



PRESS RELEASE
MAYOR KIRK CALDWELL
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
SERVICES
OFFICE OF HOUSING
CITY AND COUNTY OF

HONOLULU

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Mayor Caldwell's office mobilizes public, private, and nonprofit support to provide COVID-19 testing and quarantine services for O'ahu's homeless community



The 26 unit facility at Ka'aahi Street is a partnership between government, philanthropy and the nonprofit community designed to help to 'flatten the curve' in Hawai'i.

HONOLULU- Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell today announced plans to open a COVID-19 Medical Triage and Quarantine Center and provide mobile testing to serve homeless individuals

on O‘ahu impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The philanthropic efforts were led by The MacNaughton Group Foundation, with support from the Hawai‘i Community Foundation’s (HCF) newly established Hawai‘i Resilience Fund and Nareit Hawai‘i.

Hawai‘i Homeless Healthcare Hui, known as H4, received a grant to operate mobile testing and quarantine facility for homeless individuals with COVID-19. H4 will begin mobile testing immediately, with a focus on servicing encampments, locations with large populations of homeless individuals, and homeless shelters. Once fully operational, the mobile testing program will be able to provide up to 200 screenings and tests per day.

The grant will also fund the setup and operation of the COVID-19 Medical Triage and Quarantine Center at 524 Ka‘aahi Street in the Iwilei area of Honolulu, set to open on Wednesday, April 1.

The City-owned building will provide housing, food and hygiene facilities for up to 26 homeless individuals at a time who are experiencing symptoms, awaiting results or who test positive for the disease. The facility will also provide urgent care services to individuals on a walk-in basis, regardless of their insurance status, with services available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

“We have an opportunity to flatten the curve in Hawai‘i,” said Mayor Caldwell. “It’s clear that the actions we take now will influence our long-term ability to protect people throughout our state. Individuals experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of being exposed to COVID-19 and passing on the virus to others and potentially flooding our limited Intensive Care rooms at hospitals. We are stepping up efforts to give homeless individuals the care and services they need to stay healthy, safely socially distance themselves, and receive medical attention if they do contract COVID-19, in an effort to slow the spread of the virus in our community.”

The initiative is part of the state’s three-pronged approach to addressing the COVID-19 outbreak in Hawai‘i:

- **Increasing testing** for COVID-19, with a focus on individuals experiencing symptoms and those who work or are in vulnerable communities.
- **Adopting a strategic and proactive approach to quarantining**, with a focus on kūpuna, homeless individuals, and other groups that may be vulnerable.
- Implementing strong government directives to **self-isolate and practice social distancing**.

“Bringing together government, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector is especially important; the partnership allows us to fund, set up, and operate critical services in far less time than any of us would be able to achieve on our own,” said Hawai‘i Gov. David Ige. “As we find solutions to overcome the threat of COVID-19, it’s these types of local, collaborative efforts that will make a difference in our community.”

The COVID-19 Medical Triage and Quarantine Center will be staffed by physicians, registered

nurses, medical assistants, and other medical professionals provided by H4. H4 will also provide onsite testing services.

The Hawai'i Department of Health will assist with startup costs and hire displaced Local 5 workers to provide food service, security, housekeeping and maintenance services. Local 5 will also provide meal preparation and facilities maintenance on a volunteer basis. The City and County of Honolulu will provide water, electric services and sewer connection, and the Institute for Human Services will offer social services case management for patients. The COVID-19 Medical Triage and Quarantine Center has the capacity to serve up to 600 homeless participants during the 120-day grant period.

“We are honored to join with HCF and other businesses to support our government agencies and nonprofit organizations to protect those in our community in vulnerable situations,” said Jeff Arce, president of The MacNaughton Group Foundation. “Our state always comes together to help each other in times of crisis, and it is heartening to see all parties collaborating seamlessly to stand up this effort so quickly.”

“Each of us has a role to play in addressing this pandemic whether it’s through philanthropy, staying at home to protect others, or working on the front lines to provide critical health care,” said Micah Kane, president and CEO of Hawai'i Community Foundation. “Though we may be physically separated, togetherness is our strength in this situation. We’re seeing our community come together in the spirit of aloha - and that means caring for everyone in our state, including those who are homeless.”

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