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News Release

Private Nonprofits, Including Houses of Worship, May Be Eligible for Disaster Assistance

HONOLULU – Private nonprofits, including houses of worship and other faith-based organizations, may be eligible to apply for federal disaster assistance to help recover from the Aug. 8 wildfires on Maui and the Big Island.

The deadline to submit an application for FEMA's Public Assistance program is **Tuesday, Oct. 10**.

Under the Aug. 10 major presidential disaster declaration, funding from the Public Assistance program can be used to pay for debris removal, emergency protective measures and restoration of disaster-damaged facilities in Maui County.

Hawai'i County is designated to apply for eligible expenses for emergency protective measures.

The application process depends on whether a private nonprofit organization is classified as offering critical services or essential, noncritical social services.

Private nonprofit organizations that provide critical services such as health-care facilities and utilities can apply directly to FEMA for funding. Other examples of critical services include water, sewer and electrical systems; private schools providing primary or secondary education; or institutions of higher education.

Private nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship, can also be classified as providing essential noncritical social services. For these organizations, FEMA provides only Public Assistance funding for eligible permanent work costs. But first, apply for a low-interest disaster loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Private nonprofit organizations in Maui County may then apply for FEMA Public Assistance, a program which reimburses the state, local governments and certain nonprofits for eligible disaster-related expenses.

If a house of worship or other nonprofit organization offering essential non-critical social services in Maui County is turned down for an SBA loan, or if the loan amount does not cover the cost of all permanent repairs, FEMA may be able to help. FEMA may provide funds to pay for what SBA or insurance does not cover.

If SBA offers a loan to an applicant, which then chooses not to accept the loan, the applicant would not be eligible for FEMA funding.

Besides houses of worship, other examples of non-critical essential services include educational enrichment activities, supervised care and daycare services, residential services for people with disabilities, assisted living and low-income housing, homeless shelters and rehabilitation service, and community and performing arts centers.

Houses of worship and other nonprofits in Maui County are encouraged to file an application for Public Assistance as soon as possible. The application is called a Request for Public Assistance. Interested applicants can contact Brian Fisher, the Public Assistance lead for the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, by calling **808-518-7985** or emailing Brian.j.fisher@hawaii.gov.

SBA applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information, and download applications at <https://www.sba.gov/hawaii-wildfires>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at **800-659-2955** or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

Personal help with completing loan applications is available at any of the Disaster Recovery Centers or SBA's Business Recovery Centers. For locations and hours, go to <https://go.dhs.gov/oAz>.

More information about assistance for houses of worship is also available at [What Houses of Worship Need to Know About FEMA's Disaster Relief Process | FEMA.gov](#) in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, French, German, Haitian Creole, Korean and Portuguese.

For the latest information on the Maui wildfire recovery efforts, visit mauicounty.gov and fema.gov/disaster/4724. Follow FEMA on social media: [@FEMARegion9](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion9) and facebook.com/fema.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency and/or economic status. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call the Civil Rights Resource line at 833-285-7448.