



**Hawaiian  
Electric**

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **O‘ahu renters behind on utility bills urged to seek financial help through new City program starting today**

*Moratorium on disconnections for nonpayment set to end May 31*

**HONOLULU, April 5, 2021** – Millions of dollars in federal assistance to households behind on rent and electric bills are now available through the City and County of Honolulu.

Disconnections for nonpayment and collections activities have been suspended for more than a year as part of Hawaiian Electric’s effort to help households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The moratorium is set to end on May 31.

The City and County of Honolulu is leveraging \$114 million in federal funds for rent and utility assistance. Here’s what customers need to know about the program:

- O‘ahu renters may go to [oneoahu.org/renthelp](https://oneoahu.org/renthelp) to learn more about the Rent & Utility Relief Program.
- Renters earning at or less than 50 percent of annual median income for Honolulu County or have been unemployed for at least 90 days at the time of applying will be eligible.
- Applications will be accepted in groups of 8,000.
- After first round of priority applicants is processed, program will open to applicants earning up to 80 percent of the annual median income for O‘ahu.
- Provides up to \$2,000 a month for rent and up to \$500 a month for utility bills for up to 12 months.
- Payments made directly to the landlord or utility company. Use toward unpaid rent and utility bills dating back to March 2020; current rent and bills; and future rent and bills so long as applicants requalify every three months and funds still available.
- Administered by Catholic Charities Hawai‘i and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement

While the end of the moratorium won’t trigger immediate disconnections, disconnections cannot be suspended indefinitely. Customers having difficulty paying their bill are urged to apply for the federally funded rent and utility assistance while it is available. For additional assistance, customers should submit a payment arrangement request to ensure uninterrupted service. Go to [hawaiianelectric.com/paymentarrangement](https://hawaiianelectric.com/paymentarrangement) to submit a request. About 13 percent of the residential customers who are past due by more than 30 days are currently on a payment arrangement.

“Our goal is to ensure that every Hawaiian Electric customer stays connected,” said Shelee Kimura, Hawaiian Electric senior vice president of customer service. “To do this, we are

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working collaboratively with government and community partners to support customers still dealing with the financial toll of the pandemic, and we have made our most flexible payment options available to even more customers. Please contact us so we can help.”

Hawaiian Electric is reaching out to residential and business customers who have fallen furthest behind. Residential and smaller commercial customers with a past due balance are being offered deferred and 4-, 6- or 12-month payment arrangement options (no interest or late fees).

For the latest information on available financial assistance, go to [hawaiianelectric.com/COVID19](http://hawaiianelectric.com/COVID19).

For assistance managing energy costs, Hawai'i Energy is a trusted resource for tips and rebates to help offset the costs of energy-saving equipment and services. Visit [hawaiienergy.com/tips](http://hawaiienergy.com/tips) for more information.

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