



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

News Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACTIVATES
RAPID RESPONSE TEAM TO ASSIST
SEA LIFE PARK HAWAII EMPLOYEES**

Department also opens up Rapid Response Sessions to the Public

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) announced today that the state has activated its multi-agency Rapid Response Team to assist employees who are being laid off by Sea Life Park Hawai'i. Additionally, the DLIR also announced that the Rapid Response Session will also be open to any member of the public that has been recently laid off.

The Rapid Response Session will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 5, 2008, at the DLIR, located at the Princess Ruth Keelikolani Bldg. 830 Punchbowl Street, Honolulu, HI 96813. This session will be held for 44 employees being laid off this week from Sea Life Park Hawai'i, as well as any member of the public that feels they may benefit from the session.

"We are committed to ensuring that these workers are given the information they need to move forward during these difficult times," said Darwin L.D. Ching, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The Rapid Response Team is composed of staff from the DLIR's Workforce Development Division and Unemployment Insurance Division, Department of Human Resources Development, Department Human Services, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Officials from the DLIR have been in contact with Sea Life Park management in disseminating information to the affected employees.

The Rapid Response team will provide an array of services for these dislocated workers, including skills assessment, individual counseling, career planning, employment development, occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, job-readiness training and adult education. Participants will also be provided information regarding unemployment benefits, welfare assistance and medical benefits. Project participants may also receive out-of-area job search assistance, relocation assistance and other related supportive services. Support services may include childcare, transportation assistance and job related certifications, uniforms and equipment.

In the past two weeks, DLIR has activated similar Rapid Response Teams to assist employees who were laid off by Maui Land and Pineapple Company, the Honolulu Advertiser, Kona Community Hospital and North Hawai'i Community Hospital.

Additional information on the State's Rapid Response Team and other information for laid off or displaced workers is available on the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Web site at www.hawaii.gov/labor/rapidresponse.

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