



Aloha United Way

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HAWAII'S RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DISTRIBUTED THE MOST HOUSING SUPPORT PER CAPITA IN 2020

Honolulu - 13,709 Hawai'i households were assisted by the state's Rent Relief and Housing Assistance Program (RRHAP), Aloha United Way, and Catholic Charities Hawai'i and additional partners. The program, managed by Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC), has been cited as a success story by local policy experts.

"Recent analysis by the Hawai'i Budget & Policy Center finds that this state program – RRHAP – got out more housing assistance to help renters per capita than any other state effort across the country," said James Koshiba, founder of Hui Aloha, a former Chair of the House Subcommittee on COVID-19 & Housing. "To get \$60 million out the door in just under three months to Hawai'i households plus expend additional funds for partners, systems, and administrative staffing is remarkable. The success of the program was due to heroic effort and sacrifices by AUW, CCH, and HHFDC."

In early September, the Rent Relief and Housing Assistance Program (RRHAP) was quickly launched to provide much-needed financial assistance for renters and homeowners severely impacted by COVID-19. Aloha United Way has been responsible for distributing nearly \$21 million to Hawai'i renters and homeowners through partnerships with over a dozen non-profit agencies (listed below.) Catholic Charities Hawai'i was able to distribute over \$38 million to renters and homeowners through the program.

The program received more than 18,300 applications in its first five weeks of operation (September/October), and the program concluded on December 31, 2020.

- \$59,733,688 in housing assistance funding was approved for 13,709 households;
- 4,824 applications were denied due to ineligibility; and
- **\$59,003,328 has been disbursed to 13,690 qualified households (as of January 13, 2021).**

"We want to thank those who applied for the state assistance program for their patience and understanding," said Catholic Charities Hawai'i president and CEO Rob Van Tassell. "We are acutely aware of the anxiety and stress in the community during these challenging times; we did all within our means to expedite the payment process. Our dedicated and hard-working staff worked tirelessly to process applications and get rent relief out as quickly as possible."

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“Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic earlier this year, many of Hawai'i's families, including those from moderate-income households that never needed housing financial assistance before, found themselves struggling to make ends meet,” said Aloha United Way President and CEO, John Fink. “With our 101 year history of service to our local community, AUW has been honored to be part of this effort to assist people during these extremely unusual and challenging times.”

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of households receiving financial assistance through RRHAP were at 50% area median income (AMI) or lower. Fifteen percent (15%) of applicants received assistance having reported no income.

By County, Honolulu county residents received the most payments, followed by Maui*

- Hawai'i County: More than \$2.5 million assisted nearly 700 households
- Maui County: More than \$10 million assisted approximately 2,500 households
- Kauai County: \$3.8 million assisted over 900 households
- Honolulu County: More than \$41.3 assisted over 9,500 households

**County-by-county data as of 12/31/2020*

“What we received here on Kaua'i with the rent relief program has greatly assisted me and my family. I have two little ones, I'm a single mom, and I've really felt the struggle,” said Anna, Kaua'i resident and small business owner for six years. “The lack of security was definitely a stressor. Now that I've gotten the rent relief, it's helped my emotional well-being and helped me in the workplace.” (Photo: [Anna and daughter](#))

The RRHAP was funded by \$100 million in State CARES relief appropriations through [Act 9 \(SLH 2020\)](#) and ran in parallel to the housing assistance programs administered by the City and County of Honolulu and Hawai'i County. In line with industry norms for non-profit partnerships and CARES funding parameters, an amount of up to fifteen percent (15%), or \$15 million for the program was allotted for the cost of administering the program, including administrative and operational expenses incurred by CCH, AUW, non-profit partners, and the State of Hawai'i. The preliminary final expenditures to administer the program amounted to approximately \$10.3 million, well below the allocated funding for program administration. The remaining balance of program appropriations, about \$30 million, has been returned to the State of Hawaii unemployment insurance fund.

The application period for this program has ended, and new applications are not being accepted. However, applications that were approved for payment before the program's conclusion on December 30 are still being paid in January. Aloha United Way is allowing final landlord verification forms to be submitted up to January 30. Applicants can find out if a landlord form is outstanding by looking up their application status at <https://www.auw.org/rrhap-application-status>

“The importance and impact of this program cannot be understated,” said Gavin Thornton, Executive Director at Hawai'i Appleseed. “Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, Aloha United Way, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, and their community partners did unprecedented work paying out a total of \$60 million in rental assistance benefitting tenants and landlords as well.”

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Aloha United Way's RRHAP non-profit partner agencies

- ALEA Bridge
- Gregory House Programs
- Hina Mauka
- Institute for Human Services
- Parents and Children Together
- The Salvation Army
- Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center
- Waikiki Community Center
- Pearl Hawaii Federal Credit Union
- Hawaii State Federal Credit Union
- Hotel and Travel Industry Federal Credit Union
- Kauai Government Employees Federal Credit Union
- Hickam Federal Credit Union

Catholic Charities Hawai'i's RRHAP partner agencies

- Family Promise of Hawaii
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies
- Susannah Wesley
- Unite Here! Local 5

About Aloha United Way

Founded in 1919, Aloha United Way brings resources, organizations, and businesses together to advance the health, education, and financial stability of every person in our community. A member of United Way Worldwide, AUW supports non-profits and communities on Oahu. For more information, visit AUW.org.

About Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) was established in 1947 with the mission to "serve the people of Hawai'i, without regard to their faith or culture. We are a community of hope that promotes the dignity of each person by helping them empower themselves." Today, CCH is one of the largest social service agencies in Hawai'i, with over 40 programs serving keiki to kupuna. We have over 300 staff on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and Hawai'i Island that collectively serve approximately 40,000 individuals annually.

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