

FOOD, WATER AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP

Draft Report
November 1, 2023

Purpose: To evaluate the availability and distribution of food and other necessary supplies for displaced individuals and families, and to prepare recommendations for appropriate legislative action.

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Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

SUMMARY

The Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group (Working Group) is comprised of Co-Chair Representatives Greggor Ilagan and Terez Amato and Member Representatives Diamond Garcia, Cedric Asuega Gates, Rose Martinez, Richard H.K. Onishi, Jackson D. Sayama, and Adrian K. Tam. The purpose of the Working Group is to evaluate the availability and distribution of food and other necessary supplies for displaced individuals and families. The Working Group is committed to thoroughly evaluating the current situation and preparing actionable recommendations that can better support vulnerable communities in times of crisis.

The Working Group took a trifold approach to data gathering: (1) Soliciting data from government officials and the public through correspondence and surveys; (2) Conducting site visits and interviewing government officials; and (3) Performing independent research. Members examined the entire supply chain, from beginning to end, to identify logistical problems related to supply availability and distribution. This included researching the role of different parties in the supply chain, including governmental agencies (such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), Maui Emergency Management Agency, and various other federal, state, and county departments), non-governmental organizations (such as the American Red Cross, Maui Food Bank, Maui Economic Opportunity, and other local non-profits), businesses (such as grocery stores, restaurants, and transportation companies), religious organizations, and private individuals.

On September 13, 2023, the Working Group sent 20 letters formally inviting the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, state executive department heads, and Maui Mayor to share insights, data, case studies, or best practices that will assist the Working Group in crafting impactful legislative recommendations. As of this writing, the Working Group has received nine responses from the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller, Director of Health, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Director of Human Services, Director of Finance, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations, and Director of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. The Working Group is awaiting 11 responses from the Director of Human Resources Development, Attorney General, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Director of Public Safety, Adjutant General, Director of Taxation, Superintendent of Education, Director of Transportation, Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, and Maui County Mayor. These responses as well as the initial request letters are available on the [Working Group's webpage](#).

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The Working Group also conducted a public survey between October 9-29, 2023, which solicited suggestions and comments on improving disaster response. The survey was sent to various individuals involved in response efforts or directly affected by the disaster, including government officials and agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community members. Information on how the survey was conducted and the responses received may be found on the [Working Group's webpage](#). In addition to these survey results, the Working Group is also anticipating responses from approximately 500 community members from a needs assessment survey conducted via phone by the Department of Health.¹ Data relating to food, water, and other supplies is expected from the Department by October 25, 2023, for possible inclusion in the final Working Group report.

On September 18, 2023, the Working Group visited FEMA's Distribution Center in Hawaii. The Distribution Center serves as a significant resource hub stocked with immediate response resources. The Distribution Center, which is strategically located in Halawa's Industrial Park near key transportation hubs, has a wide range of essential supplies, including the "Big Six" (water, meals, blankets, cots, tarps, and plastic sheeting), soft sided tent shelters with support package and portable toilet, infant and toddler care items (diapers, bottles, formula, etc.), durable and consumable medical equipment, joint field office kits, and generators.

On October 10, 2023, the Working Group visited the Maui Relief Storage Facility in Kakaako. The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement opened the facility, in coordination with Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, to receive, sort, and inventory donations collected for Maui residents impacted by the wildfires and store them until they are ready to be transported and received on Maui.²

The Working Group is also scheduled to travel to Maui on November 3, 2023, to visit distribution centers, specifically the Kahana Gateway Distribution Center. Located in West Maui, the Kahana Distribution Center provides food, supplies, and other necessities for community members affected by the Maui wildfires.³

¹ "Department of Health to Conduct Maui Needs Assessment Survey." *State of Hawaii Department of Health*, 6 Oct. 2023, <https://health.hawaii.gov/news/newsroom/department-of-health-to-conduct-maui-needs-assessment-survey>.

² "Coordinated Donation Management Center for Maui Fire Victims Opens in Hakuone." *The Office of Hawaiian Affairs*, 19 Aug. 2023, <https://www.oha.org/news/coordinated-donation-management-center-for-maui-fire-victims-opens-in-hakuone>.

³ "Kahana Gateway Distribution Center: Stability and Hope for Maui Fire Victims." *County of Maui*, 16 Sept. 2023, <https://www.maui-county.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=12857>.

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The Working Group interviewed various governmental officials, including the Department of Human Services, who provided insight on the Lahaina wildfire response.

Lastly, members gathered data by reviewing various federal and state emergency management documents, emergency proclamations, laws, and news articles, and by speaking with key stakeholders. Chapter 127A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which governs Hawaii state emergency management procedures, including the delegation of powers, proclamations, and other major items, such as commodity price regulation, was reviewed in detail.

The increased likelihood of natural disasters such as the August 8, 2023, Maui wildfires mandate increased efforts in preparation. To this end the Working Group here presents its research, including findings, recommendations, and community feedback, to evaluate the availability and distribution of food, water, and other necessary supplies for displaced individuals and families, and to prepare recommendations for appropriate legislative action.

The work of the Working Group sheds light on the current state of disaster supplies availability and distribution, identifies gaps and inefficiencies in supply chains, and offers concrete solutions to address issues of critical importance. Specifically, the Working Group proposes six recommendations on the following topics to improve the availability and distribution of essential supplies to displaced individuals and families:

- (1) Distribution Management Plan Maintenance;
- (2) Food Bank Reserves;
- (3) "Right to Garden" Law;
- (4) Hot Food Donation Standards Outreach;
- (5) Emergency Prescription Refills; and
- (6) Emergency Surge Personnel.

Hawaii can significantly enhance its supply availability and distribution system by adopting the recommendations, ensuring a more effective and coordinated disaster response.

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FINDINGS

Distribution Management Plan Maintenance

Finding: A state's Distribution Management Plan details the process for an effective and efficient distribution of critical resources to disaster survivors during a crisis. Hawaii currently lacks a comprehensive process for community stakeholders to provide input on the State's Distribution Management Plan. This absence can lead to inefficiencies in disaster response, potential misallocation of resources, and a lack of transparency in decision-making processes.

Purpose of the Distribution Management Plan

In 2019, program requirements for the Emergency Management Performance Grant were updated to require that recipients' Emergency Operations Plans include a Distribution Management Plan. As the primary state agency responsible for emergency management, HI-EMA annually maintains the [Hawaii State Distribution Management Plan](#). The objectives of the Hawaii State Distribution Management Plan are to establish and maintain an emergency distribution network to provide critical supplies to counties. To achieve these objectives, HI-EMA has developed three distribution efforts that form the foundation of the Distribution Management Plan:

- (1) Distribution Management (Resupply): This involves overseeing the movement of critical resources from suppliers to disaster survivors;
- (2) Pre-Staged Supplies: These are supplies pre-staged within the State in anticipation of disasters to bridge the gap between the catastrophic event and the opening of emergency supply lines. These supplies can include vendor managed inventories or other storage methods; and
- (3) Commodity Points of Distribution (C-PODs) Operations: These operations establish centralized initial accessible points where the public can obtain life-sustaining emergency relief supplies until they are no longer needed. Generally, the counties manage C-PODs and are crucial for immediate relief. However, the Distribution Management Plan provides guidance on the process and procedures for the State to run a C-POD.

The success of the Hawaii State Distribution Management Plan involves coordination among FEMA, HI-EMA, county emergency management agencies, and the private sector. Each has specific roles in establishing or maintaining key areas or critical nodes, such as Ports of Debarkation and federal, state, and county staging areas.

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Under the current plan, various forecast advisories and conditions for natural and man-made occurrences are utilized as the primary means for indications and warnings to begin plan implementation. Noticeably absent from the list of incident types is wildfires. Following the Lahaina wildfire and the overall rise in disaster events occurring in Hawaii in recent years (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic, Kilauea eruption, and Kauai flooding), consideration should be given to updating this list to include all foreseeable incident types impacting the State.

The Lahaina wildfire and its devastating impact on the community underscore the critical need for an effective and efficient Distribution Management Plan in Hawaii. While existing frameworks have served their purpose to some extent, there are evident gaps and areas for improvement. This chapter aims to shed light on these areas, focusing on the roles of key stakeholders in disaster relief distribution.

Coordination and Community Response

Although "Unified Coordination" was implemented for primary federal/state/county government incident management activities, information regarding coordination and community response as it relates to supply distribution following the Lahaina wildfire emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive Distribution Management Plan. The Working Group recognizes that the state and county governments tried to handle the unprecedented situation in Lahaina as effectively and efficiently as possible, however, certain gaps became apparent from the stories published in an article from the Honolulu Star-Advertiser on August 11, 2023, titled "[As the Smoke Clears, Maui Residents Pull Together.](#)" In one incident, a wife left Lahaina to purchase supplies from a different part of the island. Regrettably, due to strict roadblocks set up by the Maui Police Department, she was restricted from re-entering Lahaina, which prevented her from reuniting with her husband. By contrast, private envoys originating outside of Lahaina were able to successfully coordinate with the Maui Police Department to pass through National Guard and police checkpoints and deliver hundreds of pallets of bottled water as well as food, diapers, blankets, and clothing to Lahaina.

In the aftermath of a major disaster like the Lahaina wildfire, there needs to be a more structured plan to instruct emergency responders on addressing such predicaments. The simple task of fetching supplies should not lead to a distressing separation of a wife and husband at a crucial time. This incident accentuates the pressing need for a well-defined Distribution Management Plan. Such a plan should seamlessly integrate county initiatives, ensuring that future protocols facilitate families obtaining supplies without unnecessary separations.

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The article, which was written three days after the devastating Lahaina wildfire, highlighted a major aspect of the Lahaina wildfire response: Community support. Private organizations and citizens exhibited commendable teamwork in the field. In the immediate aftermath of the Lahaina wildfire, before governmental emergency response became fully operational, communities across the State rallied together to provide supplies for those affected by the wildfire.⁴ The Maui community worked together to fill gaps in supplying and distributing food, water, and other supplies directly to Lahaina. This included private citizens loading trucks with supplies, moving supplies to boats in Kihei, and delivering supplies to point of distribution sites, sometimes using paddleboards, jet skis, and other modes of water transportation to bring supplies ashore following the closure of Lahaina Harbor. Private pilots across the State also began organizing flights to bring lifesaving supplies to Lahaina, including a shipment of insulin.

The supply distribution hubs established on Maui in the immediate aftermath of the Lahaina wildfire were island wide and run largely by community volunteers. However, the locations for distribution were limited even though there was a strong willingness of the community to help with supply chain distributions.

⁴ Pollard, James, and Thalia Beaty. "Maui Residents Fill Philanthropic Gaps While Aid Makes the Long Journey to the Fire-stricken Island" *AP News*, 17 Aug. 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/hawaii-wildfires-maui-lahaina-philanthropy-f343a8045c87e209df1b84c1443445cb>.

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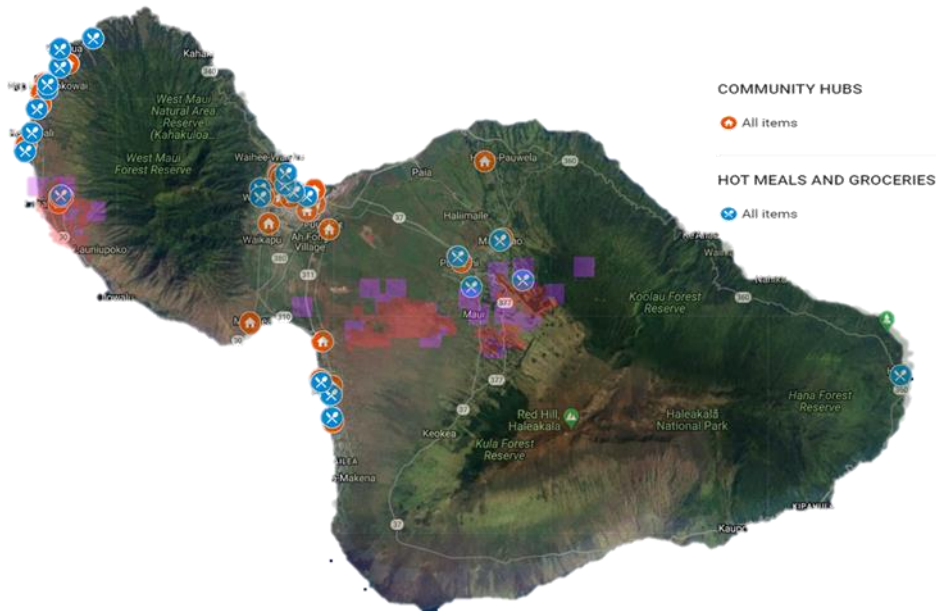


Figure: [ARCGIS resource map](#) presented by the Maui Fire, Flood and Disaster Relief Group via Facebook | @mauireliefgroup via Instagram.

Information was often scarce in the immediate aftermath of the Lahaina wildfire. Most cellular and broadband services were unavailable or severely limited due to fire damage and power outages. Residents often had to rely upon other forms of communication, including radio and direct outreach. It was not until mobile hotspots were deployed two days after the wildfire that some residents were able to access the Internet.⁵

Yet, locating available supplies remained a significant obstacle. It took several days to stand up state and county websites on the wildfire. For example, Maui wildfire information was not recorded by the Internet Archive on the [MauiNuiStrong.info](#) website until August 14, 2023, six days after the Lahaina wildfire.⁶ Ultimately, the site's high-bandwidth usage, due in part to many unnecessary images, made it difficult for residents with limited Internet service to access the site.

⁵ Murphy Kelly, Samantha. "Portable Hotspots Arrive in Maui to Bring Internet to Residents and Tourists." *CNN Business*, 10 Aug. 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/10/tech/portable-cell-service-maui-outages/index.html>.

⁶ "Wayback Machine." *Internet Archive*, https://web.archive.org/web/20230000000000*/https://www.mauinuistrong.info. Accessed 30 Oct. 2023.

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Instead, residents often had to rely upon community-established, low-bandwidth online data sources for supply information in the days and weeks after the wildfire.

Supplies					Food						
HUB	HOURS	NOTES	HOW CAN I GET SUPPLIES?	LINKS FOR UPDATES & CURRENT NEEDS LIST	LOCATION	PHONE	SERVICE	DELIVERY	FOOD SERVICE HOURS	INSTRUCTIONS	LINKS FOR UPDATES
WEST MAUI					WEST MAUI						
Honokowai Relief at Honokowai Beach Park ACROSS 2636 Lower Honokowai Rd	Heating Hui, information, Produce & Household Goods: Weds-Sun 10am-6pm Hot Meals: Wed-Sun 10am, 12pm, 5pm "walk in service" Keiki Corner: Wed-Fri 2-6pm, Sat-Sun 10-6pm Mauna Medics: 7 days per week Receiving donations: 10-6pm daily		ACCEPTING PACKAGE: Honokowai Relief C/O Amy Mobbs 5095 Napilihau St. 109B #213, Lahaina HI 96761	Facebook Instagram	A'A Roots "Vegan" 5095 Napilihau Street	(808)296-2499	FRESH PRODUCE & SMOOTHIES	NO	7 days, closed Wed 8am-2pm *Free smoothies from 8-9am	*Fresh produce available in front of store during regular business hours 8am-2pm	WEBSITE FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM
Kahana Gateway 4850 Honoapiʻiani Hwy	Mon/Wed/Fri 10am-4pm		Walk-ins available *Lunch & dinner meals offered *Feed My Sheep drive-thru distribution Thurs 10am-2pm	Website Facebook Instagram	Citizen's Church 8215 Ilihu Hwy	(808)419-8650	DINNER	NO <small>*Can pick up meals for other people w/o transportation</small>	Fri 5pm-7pm	Community Dinner open to everyone	FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM
Kelaweia Mauka 2 853 Miihau Street	Mon-Sat 10am-6:00pm Sunday times vary		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Honokowai Beach Park Relief 3636 Lower Honoapiʻiani Hwy	(808)509-7153	BREAKFAST LUNCH & DINNER	NO	Wed-Sun Breakfast 9:30am Lunch 12:30pm Dinner 4:30pm	Walk up meals	Facebook Instagram
Kelaweia Mauka 3 909 N Hopoe Place	Mon-Fri 10am-7pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Kahana Gateway 4405 Honoapiʻiani Hwy	-	LUNCH OR DINNER	NO	Mon/Wed/Fri 10am-4pm Thurs: Feed My Sheep drive-thru distribution 10am-2pm	Walk up meals	Website Facebook Instagram
Kelaweia Mauka Park Lahainaluna Road	Mon-Sat 10am-5pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Kelaweia Mauka Kitchen 507 N. Lealei Place	-	DINNER	NO	Tues/Thurs/Fri/Sat 5:30pm til pau	Walk up meals	FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM
Lahainaluna Kulaha 876 Kulaha St	Mon-Sat 9am-6pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Merriman's Kapalua 1 Bay Club Place	(808)669-6400	LUNCH	YES <small>DM via Instagram: Name Address Amount of people Preferred drop-off time</small>	7 days 11am-1pm or until they run out up at Merriman's Kapalua	Pick up meals *Available until they run out	INSTAGRAM FACEBOOK
Lahainaluna Liloa 758 L. Liloa St	Everyday 7am-7pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Monkeypod Kitchen by Merriman's 2435 Seapointe Pkwy Bldg L-1	(808)878-6763	LUNCH	NO	Everyday at 11am-2pm Pick up in front of Whaler's Village at the roundabout entrance.	Pick up meals *Available until they run out	INSTAGRAM FACEBOOK
Lindsay's Closet	*Womens plus size clothing By appointment only, open to anyone in need		Text Lindsay at (808)268-1273	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates	Noodle Bar Lahaina	(808)913-9119	LUNCH AND / OR DINNER	YES	Varying Schedule *Check social media pages for menu, days and hours	Text Lily at (808)813-9119 for pick up	FACEBOOK
Napili Noho 50 Maha St	Mon, Tues, Thurs-Sat 10am-4pm, Fri 10am-5pm (closed Wed & Sun)		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Website Instagram Amazon Wishlist	Plantation House 2800 Plantation Club Drive	(808)669-6299	LUNCH	NO	Mon/Weds/Fri 11am-1pm *Aug 28-Sep 28 only	* Chilled family meals for 6+ persons ready to heat up * Food pantry items	FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM
Pohaku Park "S-Turns" 4001 Lower Honoapiʻiani Rd	Mon-Sat 10am-6pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates							
Sheraton Kaanapali Nā 'Aikane o Maui 2600 Kaanapali Pkwy	Everyday 10am-4pm		Walk-ins available *Open to anyone in need	Check Maui FFD Relief Group for updates							

Figure: Sample of the [supply and food location spreadsheets](#) presented by the Maui Fire, Flood and Disaster Relief Group via Facebook | @mauireliefgroup via Instagram.

Lahaina Fire help page (Amato)

Overview

Shelters

FEMA Aid

Food and Water

Maui County Updates

Organization Signop

Mortgage Help

Transportation

Find Help

Find Housing

Find a Loved One

House an Evacuee

Fuel

Legal Help

Disclaimer

Multilingual Help

Register for Assistance

Help or Donate

House an Evacuee

Going to Lahaina

Loans

Federal Resource Fair

Disclaimer

Help or Find Animals

Business Help

Get Medical Care

Unemployed?

Contact us

For Keiki

Radio

Apply for MedQuest

Our Mission: To help our 'Ohana Aloha Friends! You are not alone!

[FIND HELP HERE](#) [GIVE HELP HERE](#) [HELP IN 18 Languages](#) 29 categories and growing see buttons top/side

[Maui County Recover Website](#)

Thank you for visiting [Kihei's State Representative Terez Amato's Fire Relief Alliance](#) site. We rapidly set it up to help our 'Ohana hurt by the Maui wildfires. We know information is limited and hope this low bandwidth accessible site helps you and your loved ones find help or give help.

Everyone is affected. Our Maui 'Ohana needs food, medicine, shelter, smiles and hugs and [YOUR support](#). A lot of it.

This is an evolving site - - we set it up fast... constantly being improved - People need help and information NOW! Not fancy, but all verified info: [DISCLAIMER](#)

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Figure: Screenshot of the low bandwidth [website](#) accessible at text data rates implemented by Co-Chair Amato, which provided information to the community on various subjects, including food, water, and other supplies, in the immediate aftermath of the Maui wildfires (site is no longer updated).

Once communications improved and online government resources were established, residents pivoted toward using these resources to access key information on supply availability and distribution, including using the [MauiRecovers.org](#) website for information on whether the local water is safe to drink, cook with, or use for hygiene purposes:

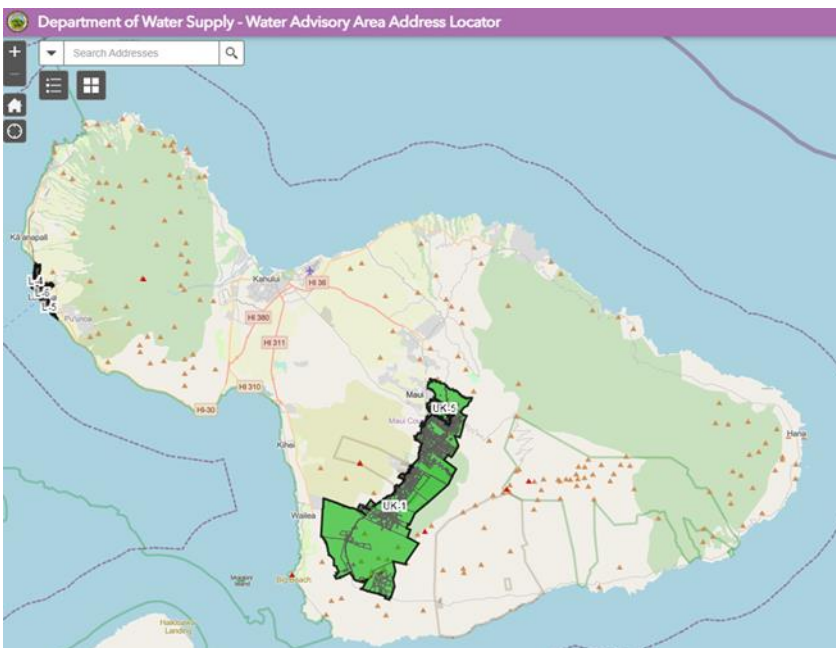


Figure: Maui County Department of Water Supply ARCGIS [Water Advisory Area Address Locator](#) map resource.

Although there are many positive aspects of a community-driven disaster response, certain issues did arise. For example, there are multiple reported incidents via social media and private conversations of some supply distribution hubs refusing food or water to people in need from other neighborhoods. Furthermore, with a disaster of this magnitude, there is a higher potential for persons to take advantage of the emergency situation for personal gain, including diverting resources away from persons in need through donation scams. The Department of the Attorney General currently enforces Chapter 467B, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which regulates the solicitation of funds from the public and authorizes administrative and criminal penalties for illegal activities.

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Overall, the proactive response from the private sector during the initial recovery phase of the Lahaina wildfire is noteworthy. An effective Distribution Management Plan should explicitly outline strategies to optimally harness private sector contributions during emergencies.

Other Identified Gaps

The Lahaina wildfire also highlighted other gaps in supply distribution, including language access and animal welfare, that are not adequately addressed in the current Hawaii State Distribution Management Plan.

During and immediately after the wildfire, most, if not all, information was provided exclusively in English with the exception of Co-Chair Amato's website which included information for people in 13 languages.

Following the wildfire, reports emerged regarding access issues for Lahaina's non-English speaking populations, particularly its Filipino residents. In Hawaii, Filipinos represent the second-largest ethnic group in State, accounting for approximately one-fourth of the State's 1.4 million residents.⁷ Of the nearly 48,000 Maui residents that can trace their roots back to the Philippines, about 5,000 of them lived in Lahaina, which accounted for approximately 40% of the town's population before the fire.

Despite the large representation of Filipino residents in Lahaina, many reported difficulties in obtaining information and aid, and by extension supplies, due to language access issues.⁸ According to the United States Census Bureau, roughly 59% of Filipinos in Hawaii speak a language other than English at home. During and immediately after the wildfire, most, if not all, information was provided exclusively in English. The language access issues that occurred with the Lahaina wildfire underscores the importance of an effective Distribution Management Plan that caters to the community's diverse needs.

Another focus of the Lahaina wildfire response has been the animal welfare crisis. Amidst the chaos of the Lahaina wildfire, many residents were separated from their pets. The Maui Humane Society, the island's only open-admission animal shelter, has been at the forefront of the Lahaina animal rescue operations. Two weeks after the wildfire, the organization had recovered 187

⁷ Kelleher, Jennifer Sinco. "Lahaina's Filipino Residents Are Key to Tourism and Local Culture. Will They Stay?" *AP News*, 10 Sept. 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/lahaina-maui-wildfire-filipino-housekeepers-tourism-5a06eed3e5ebe7466d62b5a9e2f214a0>.

⁸ Venkatraman, Sakshi, and Kimmy Yam. "Filipinos in Lahaina Say They've Been Overlooked in Wildfire Response." *NBC News*, 7 Sept. 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/filipinos-maui-hawaii-wildfires-rcna102375>.

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animals from the burn area and treated an estimated 375 animals affected by the fires.⁹ The organization had received over 1,350 reports of lost animals and estimated that approximately 3,000 animals were initially unaccounted for due to the wildfire. At that time, approximately 30% of the recovered animals had been reunited with their families, while the remaining were being cared for by the shelter or foster families. The number of animals being rescued and cared for demonstrates the need for distribution management efforts to incorporate animal welfare considerations, such as food, water, medical, and other supplies, and highlights the significant role played by local animal welfare organizations in disaster relief.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of Hawaii's disaster relief efforts hinges on a robust, transparent, and accountable Distribution Management Plan. By taking legislative action on the recommendations outlined in this report, Hawaii can build a more resilient state, better prepared to meet the challenges posed by natural disasters and emergencies.

Food Bank Reserves

Finding: Food banks have filled a critical need during disaster situations, including Hurricane Iniki, COVID-19, and the Lahaina wildfire.

Under the Hawaii State Distribution Management Plan, there is a four-day "gap" in state to county support post incident. Although HI-EMA's preferred method for addressing this gap is for residents to stock emergency preparedness kits with enough food and water for at least 14 days, only a small portion of the State actually follows this guidance.¹⁰

According to personnel interviews, FEMA is typically prepared to provide two weeks of food. However, with large-scale disaster events such as the Lahaina wildfire that displace individuals and families for long periods of time, additional food is needed beyond this two-week period.

Local food banks, including pet food banks, serve a critical purpose in providing food assistance and emergency supplies following disaster events. Food bank reserves were already low before the Lahaina wildfire and are further depleted now. The Hawaii Food Bank generally has about three weeks of food on hand at any given time. At their regular pace of distribution, this usually

⁹ Childs, Jeremy. "Animal Rescuers Seek Pets Wandering in Lahaina Fire's Ruins." *Los Angeles Times*, 26 Aug. 2023, <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2023-08-25/maui-fire-pets-humane-society>.

¹⁰ Ladao, Mark. "Most in Hawaii Not Prepared for Natural Disaster, Study Finds." *Hawaii Tribune-Herald*, 18 July 2023, <https://www.hawaiitribune-herald.com/2023/07/18/hawaii-news/most-in-hawaii-not-prepared-for-natural-disaster-study-finds> (56% of households surveyed believe they have enough supplies for a natural disaster; however, only 12% at least 14-days of emergency supplies.).

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amounts to somewhere between 1-1.5 million pounds of food, serving an average of 127,000 people per month. However, if a major disaster were to strike Oahu and the number of people who were in need of food assistance rose dramatically, that food supply would only last a few days at most. The Hawaii Food Bank is working now to determine what ideal food stores might look like (to complement the FEMA reserves on island, and also understanding where food is from the commercial sector at any given point, between retail stores, distribution warehouses, and in transit on the water) so that it can support the broader community in a major disaster and if supply chains were significantly disrupted. Ideally, the Hawaii Food Bank would have three to four times its current capacity on hand at any given time, but that might change as it works to refine its numbers.

The major issues hindering the Hawaii Food Bank are storage capacity and funding. The Hawaii Food Bank's current warehouses on Oahu and Kauai are maxed out in terms of storage capacity, and the Oahu facility is also impacted by the tides (the road is covered with water every time the tide goes above 1.6 ft). There is a plan to build a new facility with significantly expanded storage capacity, and the Hawaii Food Bank is also looking at ways to store food in more vulnerable communities that are at risk of being cut off in a natural disaster. From a funding standpoint, the Hawaii Food Bank is constantly working to raise funds, both to support its ongoing operations, including storage and employee labor, and also to ensure that it has sufficient safe and healthy food to distribute to those in need in the community. The Hawaii Food Bank is seeing more people seeking food assistance, many for the first time, and the cost of food is also rising—making it more difficult to meet the current needs, let alone build up enough reserves to be prepared for a major disaster.

The Hawaii Food Bank needs to be ready in case of a government shutdown in November, or at future date, which could really strain its capacity.

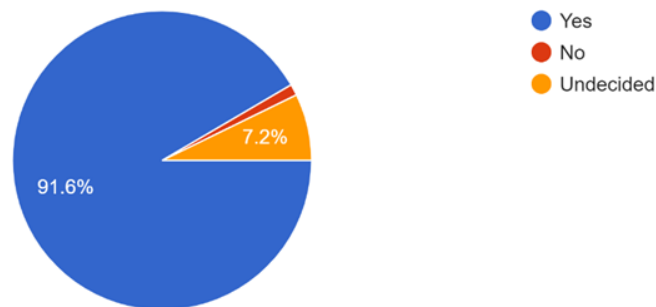
Most states and cities/counties fund their food banks. Hawaii is an outlier in that the Hawaii Food Banks receive no regular operational or food purchase funding outside of the grant-in-aid process. As COVID-era federal funding disappears and disaster-related philanthropy fades, the Hawaii Food Bank is concerned that it will no longer be able to meet the needs of the community without some other means of support.

Regular funding (potentially financial support as well expanded storage capacity) would help to ensure that the Hawaii Food Bank is able to meet the daily food needs of all in Hawaii, as well as increase its resiliency from an emergency preparedness standpoint.

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The Working Group's survey asked respondents whether they support increasing foodbank reserves for disaster readiness and pre-authorizing a limited emergency funding reserve to enable foodbanks to purchase replacement food without delay in the event of a declared disaster. A clear majority supported the proposal:

Do you support increasing foodbank reserves for disaster readiness and pre-authorizing a limited emergency funding reserve to enabling foodbanks to...without delay in the event of a declared disaster?
83 responses



"Right to Garden" Law

Finding: Continued economic stress persists after a disaster, requiring funding for food support (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)).

As a geographically isolated state with a limited local food supply and reliance upon imports, Hawaii is particularly susceptible to food insecurity following a disaster event. Hawaii spends up to \$3 billion a year importing more than 80% of its food. Any disaster event affecting the operability of the State's main seaport, the Port of Honolulu, has the potential to disrupt or even cut off food resupply across the State, including most FEMA resupplies.

Individuals and families also rely upon food assistance programs (such as SNAP and D-SNAP) after a disaster event due to the loss of their homes and employment. However, these programs

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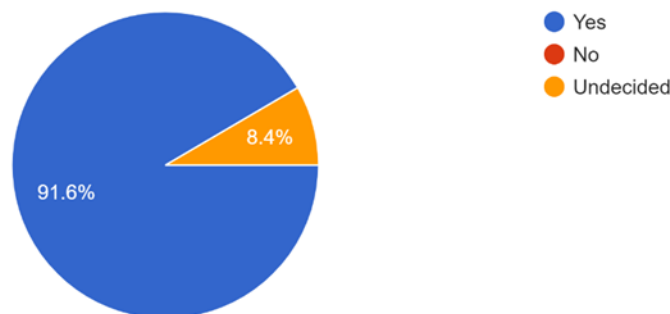
take time to implement in disaster areas, resulting in food insecurity in the days following the disaster.¹¹

Home gardens would substantially strengthen Hawaii's food security.¹² Yet the right to garden is not guaranteed under Hawaii state law. At least two other states, Illinois and Florida, have enacted "right to garden" laws, and Maine amended its constitution to establish a "right to food," which protects an individual's right to grow and consume their own food.¹³

The Working Group's survey asked respondents whether they support a 'right to garden ordinance' that gives both economic and food resiliency benefits allowing vegetable gardens on residential properties and prohibits regulating such gardens (known in 1940s as [victory gardens](#)). An overwhelming majority, 91.6% of respondents, answered in the affirmative:

Do you support a 'right to garden ordinance' that gives both economic and food resiliency benefits allowing vegetable gardens on residential properti...such gardens (known in 1940s as victory gardens).

83 responses



¹¹ "USDA Announces Approval of D-SNAP for Hawaii Disaster Areas." *United States Department of Agriculture*, 14 Sept. 2023, <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/09/14/usda-announces-approval-d-snap-hawaii-disaster-areas> (applications were accepted beginning September 18, 2023, 10 days after the Lahaina wildfire).

¹² Korpelainen, Helena. "The Role of Home Gardens in Promoting Biodiversity and Food Security." *Plants* (Basel, Switzerland) vol. 12,13 2473. 28 Jun. 2023, <https://doi:10.3390/plants12132473>; Galhena, D.H., Freed, R. & Maredia, K.M. Home gardens: a promising approach to enhance household food security and wellbeing. *Agric & Food Secur* 2, 8 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1186/2048-7010-2-8>.

¹³ Kornei, Katherine. "Only Two States Have Passed 'Right to Garden' Laws. Will Others Follow?" *Civil Eats*, 22 Aug. 2022, <https://civileats.com/2022/08/20/two-states-right-to-garden-laws-local-food-community-nutrition-security-illinois-florida>.

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Hot Food Donations Standards Outreach

Finding: Hot food donations are a critical resource for evacuees following a disaster event.

Even though Hawaii imports the majority of its food supply, which results in higher food prices, a significant portion of food in the State ultimately goes to waste.¹⁴ To encourage the donation of food that would otherwise go to waste, Hawaii protects good-faith food donors from civil and criminal liability.¹⁵ This protection extends to prepared food, such as hot foods, which are especially needed after disasters events like the Lahaina wildfire when individuals and families are evacuated to shelters where they cannot store food and lack access to cooking facilities.¹⁶

In 2019, the Department of Health developed guidance for safe food donations by permit holders. This guidance includes standards for the donation of ready-to-eat, temperature controlled hot foods to protect potentially vulnerable populations from a food-borne illness outbreak. It is important that food establishments are regularly made aware of these hot food donation standards, particularly during emergency periods when hot foods are urgently needed.

Prescriptions Refills

Finding: During times of natural disasters or public health emergencies, there may be significant challenges that impede a patient's ability to timely receive a necessary prescription.

Prescription refills play an important role in allowing patients to get their medication without frequent office visits. Refills also support patient adherence to taking medications for chronic conditions. Typical pharmacotherapy requires a patient's adherence to the regimen to achieve the therapeutic outcome, especially in patients with chronic conditions. Abrupt cessation or unplanned interruption of therapy may lead to undesirable outcomes.¹⁷ For example, 12% of

¹⁴ Smallwood, Bianca. "In Hawaii, We Waste More Than a Fourth of All Our Food." *Honolulu Civil Beat*, 3 May 2016, <https://www.civilbeat.org/2016/05/food-in-hawaii-how-much-are-we-wasting>.

¹⁵ Chapter 145D, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

¹⁶ "USDA Approves SNAP Hot Foods Waiver for Hawai'i Impacted by Wildfires." *State of Hawaii Department of Human Services*, 18 Apr. 2023, <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/blog/snap-hot-foods-waiver-for-hawaii-impacted-by-wildfires>.

¹⁷ See Kim, Jennifer, et al. "Medication Adherence: The Elephant in the Room." *U.S. Pharmacist*, 19 Jan. 2018, <https://www.uspharmacist.com/article/medication-adherence-the-elephant-in-the-room> ("Nonadherence can account for up to 50% of treatment failures, around 125,000 deaths, and up to 25% of hospitalizations

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Hawaii's population reported being diagnosed with diabetes in 2018.¹⁸ Patients without diabetic medications, such as insulin, can become hyperglycemic, which can cause the life-threatening condition ketoacidosis.¹⁹

It is paramount for pharmacists to ensure that a patient's regimen is not disrupted and medications are dispensed in a timely manner, including during emergency periods. During the COVID-19 pandemic, some providers were forced to limit office hours. Additionally, quarantine mandates forced patients to cancel existing appointments. These challenges resulted in gap periods without medications.

To ensure that patients received their prescriptions in the aftermath of the Lahaina wildfires, Governor Josh Green issued an Emergency Proclamation to allow pharmacists to refill prescriptions with up to a 30-day supply for people directly affected by the wildfire emergency, even when the pharmacist was unable to obtain refill authorization from the prescriber.²⁰ With the increase in disasters occurring in Hawaii every year, there should be a permanent, self-executing authorization for pharmacists to refill prescriptions during declared states of emergency.

Personnel Surge Capabilities

Finding: Following a disaster, certain governmental agencies may be required to perform various emergency functions in addition to normal core functions. Emergency

each year in the United States"); Schachter, Steven C. "Missed Medicines as a Seizure Trigger." *Epilepsy Foundation*, <https://www.epilepsy.com/what-is-epilepsy/seizure-triggers/missed-medicines>. Accessed 28 Oct. 2023 ("Missing doses of seizure medicine is the most common cause of breakthrough seizures"); Cools, Frank et al. "Risks associated with discontinuation of oral anticoagulation in newly diagnosed patients with atrial fibrillation: Results from the GARFIELD-AF Registry." *Journal of thrombosis and haemostasis*, vol. 19, no.9 (Sep. 2021): 2322-2334. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jth.15415> ("Relative to patients who remained on [oral anticoagulants], patients who discontinued [oral anticoagulants] for ≥ 7 consecutive days had a higher risk of all events [...], with the exception of cardiovascular death"); "Kidney Transplant Medication." National Kidney Foundation, https://www.kidney.org/sites/default/files/kidney_transplant_1.pdf. Accessed 28 Oct. 2023 (skipping a single dose of immunosuppressants increases the likelihood that a body will reject a transplanted kidney).

¹⁸ "Hawaii Diabetes Plan 2030." State of Hawaii Department of Health, Jun. 2021, https://hhsp.hawaii.gov/assets/pdf/HHSP_Diabetes_Plan_WEB.pdf.

¹⁹ "Hyperglycemia (High Blood Glucose)." *American Diabetes Association*, <https://diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-care/hyperglycemia>. Accessed 28 Oct. 2023.

²⁰ "Fifth Proclamation Relating to Wildfires," *State of Hawaii Office of the Governor*, 13 Aug. 2023, <https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/2308019.pdf>.

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personnel surge capabilities are needed to assist in governmental emergency response, particularly when agencies are understaffed or the emergency is so widespread that it greatly surpasses an agency's ability to timely respond.

The ability of certain state departments to promptly respond to assistance needs in emergency situations impacts individuals and families' ability to obtain food, water, and other supplies. The Department of Human Services plays a key role in preparedness for, response to, and recovery from natural disasters, including supporting vulnerable families, children, individuals, and communities. This includes multiple response aspects related to supplies, such as coordinating signups for assistance programs like SNAP, D-SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families (TAONF), and managing non-governmental subcontractors and volunteer programs. Currently, the Department of Human Services is 30% understaffed. Following the Lahaina wildfire, the Department was stretched to perform all normal core functions along with its emergency functions.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations also experiences surges during emergency periods, particularly those that involve economic upheaval and mass unemployment, such as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and Lahaina wildfire.

The federal Intergovernmental Personnel Act authorizes surge personnel to be borrowed from other departments if they are cross-trained. This model could be examined for potential implementation in Hawaii. State agencies should be queried to see if state employees can be cross-trained for temporary surge capacity. Although approximately three-fourths of the Maui unemployment claims are not currently processed, the Director of Labor and Industrial Relations is not interested in cross training employees for surge capacity. The Director of Human Services, however, is interested. Further discussions, evaluation, and investigation including Working Group co-chairs and agencies in conjunction with the executive branch are in order.

Hawaii's emergency management chapter currently authorizes the Administrator of HI-EMA to establish an Emergency Management Reserve Corps comprising trained specialists to support state and county emergency, disaster, or day-to-day requirements.²¹ Establishing a standing volunteer "Emergency Response Corp" or "Surge Capacity Force" during non-crisis conditions and maintaining readiness through intermittent training would allow fast deployment in the aftermath of a catastrophic event to help support response and recovery efforts.

²¹ Chapter 127A-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

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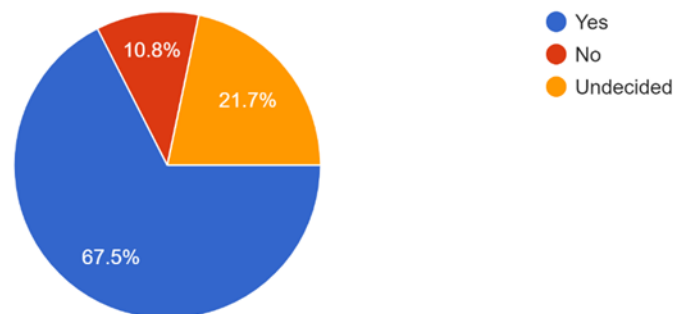
The Working Group's survey asked respondents two questions involving the provision of additional state emergency response personnel:

- Do you support funding of a new team of dedicated State agency personnel (e.g. DHS, DLIR, DOH or others) for immediate post-disaster deployment?
- Do you support an emergency personnel surge capability to improve disaster response including voluntary paid cross training of State Employees or an Emergency Response Corp (ERC) or related ideas?

Respondents responded favorably to both suggestions:

Do you support funding of a new team of dedicated State agency personnel (e.g. DHS, DLIR, DOH or others) for immediate post-disaster deployment?

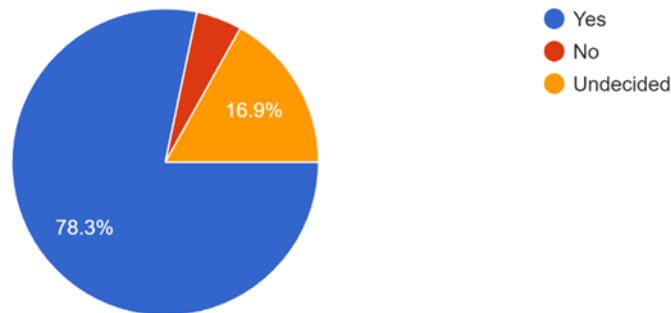
83 responses



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83 responses



RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group offers the following legislative recommendations as a roadmap for enhancing the availability and distribution of food and other necessary supplies for displaced individuals and families. These recommendations are not merely theoretical but are designed to be actionable, with the potential to be converted into bills or resolutions for legislative action.

Recommendation 1: Distribution Management Plan Maintenance

The State should establish a comprehensive Distribution Management Plan that encompasses all disasters and topics, including but not limited to language access and pet supplies. The plan should also ensure that HI-EMA and the counties have a coordinated plan. This recommendation can be implemented either by mandating the establishment of a comprehensive Distribution Management Plan under state law or by establishing a framework for the plan to be reviewed and approved by an advisory board. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. The benefit of mandating the comprehensive Distribution Management Plan under state law is that HI-EMA would take full responsibility for the plan, eliminating the need for meetings or collaboration with advisory board members, and ensure that the plan is maintained in the event a plan is no longer required under federal law. On the other hand, the advantage of an advisory board is the opportunity for feedback and representation from across the State. Engaging these members would lead to a more detailed and inclusive Distribution Management Plan. The advisory board would consist of seven members, with one member to be appointed by each of the following: the

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Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and of the mayors of the individual counties.

Recommendation 2: Food Bank Reserves

The State should set aside funding to ensure that food banks have adequate storage capacity, labor, and food reserves for its normal and emergency operations.

Recommendation 3: "Right to Garden" Law

The State should enact a "right to garden" law that protects an individual's right to grow food on their property. Consideration should be given to various property matters, including zoning, property type, community associations, and rental agreements.

Recommendation 4: Hot Food Donation Standards Outreach

The Department of Health should conduct outreach after disasters to ensure that food establishments understand the standards for safely donating hot foods.

Recommendation 5: Emergency Prescription Refills

The State should enact a law to allow pharmacists to provide medication to patients without interruption during emergencies. We suggest converting the current pharmacy and medication authorization issued under the Governor's Emergency Proclamation into a statute. In emergencies, this would enable pharmacies to refill prescriptions without a doctor's authorization, ensuring uninterrupted medication access for patients.

Recommendation 6: Emergency Surge Personnel

The State should implement and facilitate programs and initiatives to provide personnel support for disaster response. This can include cross-training state employees for temporary surge deployments for critical services, funding new positions within departments that provide critical services, creating a mechanism to surge staffing when needed, and deploying volunteer state employees to support response and recovery efforts.