

OHCD Announces Incentive Program for Landlords

\$3,000 sign-on bonus for renting to select housing voucher holders

The Hawai'i County Office of Housing and Community Development announced today a \$3,000 sign-on bonus for Hawai'i Island Landlords taking part in select housing assistance programs.

Starting April 17, Landlords who partner with the Office may be eligible to receive a one-time \$3,000 incentive payment when renting with a one-year lease to Emergency Housing, Veteran, Non-Elderly and Disabled, or Foster Young Adult voucher holders. Property owners with multiple open units could receive \$3,000 per unit.

By offering the \$3,000 sign-on bonus, the Office hopes to increase the number of Landlords on Hawai'i Island participating in the program to provide more housing opportunities for participants holding vouchers.

"Addressing the homelessness and affordable housing crises requires collaboration and partnerships. This new incentive program launched through the Hawai'i County Office of Housing and Community Development seeks to leverage the units of affordable housing available now on Hawai'i Island to help those in need to deliver real results," said Housing Administrator Susan Kunz. "This investment will ensure the successful delivery of this program into the community."

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's most recent "The Gap" report issued in March 2023, Hawai'i in 2021 had just 89 affordable and available homes per 100 renter households earning at or below 100% Area Median Income (AMI). For low-income renter households, those earning at or below 80% AMI, there were just 74 units per 100 households. The figure drops to 34 units per 100 households at or below 30% AMI.

This shortage of affordable rental housing units makes it difficult for voucher recipients to find or keep an affordable housing rental unit in Hawai'i County. In any given month, up to 100 participants who've received a voucher are searching for a safe place to call home.

"Many Hawai'i Island renters are struggling to find a place, and our housing voucher program participants are no different," said Existing Housing Division Manager Michael Yee. "This incentive program will bring more of our housing stock into the reach of voucher holders because, as we all know, stable, affordable housing is critical to a person's health, dignity, safety, inclusion and overall contribution to their community."

The Landlord Incentive Program will end upon the depletion of available of federal funding. Full program details can be found at www.hawaiicounty.gov/landlords.

Interested Landlords are also encouraged to sign-up for the Office's next New Landlord Orientation set for 9 a.m. May 24 in Hilo.

For more information, visit www.hawaiicounty.gov/landlords, email landlord.housing@hawaiicounty.gov or call the Existing Housing Division at (808) 959-4642, ext. 1904.

The Hawai'i County Office of Housing and Community Development is responsible for the planning, administration, and operation of all County of Hawai'i housing programs. Our Mission is to provide for the development of viable communities through decent housing, suitable living environments and expanded economic opportunities.

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