STATE OF HAWAIʻI
KA MOKU ʻĀINA O HAWAIʻI

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIAʻĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA ʻOIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

ANNE LOPEZ
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL URGES CAUTION AND VERIFY CHARITIES WHEN DONATING TO KONA LOW DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS

News Release 2026-18

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 16, 2026

HONOLULU – As Hawaiʻi residents organize resources and solicit donations on crowdfunding platforms to help victims of the recent Kona Low storms and floods, the Tax & Charities Division within the Department of the Attorney General is reminding the public to carefully research before donating to or creating fundraising events.

Residents are encouraged to take a moment before making a donation to verify the status of the charity through these online resources:

- **Hawaiʻi Attorney General:** https://charity.ehawaii.gov/charity/welcome.html
- **IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search:** https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/
- **Charity Navigator:** https://www.charitynavigator.org/
- **DCCA Business Search:** https://hbe.ehawaii.gov/documents/search.html

The public may also visit the Federal Trade Commission website for detailed tips on how to avoid scammers when donating to crowdfunding campaigns through social media platforms. In addition, the department encourages everyone to:

- Find out who is behind the crowdfunding request and donate only to campaigns organized by people you know.
- Pay attention to who is asking for and receiving the money. Check where the donation link leads and confirm with the person who posted it that they know the charity or fundraiser organizer.
- Ensure the fundraiser provides clear information about:
    - **Where your money goes.** Who is receiving my donation?
    - **Fees.** Will the fundraiser take any fees from my donation?
    - **Timing.** When will the charity receive my donation?
    - **Follow-through.** What will happen to my donation if it can't be sent to the charity I chose?
    - **Your information.** Will my information be shared with the charity or anyone else?

If these details are not clear, consider donating elsewhere or giving directly to established charities.

Individuals or businesses seeking to organize a fundraising event on behalf of a charity are reminded to comply with requirements to obtain a written consent from the charity before conducting a fundraiser. Written consent forms may be submitted to the Department of the Attorney General by using the online form provided here.

Charities should also conduct due diligence to ensure they are aware of and have approved fundraising events conducted on their behalf. Charities are also reminded to comply with registration requirements with the Department of the Attorney General prior to soliciting donations in Hawaiʻi. More information and details about the registration requirement can be found on the Tax & Charites Division website.

Questions or complaints about a scam charity or suspicious fundraiser can be directed to the Tax & Charities Division at 808-586-1480 or by emailing ATG.Charities@hawaii.gov.

# # #

Media contacts:
Dave Day
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Office: 808-586-1284
Email: david.d.day@hawaii.gov
Web: http://ag.hawaii.gov

Toni Schwartz
Public Information Officer
Hawaiʻi Department of the Attorney General

Office: 808-586-1252
Cell: 808-379-9249
Email: Toni.E.Schwartz@hawaii.gov
Web: http://ag.hawaii.gov