



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

HAWAI'I AUGUST 2023 WILDFIRES JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

NEWS RELEASE
August 12, 2023

W23JIC-004

CONTRIBUTING TO WILDFIRE RELIEF? CONSIDER THESE TIPS

HONOLULU — The public has offered an outpouring of support for those harmed by the devastating wildfires in Maui and Hawai'i counties, with people here and around the world both volunteering and making donations.

If possible, state and local officials recommend donations of cash to reputable nonprofit organizations active in Hawai'i, which will allow the nonprofits to buy and provide exactly the goods and services required to meet the needs of survivors.

While gifts of food, clothing and other physical items are appreciated, the sheer volume of goods donated has begun to overwhelm some groups that have been accepting such donations. Deliveries of donated items have been made by sea to Maui, but vehicles have been unable to take them away from the dock to where survivors need them, emergency workers reported Saturday.

"Canned goods, blankets, clothing and similar donations all need to be handled, stored, and then delivered where they are needed," said James Barros, administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency.

That adds cost and complications. Cash donations, by contrast, can buy goods that support the local economy and can be delivered exactly where and when needed.

Also, local officials stress that individuals should not "self-deploy" to Maui to assist with the disaster response and recovery efforts. The fire-impacted areas are off-limits while fire control and the search for survivors or human remains continues. Law enforcement will coordinate with residents to provide access to their homes when it is safe to do so.

Authorities are also controlling access to the scene to ensure protection for 'iwi kūpuna and historically and culturally important items.

While disasters often bring out the best of people, they also bring out the scammers. Please refer to this resource to learn more about how to protect yourself from scammers and make sure that your donation gets into the hands of the people who need it:

<https://aq.hawaii.gov/tax/learn-more/>

If you want to help, here are some recommendations:

- Hawai'i Community Foundation - Maui Strong Fund, www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/maui-strong
- Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement - Kāko'o Maui Fundraiser, www.hawaiiancouncil.org/maui
- Maui United Way - Maui Fire Disaster Relief, <https://mauiunitedway.org/disasterrelief>

Organizations or entities that would like to assist in the relief effort are asked to contact John Vierra at the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency at 808-733-4300, extension 548, or email MauiStrongAssist@hawaii.gov.

Those seeking to volunteer also may contact John Vierra.

###

Contact:

August 2023 Wildfires Joint Information Center
(808) 636-8955

Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency
HawaiiEMA@hawaii.gov