

# FAQ: Direct Housing Updates

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**Release Date: January 24, 2025**

FEMA continues to house survivors of the Aug. 8, 2023, Maui wildfires through its Direct Housing Program. Currently all households that remain eligible for the Direct Housing Program are licensed into direct housing units. Participants will continue to be housed as long as they remain eligible for the program and should remain in contact with their FEMA recertification advisor.

## **Q&A for Direct Housing Participants**

### **Q. Why are participants being asked to relocate?**

A. There are various reasons why survivors in Direct Lease units may need to be relocated, with safety always being a top priority. FEMA's goal is to ensure all survivors have a safe, sanitary, and habitable place to live. Currently, FEMA is focused on efforts to bring survivors back to West Maui, closer to their homes, while reducing their overall footprint on the island. This includes prioritizing properties nearer to Lahaina.

### **Q. What happens if a participant is offered housing to return to West Maui and declines?**

A. Wildfire survivors in FEMA's Direct Housing Program that have previously expressed interest in returning to West Maui are currently being contacted by FEMA. If they choose to decline the West Maui unit, they may remain in their current housing situation. However, they will not be offered another West Maui unit after declining the initial offer.

### **Q. What happens to participants if their landlord's contract is not extended?**

A. Wildfire survivors in FEMA's Direct Housing Program may remain in the program through Feb. 10, 2026, as long as they continue to meet eligibility requirements. If their current unit's contract is not extended and they must move out, an alternative housing solution will be provided by FEMA to accommodate them, as long as they remain eligible or until the end of the Direct Housing



Program.

**Q. How will displaced families be informed about having to move if their current property owner's contract is not extended?**

A. Tenants will be informed by FEMA in advance if they will be required to move to another location. FEMA will then provide alternative housing solutions for these households.

**Q. How do wildfire survivors feel reassured about their housing security?**

A. While housing situations may change, participants in the Direct Housing Program can rest assured that if they continue to meet the requirements in their license agreement they may remain in the program and will be housed until they find their permanent housing solution or until the program ends.

**Q. When will Direct Housing participants be required to begin paying rent?**

A. All Direct Housing households will begin paying rent to FEMA on March 1, 2025.

**Q. When will households be notified of the requirement to begin paying rent?**

A. Households received 30- 60- and 90-day notices informing them of the rent requirement that will begin on March 1, 2025, and of the process to appeal the rental amount.

**Q. How is the rental amount determined?**

A. The rental amount is based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2025 Fair Market Rent on Maui along with the household's ability to pay.

**Q. If individuals have questions about the rental requirement and the appeal process who do they talk to?**

A. Direct Housing households are encouraged to talk to their recertification advisor if they have any questions on the appeal process and what documentation is



needed to be considered for rent reduction.

For Direct Housing households with further questions call the Individual Assistance Housing Hotline at 808-784-1600.



**FEMA**