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Rental Assistance Programs

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For those renting in Hawaii who are experiencing difficulties with overdue rent or require assistance with their rental payments, numerous government, non-profit, and community programs are available to provide support. Below, you will find a comprehensive list of the current rental assistance programs, including concise descriptions, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and contact details.

Government-Funded Rental Relief Programs

- **Hawai'I Rent and Utility Relief Program (TANF) Support** – A City and County of Honolulu program funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families providing up to 4 months of financial help for rent, mortgage and utilities. **Eligibility:** Households on O'ahu (and Kaua'i or Hawai'i Island) with **dependent children or a pregnant family member**, experiencing financial hardship (e.g. behind on rent) and income ≤300% of Federal Poverty Level. At least one household member must be a U.S. citizen/qualified immigrant and Hawai'i resident. **Services:** Up to \$6,000/month for rent or mortgage, up to \$2,000/month for utilities, and assistance with security or utility deposits (paid directly to landlords or utility providers). **How to Apply:** Applications are open – apply through Catholic Charities Hawai'i's online form. **Contact:** Email RURPHelp@catholiccharitieshawaii.org or call Catholic Charities at **(808) 521-4357**. Native Hawaiian applicants can also contact the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement at **(808) 596-8155** (RURP@hawaiiancouncil.org) for assistance.
- **State Homeless Emergency Grants (SHEG) Program** – A *State of Hawai'i-funded emergency rental assistance program administered by Catholic Charities*. **Description:** Helps **homeless households or those at imminent risk of homelessness** to obtain or retain housing. Provides **one-time financial aid for past-due rent, first month's rent, or security deposit**, as well as utility deposits/payments tied to housing. **Eligibility:** Individuals or families who are **homeless or facing eviction** (verification required) with income ≤50% of Area Median Income, and who can demonstrate ability to pay future rent after assistance. **How to Apply:** Call **(808) 521-4357 (521-HELP)** for an intake screening. Gather documents (ID, proof of income, eviction notice or homeless verification, etc.) and complete an intake appointment with a case manager. **Contact:** Phone **(808) 521-4357** or email harpassistance@catholiccharitieshawaii.org for more info.
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- **Hawai‘i State Rent Supplement Program** – *A statewide program (through the Hawaii Public Housing Authority) providing ongoing “shallow” rent subsidies to low-income families, administered on O‘ahu by Catholic Charities.* **Description:** Offers up to **\$500 per month** towards rent for eligible households to make housing more affordable. **Eligibility:** Must currently be renting an appropriately sized unit for the family, **not owe back rent**, be a Hawaii resident not receiving other rent subsidies, with ability to pay at least 30% of income toward rent. Income limits apply (household must pay 30% of adjusted income and the program covers the gap up to \$500). **How to Apply:** Complete a prescreen application (online via Catholic Charities). If preliminarily eligible, a Catholic Charities housing worker will assist with the full application and required documents. **Contact:** Catholic Charities Housing Assistance, **(808) 521-4357**, or visit the “Rent Supplement” page on Catholic Charities Hawai‘i’s website.
- **Honolulu Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program** – *Previously offered COVID-19 rent relief through the City & County (OneOahu), this program provided up to 12 months of rent and utility help.* **Status:** **No longer accepting new applications** as of late 2022. It has been succeeded by the TANF-funded program above. Existing applicants could receive up to \$2,500/mo for rent in arrears, \$2,000 for future rent, and utility assistance. **Note:** Check OneOahu.org for any updated city programs. Current inquiries are directed to Catholic Charities and CNHA under the new Hawai‘i Relief Program.

Non-Profit & Community Rental Assistance Programs

- **IHS Housing Assistance Program (Institute for Human Services)** – *Comprehensive housing program aimed at preventing homelessness.* IHS offers **one-time rental assistance** for those facing eviction or in need of move-in costs, as well as longer-term housing programs. **Services:** Can help with **back rent**, security deposit, utility deposits, and short-term rental subsidies, coupled with housing navigation and case management. IHS operates Rapid Re-Housing (up to 3 months rent for at-risk households or up to 12 months for homeless households), Housing First placements for chronically homeless, and permanent supportive housing where participants pay 30% of income as rent. **Eligibility:** Priority to individuals and families who are **homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness** (e.g. have an eviction notice or currently in a shelter). **How to Get Started:** Fill out IHS’s online Housing Assistance Request form or contact their Housing Program. **Contact:** Submit an inquiry via the IHS website or call **(808) 447-2819** or **(808) 447-2853** (IHS Housing Program). *(Office: 546 Kaaahi St., Honolulu, HI).*
- **Catholic Charities Hawai‘i – Housing Placement Program** – *Homelessness prevention and re-housing assistance for families.* This program assists **households with minor children** that are homeless or facing eviction. **Services:** Short-term financial help such as **payment of rent in arrears, first month’s rent, security deposit, and utility fees**, plus housing search assistance and case management. Families receive support with finding housing, budgeting, landlord mediation, and referrals to legal services to ensure stability. **Eligibility:** O‘ahu families with **at least one child under 18**, income $\leq 250\%$ of Federal Poverty Level, who are **homeless or imminently at risk** (e.g. have an eviction notice) and demonstrate commitment to work toward self-sufficiency. **How to Apply:** Call **(808) 521-HELP (4357)** to begin the intake process or fill out Catholic Charities’ online contact form. A case manager will screen eligibility and guide you through an application. **Contact Address:** 1822 Ke‘eaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822; Phone **(808) 521-4357**.
- **Helping Hands Hawaii – Emergency Assistance Program** – *A non-profit program that provides one-time emergency financial assistance for rent or utilities.* **Description:** Helping Hands Hawaii works with low-income households in crisis to prevent eviction or utility shut-off, depending on available funding. They partner with agencies like HCAP for application intake. **Eligibility:** Generally for individuals/families facing a temporary emergency (loss of income, unexpected expenses) who **cannot pay current rent or have past-due bills**. Income limits may apply and documentation of the hardship is required. **How to Apply:** Call your local **HCAP District Center** or Helping Hands Hawaii’s Community Clearinghouse to inquire. For example, HCAP’s Kalihi-Palama office can process emergency rent/utility assistance

applications on O'ahu. You will need to fill out an application, provide ID, income proof, and rent overdue notices. **Contact:** Helping Hands Hawaii main line **(808) 440-3835**; or through HCAP at **(808) 847-0804** (Kalihi-Palama) – they will refer and help submit your application. (*Office: 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI*).

- **Salvation Army – Honolulu Community Assistance Center** – *Emergency rent and utility assistance to prevent homelessness*. The Salvation Army's Community Assistance Center on O'ahu offers **short-term financial help** for rent or utility arrears for struggling households. **How it Works:** Each month, the program accepts a limited number of applications (up to 10) during the first week of the month, subject to funding availability. If approved, payments go directly to your landlord or utility company to cover overdue rent or bills. **Eligibility:** Low-income individuals or families on O'ahu facing financial hardship who can demonstrate need (e.g. an eviction notice or past-due bill). Applicants must provide documentation (IDs, Social Security cards for household, lease, eviction or disconnect notices, income statements, bank statements). **Application:** Call or email to request an application. **Contact:** Phone **(808) 841-5565** or email hicac@usw.salvationarmy.org to inquire/apply. (The CAC operates via the Salvation Army Kauluwela Corps, **296 N. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu** – note that assistance is by phone/email, no walk-ins).
- **Family Promise of Hawai'i – Rent & Rehousing Assistance** – *Assists families with minor children to prevent homelessness or rapidly re-house*. Family Promise works with working families who hit a crisis to **cover back rent or short-term rent** so they don't lose housing, and also operates shelters and transitional housing for homeless families. **Services:** Can provide **up to 3 months of rental assistance** for eligible families to catch up on rent or secure a new rental. They also offer case management, landlord mediation, and help with security deposits or utility start-up when rehousing. **Eligibility:** O'ahu families with **children under 18** who are **homeless or at risk of eviction**. Families must have some source of income or a plan to sustain rent after assistance (to verify they can maintain housing once aid ends). **How to Get Help:** Call Family Promise Hawai'i to be screened for their Prevention/Rapid Rehousing program. Typically, you will need to show loss of income or other hardship (if related to COVID-19, etc.) and proof of residency on O'ahu. **Contact:** **(808) 548-7478** or email through their website. Offices are at the Family Promise Honolulu Center (**245 N. Kukui St., Suite 101**). (*Note: Family Promise coordinates with Aloha United Way 2-1-1 as well, so calling 211 can connect you to their services.*)
- **Kalihi-Palama Health Center – Housing Support** – *Housing assistance integrated with healthcare for homeless clients*. KPHC's **Health Care for the Homeless Project** includes a Permanent Supportive Housing program that provides **long-term rental assistance and case management** for homeless individuals with disabilities. This program (often funded by HUD) helps chronically homeless persons (including those with serious mental illness or substance use disorders) by subsidizing their rent on an ongoing basis, while KPHC staff provide wraparound support (medical, mental health, etc.). **Eligibility:** Must be **homeless on O'ahu with a documented disability** and willing to engage in supportive services. Referrals often come through O'ahu's Continuum of Care (Partners in Care). **Application:** Clients are usually referred via outreach or by calling KPHC's Homeless Program. **Contact:** KPHC Homeless Program at **(808) 791-6342** (Ka'a'ahi Street Clinic) for information. (*Address: 945 Kaaahi St. for clinic; main center at 915 N. King St.*)
- **ALEA Bridge – Emergency Housing Assistance (Central O'ahu)** – *Community-based nonprofit in Wahiawā assisting houseless and at-risk individuals*. ALEA Bridge provides outreach and can help with **emergency rent or utility payments** for those in the Wahiawā/North Shore area who are facing homelessness. They offer case management, help obtaining IDs/employment, and when funds are available, may cover a **one-time rent stipend or deposit** to keep someone housed. **Eligibility:** Varied – generally individuals or families in Central O'ahu who are homeless or about to be evicted. Priority to those engaging in their programs and seeking stable housing. **How to Apply:** Contact ALEA Bridge to

speak with a case manager; they will assess your needs and available funding. **Contact: (808) 379-2532**; office at **123 Mango St., Wahiawā, HI 96786**. (Hours Mon–Fri; call for appointment.) They work closely with the community and other agencies to secure resources.

- **U.S.VETS – Rent Assistance for Veterans** – *Supportive services for veteran households in Honolulu.* U.S.VETS (at Barber's Point and downtown) runs the **Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)** program, which can provide **temporary rental assistance, deposits, or arrears payments** for low-income veterans and their families to prevent eviction or rapidly re-house. **Eligibility:** At least one household member must be a **U.S. military veteran with any discharge other than dishonorable**, and have income below 50% AMI. You must be either homeless or imminently at risk of losing housing. **Services:** Short-term financial assistance for rent, utilities, moving costs, combined with case management and help accessing VA benefits. **How to Apply:** Call U.S.VETS – Honolulu to inquire about SSVF. You'll need to provide proof of veteran status (DD-214) and documents of your housing crisis (eviction notice, etc.). **Contact: (808) 283-9274** (SSVF outreach) or U.S.VETS main **(808) 672-2977**. Office at **&Iwaiwa St., Kapolei (Barber's Point)** and a site in town. (*Veterans may also call 2-1-1 or the VA Homeless Program for referral.*)

Programs for Native Hawaiian Families

- **Office of Hawaiian Affairs – Ka Wailele Emergency Financial Assistance** – *Temporary relief fund for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.* **Description:** Provided one-time grants up to **\$2,000** for rent, mortgage, utilities, or rental deposit to Native Hawaiians experiencing financial hardship. (This program expanded in 2022 to also cover certain car repairs, funeral and medical expenses.) **Eligibility:** Applicants had to **prove Native Hawaiian ancestry**, be Hawai'i residents age 18 or older, and demonstrate financial hardship (no income limit; limit of one assistance grant per 2-year period). **Status:** As of now, OHA's *emergency assistance program is on hold due to funding being fully expended*. OHA plans to announce when it will reopen applications—they have allocated new funds (administered via Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement) for future relief. **How to Apply:** When active, applications are processed by Hawaii Community Lending/Hawaiian Community Assets. Native Hawaiian renters in need should monitor **OHA.org/emergency aid** for updates. **Contact:** OHA offices at **(808) 594-1835** (Nimitz HQ) for information, or CNHA at **(808) 596-8155** (they were slated to administer the new \$6.1M emergency program).
- **DHHL Kūpuna Rental Subsidy Program** – *Rental assistance for Native Hawaiian elders on the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands waitlist.* **Description:** A pilot program funded by HUD/NAHASDA providing **ongoing rental subsidies for up to 12 months (renewable)** to eligible kūpuna (Native Hawaiian seniors) until they receive a Hawaiian Home Lands award. Participants pay 30% of their income toward rent and the program covers the rest directly to the landlord. **Eligibility:** Must be **62 or older**, a Hawai'i resident on the **DHHL waiting list**, renting in the state, with household income ≤80% AMI. Cannot be receiving other rent subsidies (like Section 8). Unit must pass a housing quality inspection and participant must engage in housing counseling with Hawaiian Community Assets. **How to Apply:** Apply online via the Hawaiian Council portal or by phone. **Contact:** Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (administering agency) at **(808) 596-8155** or email dhhl@hawaiiancouncil.org. Online application is available at **hawaiiancouncil.org/kupuna**.
- **Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement – Other Rent Relief Programs:** CNHA has also partnered with DHHL and other agencies on relief efforts. The **DHHL Emergency Rental Assistance Program (COVID-19)** for Native Hawaiians on the waitlist provided up to 12 months rent/utility help during the pandemic (**Note:** this particular program is now closed to new applications). Additionally, **CNHA's main line (808-596-8155)** can direct Native Hawaiian families to any current **housing assistance funds**, including **wildfire relief programs** for those impacted by Maui or Hawai'i Island fires. If you are Native

Hawaiian and struggling with rent, it's worthwhile to call CNHA to see if any specialized assistance is available.

Additional Resources and Contacts

- **Aloha United Way 2-1-1:** AUW's 2-1-1 information helpline can connect you with the most appropriate rental assistance or social service. **Dial 2-1-1** from anywhere in Hawai'i to speak with a specialist, or search their online database. They maintain an updated list of programs statewide and can refer you based on your specific situation (for example, to agencies like Catholic Charities, IHS, Salvation Army, etc. on O'ahu). **Website:** – you can search “Rental Assistance” in their directory.
- **Legal Assistance and Eviction Prevention:** If you've received an **eviction notice**, it's critical to seek help immediately. Contact the **Mediation Center of the Pacific** at **(808) 521-6767** – they offer free landlord-tenant mediation to work out payment plans and potentially halt the eviction process. For legal advice, you can reach out to the **Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i** at **(808) 536-4302** (O'ahu). Legal Aid can provide guidance on tenant rights and may have attorneys to assist with eviction defense or referrals to rent relief. The **State of Hawai'i Judiciary's “Steps to Avoid Eviction (STAE)**” program is another resource – it consolidates information on mediation and rental aid (see the Hawaii Courts STAE website).

Each program has its own requirements and application process, so it's a good idea to call ahead, get a checklist of documents needed, and **apply as early as possible**. Many programs have limited funding, and assistance is often given on a **first-come, first-served** basis. Don't hesitate to reach out to multiple organizations for help – you may qualify for more than one program or be referred to the best fit for your needs. The goal of these programs is to keep you safely housed by bridging the financial gap during tough times.

Sources:

- City & County of Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization – *Rent & Utility Relief Program Overview*
- Catholic Charities Hawai'i – *Housing Assistance Program Details (TANF Relief, SHEG, Housing Placement)*
- Institute for Human Services – *Housing Program Description*
- Salvation Army Hawaiian & Pacific – *Community Assistance Center Guidelines*
- Hawai'i Dept. of Hawaiian Home Lands / CNHA – *Kūpuna Rental Subsidy Program Information*
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs – *Ka Wailele Emergency Assistance Update*
- Bank of Hawaii – “*What to Do If You Can't Pay Rent in Hawaii*” (Jan. 2024) (resource list for renters)
- Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i – *Rental Assistance Resource Page*

Rent and Utility Relief Program — Office of Economic Revitalization | City & County of Honolulu

<https://www.revitalizeoahu.org/renthelp>

Hawaii Relief Program (TANF Support for Housing and Utility Payments) - Catholic Charities Hawai'i

<https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/hawaii-relief-program/>

State Homeless Emergency Grants (SHEG) Program - Catholic Charities Hawai'i

<https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/sheg/>

Rent Supplement - Catholic Charities Hawai'i

<https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/rent-supplement/>

Rent/Mortgage Assistance

<https://www.legalaidhawaii.org/i-cant-pay-my-rent-mortgage.html>

Housing Assistance | The Institute for Human Services

<https://ihshawaii.org/services/housing-program/>

Housing Placement Program - Catholic Charities Hawai'i

<https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/housing-placement-program/>

Kalihi-Palama District Service Center - Honolulu Community Action Program

<https://www.hcapweb.org/kalihi-palama-district-service-center/>

Community Assistance Center

<https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usa-western-territory/hawaiian-and-pacific-islands/community-assistance-center/>

Emergency Rental Assistance at Family Promise of Hawaii

<https://search.auw211.org/search/a04VV000001ziUzYAI>

Programs & Services - Family Promise

<https://familypromise.org/what-we-do/programs-services/>

RE-HOUSING - Family Promise of Hawaii

<https://www.familypromisehawaii.org/rehousing>

RENT RELIEF - Family Promise of Hawaii

<https://www.familypromisehawaii.org/rentrelief>

Health Care for the Homeless Project – Kalihi-Palama Health Center

<https://www.kphc.org/patient-care/healthcare-homeless/>

humanservices.hawaii.gov

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Rental-Assistance-HSCSWs-Quick-Reference.pdf>

ALEA BRIDGE - 123 Mango St, Wahiawa, Hawaii - Homeless Shelters

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/alea-bridge-wahiawa>

Consumer Advocacy – Public Utilities (DCA) | OHA's Ka Wailele Emergency Financial Assistance Program

<https://cca.hawaii.gov/dca/ohas-ka-wailele-emergency-financial-assistance-program/>

OHA's Emergency Financial Assistance Program - The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)

<https://www.oha.org/emergencyaid/>

DHHL Kūpuna Rental Subsidy Program | Hawaiian Council

<https://www.hawaiiancouncil.org/kupuna/>

DHHL Rent Relief Program | Hawaiian Council

<https://www.hawaiiancouncil.org/dhhl-rent-relief-program/>

Rent & Mortgage Relief Funds | Hawaiian Council

<https://www.hawaiiancouncil.org/rent-mortgage-relief-funds/>

What to Do if You Can't Pay Rent in Hawaii - Bank of Hawaii

<https://www.boh.com/blog/what-to-do-if-you-cant-pay-rent-in-hawaii>

STAE (Steps to Avoid Eviction) - Hawaii State Judiciary

https://www.courts.state.hi.us/special_projects/stae