in the last 45 years.](#) During this same time period, incomes have only grown half as fast, resulting in what [Governor Green](#) has called the "most unaffordable market in the U.S."

For Maui residents, the situation is even more challenging. A 2023 [report](#) on housing affordability ranked Maui County as the least affordable county for homeownership in Hawai'i. [U.S. Census Bureau data](#) puts the Maui median household income from 2018- 2022 at \$95,379, while the median value of owner-occupied housing during the same time period was \$800,100. A crucial element of this housing situation is the [27,000 short-term rental units](#) on Maui, which dramatically reduce the amount of available housing for residents overall.

Governor Green [took](#) significant steps to address the state's shortage of housing, prioritizing affordable housing projects and solutions through a series of emergency proclamations. But the wildfires displaced approximately 13,000 Maui residents, meaning



their homes had either been destroyed or were within the restricted areas in Lahaina and Kula. Shelter for these survivors was an immediate concern. DHS led the effort to ensure that all survivors had their housing needs met, including immediately following the fires and continuing today as needs evolve.

To provide temporary shelter in the days after the fires, emergency congregate, or group housing locations, were quickly set up across Maui by HIEMA and in conjunction with the American Red Cross. This included locations at the War Memorial Gymnasium in Wailuku, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Kings Cathedral Church in Kahului, the South Maui Community Park Gymnasium in Kihei, and the Mayor Hannibal Tavares Community Center in Pukalani. Approximately 2,113 people were housed in congregate housing for 14 days that the shelters were open and as additional resources and longer-term, non-congregate options were explored and finalized.

DHS worked closely to support HI-EMA, FEMA, and the American Red Cross with the launch of the non-congregate sheltering (NCS) program, which included the initial Safe Harbor housing program for the first 45 days immediately following the fires. NCS and the Safe Harbor program provided a key safety net for survivors, regardless of eligibility, and began to move survivors into NCS options. In the two weeks following the fires, DHS was able to help move 976 individuals into NCS options, and worked together with local, state, federal and non-profit partners to move a total of 7,796 survivors into hotel rooms across Maui. These hotel locations included the Hyatt Regency Maui, the Outrigger Kā'anapali Beach Resort, Honua Kai Outrigger, Royal Lahaina Resort, and Westin Maui in Lahaina and the Maui Seaside Hotel in Kahului.

Partnering with Airbnb

Despite the generosity of local partners, more housing options were still needed – and quickly. Governor Green quickly collaborated with [Airbnb.org](https://www.airbnb.org), an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to facilitating temporary stays for people in times of crisis, as well as Airbnb.com, to explore potential partnership options and directed DHS to lead that partnership on behalf of the state. An [agreement](#) was quickly reached and starting on



August 15, 2023, DHS was able to secure donated, local, temporary stays for 662 individuals for up to 21 days. This access was a crucial lifeline for survivors, and especially families, in the early disaster response efforts and provided more stable, home-like accommodations.

As the need for longer stays became more apparent and more urgent, DHS leadership negotiated with Airbnb to implement an additional 30-day stay for eligible households already staying in Airbnb listings, helping nearly 2,200 individuals across these two initiatives. Crucially, DHS also coordinated with HIEMA and FEMA to ensure the program would be considered part of the NCS program, and thus eligible for FEMA reimbursement – providing survivors who received emergency shelter in these Airbnb accommodations the ability to transition to the traditional NCS program at the end of their Airbnb stay.

Airbnb has continued to partner with DHS through the RAP to provide a total of approximately 3,000 eligible survivors with access to local housing totaling over 97,500 nights. This readily available and much-needed local housing solution, funded by Airbnb.org, the generosity of Airbnb hosts, and the state, helped families stay together during these challenging times.

Creating Refuge at Pu‘uhonua O Nēnē

As recovery efforts progressed, DHS identified a critical need for survivors who were



Residents, organizers, and community leaders gather on October 1, 2023, to bless the Pu‘uhonua o Nēnē, temporary shelter.

ineligible to remain in the NCS program, specifically those experiencing homelessness prior to the fires who resided in the burn zones. Most shelter options require verified structural loss as part of their eligibility requirements and did not cover individuals who were experiencing homelessness prior to the wildfires.

According to the latest [Point-In-Time \(PIT\) count for homelessness](#), there were 704 sheltered and unsheltered



homeless individuals on Maui as of January 2023. In coordination with [Project Vision Hawai'i](#), a local organization dedicated to improving access to health and human services for the people of Hawai'i, DHS moved quickly to develop a housing solution, securing access from the [Hawai'i Department of Transportation](#) to unused land for up to 18 months, acquiring military field shelters, and partnering with additional aid organizations to help support a temporary shelter.

[Pu'uhonua o Nēnē opened](#) on Friday, September 29, 2023 specifically to help individuals who were experiencing homelessness pre-disaster and therefore did not meet shelter eligibility requirements to remain in NCS. Pu'uhonua O Nēnē provides wrap-around support services, including on-site medical facilities, showers and restrooms, meals, transportation for medical and other appointments, and case managers. Pu'uhonua O Nēnē is the only housing option for pre-disaster homeless individuals in need and has helped a total of 390 individuals. It continues to house and support 122 people as of July 2024, including three veterans.

In [announcing](#) Pu'uhonua o Nēnē, Governor Green said: *"It is important that all Maui wildfire survivors have access to the necessary resources to heal. Pu'uhonua o Nēnē is a place survivors can go to receive a wide array of services. I know Project Vision Hawai'i will create a safe, welcoming environment that supports recovery, and I appreciate the Department of Human Services and Department of Transportation for their efforts to build this site so quickly."*

Housing Innovation at Scale: The Rental Assistance Program

After the initial emergency response to shelter survivors, additional and longer-term housing options were needed. Governor Green and DHS recognized a need for a state housing solution for additional survivors and took action to create and launch the innovative [Rental Assistance Program \(RAP\)](#) specifically to help survivors of the Maui wildfires who were not eligible for FEMA assistance.

On November 30, 2023, DHS [launched](#) the state RAP with an initial \$2.5 million in funding to provide assistance quickly and to determine the viability of this new interim housing solution. The goal was to connect eligible households with an Airbnb property, helping to secure housing for up to 12 months. This first-of-its kind program makes creative use of



Hawai'i's short term rental market and was immediately successful. It was quickly expanded to a \$17.5 million program before the end of 2023 with the goal to provide an interim housing solution for 200 survivor households who did not qualify for a FEMA interim housing solution. Partnering with local organizations to facilitate the program and HIEMA to determine eligibility, the RAP secured interim housing solution for nearly 100 households by February 8, 2024, and reached the goal of housing 200 households before the end of April 2024 — and did so \$3.5 million under budget.

“The Department of Human Services is grateful to Governor Green for continuing to prioritize supporting the survivors of the Maui wildfires. This new housing program is a novel way to enable us to help more families find places to live and to recover without having to worry about where they will move next, or high rental costs,” said DHS Deputy Director Speer in announcing the program. *“Survivors, especially those that don't qualify for federal assistance, need the state to step in and the Department of Human Services is proud to offer this help through Governor Green's leadership and motto for equity.”*

On April 30, 2024, Governor Green authorized an additional \$17.5 million to the program to continue its work and to help facilitate the transition out of NCS shelter housing to interim housing solutions for all households eligible for a state housing solution. In June 2024, the RAP accomplished this goal, successfully placing all eligible households in NCS into longer-term housing options – totaling 301 households and 840 individuals. Additional households are now being referred to the program from the State of Hawai'i Interim Housing Program. With \$35 million in total funding, the RAP has expanded its goals and is aiming to place up to 300 eligible households into interim housing options through August 31, 2025, if necessary.

Building for the Future at Ka La'i Ola

Expanding this work on housing needs, DHS, in partnership with [HomeAid Hawai'i](#) and [Construction Management & Development](#) (CM&D) [broke ground](#) on another innovative housing solution on Maui in March 2024. [Ka La'i Ola](#), which means 'The Place of Peaceful Recovery,' is the largest interim housing development for Maui wildfire survivors to date, and will create 450 temporary housing units, including studios and one-, two-, and

three-bedroom homes. The first residents will be moving into Ka La'i Ola in late August 2024, and DHS expects to be able to house up to 1,200 total survivors through this new project.

Located in West Lahaina, Ka La'i Ola's temporary homes will be occupied for up to five years, providing those impacted by the fires a safe place to continue on their path to recovery. Ka La'i Ola will also provide property management and support services to help residents as they heal, recover, and rebuild



A map showing the Ka La'i Ola housing project layout

their lives, including from dedicated Disaster Case Managers (DCMs) through the Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP). After the five-year program is complete, Ka La'i Ola's 57-acres and structures will be transferred to the [Department of Hawaiian Home Lands](#) (DHHL), helping to support Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

"Ka La'i Ola is a special project for our community, providing a safe place of refuge for survivors that have not been able to receive disaster aid from FEMA. DHS is committed to ensuring that all

survivors have access to the supports and resources they need, and housing is a crucial part of this," said DHS Deputy Director Campos. "We are looking forward to this project's benefits and are excited to welcome our first residents in the coming weeks."



A mockup of the completed Ka La'i Ola's development



Supporting Our Communities

Access to nutrition and financial support for families are crucial, highly time-sensitive needs for the survivors of the Maui wildfires. Feeding people at scale was an immediate challenge as a result of the destruction of basic services and utilities in the areas affected by the fires and required a robust response. The Maui community came together immediately to organize large-scale food services and DHS led the state's efforts to provide expanded access to food and financial resources to survivors. Leveraging federal assistance programs, DHS helped increase access to nutrition assistance and supports, as well as facilitating direct financial support to survivors.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Extensions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) is a crucial lifeline for many people, providing low-income families with food benefits to supplement their access to nutritious, healthy foods.

On August 15, 2023, DHS [announced](#) a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) replacement benefit for households that were participating in SNAP and had food destroyed by the wildfires. On August 16, 2023, and in coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), DHS [secured a waiver](#) that expanded the benefits of the SNAP program to include hot foods. Normally, SNAP benefits may not be used for hot foods, and this was a crucial change as many survivors were in temporary shelters or housing solutions with limited ability to store or cook food. This waiver was [extended](#) several times for Maui residents through April 30, 2024.

On September 14, 2023, the USDA [announced](#) the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) for eligible wildfire survivors who experienced loss of housing or employment, incurred disaster-related expenses, or food loss due to the wildfires – expanding the existing services of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by up to approximately 16,000 estimated additional households. DHS' Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD) facilitated this program and associated outreach efforts, which [launched](#) on September 18, 2023. BESSD achieved significant success in



bringing support directly to survivors, including modifying administrative rules and implementing a multi-week program to individually process each application in person. A team of 50 BESSD staff processed applications on site on Maui from September 18-23, 2023, helping 3,222 households, totaling 8,616 individuals, and disbursing a total of \$4,005,391 in D-SNAP benefits.

“This essential support helped survivors access the food and support they needed and helped the Maui community overall through some of its most difficult days,” said DHS Deputy Director Campos. *“DHS is honored to have been able to help survivors with these critical needs and is grateful to the Department of Agriculture for their support and flexibility in helping these programs make a difference for people in our community.”*

Maui Relief Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program

In partnership with [Maui Economic Opportunity Inc.](#) (MEO), DHS [launched](#) the Maui Relief Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program on October 13, 2023 with \$100 million in funding. An expansion of the existing [federal TANF program](#), the Maui Relief TANF Program was designed using emergency administrative rules to provide up to four months of financial support for families with at least one dependent child who were directly affected by the wildfires and who met income eligibility guidelines. The program provided funding for a variety of expenses for eligible families, including housing, transportation, utilities, clothing, and school supplies.

The Maui Relief TANF program was immediately successful, [providing support](#) for 1,000 households and 4,000 individuals in need within the first five months of its operation. In total, 1,851 households representing 5,409 individuals have been provided with Maui Relief TANF assistance funds, totaling more than \$11 million in aid for rental assistance, mortgages, transportation, utilities, clothing, school supplies and more.

Long-term, Comprehensive Recovery

Almost immediately following the wildfires, DHS leadership recognized the need for assistance in helping survivors navigate the many, and often complex, support and



resources available at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as through additional community-based organizations.

DHS explored different options and selected an existing federally-funded program, the [Disaster Case Management Program](#) (DCMP), which connects survivors of disasters with Disaster Case Managers (DCMs), specialists in disaster recovery planning, to help assess and address their needs. Together, the DCMs and survivors develop a disaster recovery plan, which includes resources, decision-making priorities, providing guidance, and tools across key issues including transportation, childcare, health, legal aid, assistance with government documents, financial guidance, insurance information, FEMA appeals, employment, and housing.

The Disaster Case Management Program

Within 6 weeks of the Maui wildfires, DHS applied for a Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP) grant through FEMA – one of the fastest application completions and submissions in the program’s history. While awaiting approval from FEMA, DHS recognized the need for immediate assistance and secured \$750,000 in private funding from the American Red Cross to launch the program on a 90-day interim basis ahead of the final approvals and launch of the FEMA-funded program. This funding enabled DHS to procure 20 dedicated Disaster Case Managers (DCMs) to provide support for up to 700 households that were ineligible for FEMA support.

Working with a leading expert in disaster case management services, [The Society of St. Vincent De Paul](#) (SVDP), and three local community-based organizations (CBOs), [Catholic Charities Hawai‘i](#) (CCH), [Family Life Center](#) (FLC), and [Family Promise of Hawai‘i](#) (FPH), DHS began training for the interim DCMP on November 13, 2023. On November 18, 2023, DHS received notice that FEMA had granted initial approval for Hawai‘i’s application, and on November 20, 2023, the interim DCMP began enrolling survivors. The interim program was able to begin offering services to survivors on an expedited timeline, building on Governor Green’s commitment to ensure all survivors, regardless of their application status with the American Red Cross or FEMA, were able to access the support they needed.



On March 1, 2024, DHS [launched](#) the full DCMP, expanding on the interim program and leveraging the \$17.2 million grant from FEMA to help survivors navigate their recovery for a minimum of 2 years, with the possibility of a 12-month extension. In total, this FEMA grant funds a comprehensive program that will include a total of 36 DCMs across four CBOs to provide disaster recovery services to up to 1,260 households. The federally funded DCMP

How the Disaster Case Management Program Helps Wildfire Survivors



DHS June 2024

A visual representation handout of how the DCMP functions as a 'hub' to help connect survivors with the supports and services they need to recover

expansion also enabled the addition of another local community-based organization, Aloha House, to join the program.

"The Disaster Case Management Program has made a significant difference for survivors on Maui, connecting them with the supports and

services they need to navigate their recovery processes. We are thankful to our partners, including FEMA, St. Vincent De Paul, and the incredible local organizations that have made this critical work possible," said DHS Deputy Director Speer. *"We continue to grow and scale the DCMP to meet the community's needs and remain committed to providing this crucial service."*

To scale the program as quickly as possible, DHS created two branches: a DCM branch, which provides a DCM and corresponding supports, and the Screening, Eligibility, and Outreach Care Navigator Branch (SEOCN) which connects with survivors, determines eligibility for the program, and enrolls them. The SEOCN branch also immediately provides survivors with an Outreach Care Navigator (OCN) to assist them in navigating their recovery. It is supported by \$1 million in additional limited-duration funding from the American Red Cross and helps to support DHS's goal of building capacity within our community to be better prepared for future disasters.



The DCMP onboarding process begins with a survivor reaching out to the DCMP through the [Aloha United Way 211 Call Center](#). A Screening Eligibility Specialist (SES) from SEOCN Branch then contacts the survivor to determine eligibility, enroll them into the DCMP, if eligible, and provide additional information that they will share with the assigned DCM or OCN. An OCN steps in to assist the DCMs and expands the program's capacity, meeting with the survivor to obtain documents for eligibility and assess their unmet needs. An OCN will serve as a guide to the survivor, answering questions, navigating resources, assisting with unmet needs, and providing updates during the time survivors are awaiting a DCM assignment. This wrap-around support aims to create a trusting relationship with the survivor and provide them with the tools they need to foster resiliency as they recover.

To continue helping to support the community and conduct outreach efforts to connect with survivors in need, the DCMP is also engaging in weekly meetings with the Governor's disaster response team, the Housing Coalition, the Maui Mayor's Lahaina Advisory Team, and the [Committee on the Status of Women](#).

In total, the DCMP currently partners with 8 local CBOs, as well as SVDP, and is collectively staffed by 89 dedicated team members, including administrators and support staff. While this grant from FEMA is for a maximum of 36 months funding, DHS is preparing to ensure this program is available for up to 5 years to assist survivors with achieving recovery. To date, more than 3,500 individuals have been served by the DCMP, which includes 1,102 open and active cases. The SEOCN Branch has recorded 1,192 inbound calls to 211 for DCMP support and is currently serving 236 cases. The DCM Branch has served a total of 1,264 households, with 866 open and active cases.

Preparing for the Future

Over the last year, DHS has worked hard to support survivors and to begin rebuilding our community. As we continue to move forward with recovery efforts, it is equally as important to prepare for the future.

Life on Hawai'i, as an isolated archipelago, built by volcanic activity, and in the middle of the world's largest ocean, has always and will always come with inherent risk. The people who



live here understand this means being prepared for whatever comes next, and while fires of this scale and intensity were an unprecedented disaster, we must acknowledge that there will be more challenging times in our future.

In responding to the Maui wildfires, DHS has significantly expanded our disaster preparedness and response capabilities to help to protect local communities moving forward. Starting with the data-sharing agreements signed with aid organizations within weeks of the fires and throughout the response and recovery process, DHS has been putting policies and procedures in place to ensure that the state is better prepared moving forward.

On October 23, 2023, Governor Green created the DHS Emergency Management Team to support his administration's ongoing priorities in keeping the people of Hawai'i safe. The DHS Emergency Management Team has created new standardized operations, policies, and procedures, developed in-depth process and programmatic manuals, and built capacity overall. The team has also created template contract agreements and service contracts that will enable DHS to action partnerships in real-time and get assistance to those who need it faster. These materials and assets will serve as the foundation of DHS' emergency response process moving forward and will enable the state as a whole to act more quickly and comprehensively.

DHS has also created and grown crucial relationships with a variety of community-based organizations, national and international nonprofits and NGOs, and additional entities. Throughout the last year, DHS has convened and led all of these entities in responding to the fires and helping to rebuild our community. These existing contacts and agreements will ensure that DHS can expedite its work and respond to needs faster.

Finally, DHS' experience in working closely with the federal government, especially FEMA, has expanded the agency's capacity for more successful federal engagement overall. FEMA's programs, eligibility requirements, and timelines for aid are complicated, and Hawai'i is one of the most unique and complex states in the nation for disaster response. Working closely with FEMA throughout this year has both increased DHS' expertise in



navigating federal processes and helped to expand FEMA's understanding of Hawai'i's needs.

Conclusion

Over the past year, DHS has led the response to the Maui wildfires by creating and leveraging innovative solutions to address challenges, providing supports and services to those in need, and making key investments in our communities. We are seeing the impacts of our work realized as survivors embark on their recovery journey and our communities begin to heal. We know that this will be a years-long process and we continue to build on our commitment to helping the people of Hawai'i thrive.

"It is an honor and a privilege for DHS to be able to help our community in this time of need. We are committed to continuing this work each day, and unwavering in our dedication to our mission and to the people of Hawai'i," said DHS Director Yamane. *"I joined DHS in May of 2024 and have seen first-hand how this team rises to every challenge, finding solutions, creating connections, and prioritizing outcomes for people. Thank you to each member of our team. We look forward to continuing to help rebuild our communities and to support the people of Hawai'i."*

DHS is honored to have been able to help so many people throughout the communities impacted by these tragic fires. As the recovery process continues, we anticipate the need for additional services, supports, and creative solutions to the challenges we will encounter on Maui. We look forward to continuing to serve the people of Hawai'i.

In closing, we would like to share a Hawaiian proverb that has guided our work at DHS throughout this year and that we will continue to look to for guidance and inspiration moving forward:

"'A'ohe hana nui ke alu 'ia", which means "No task is too big when done together by all."

'Olelo No'eau, Puku'i #142



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- Airbnb.org
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- Maui Seaside Hotel
- Mayor Hannibal Tavares Community Center
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- Outrigger Kā'anapali Beach Resort
- Pacific Gateway Center (PGC)
- Royal Lahaina Resort
- Society of St. Vincent DePaul (SVDP)
- South Maui Community Park Gymnasium
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Westin Maui
- War Memorial Gymnasium



Appendix

