

Traffic Emergency Zone Designation

Hawaii Belt Road Route 19 MP 3 to 15

Hilo, Hawaii

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- November 5, 2025 HDOT investigated various locations along Route 19 between MP 3 to 15 which indicated signs of potential slope failures and major depressions in the roadway.
- Findings confirmed the need for immediate interim repairs at the distressed areas.



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- Traffic Emergency Zone

- Hawaii Revised Statutes §264-1.5 Emergency powers; traffic emergency zones

“... if the ... state director of transportation, in the case of a state highway ... determines that substantial endangerment to public health and safety is or is highly likely to be caused by the temporary closure of, or the lack of adequate access to an area by ... a state highway as defined under section 264-1(a), which requires immediate action, the ... state director of transportation, in the case of a state highway, ... without a public hearing, may designate the area to be a traffic emergency zone, and may take any action that may be necessary until access to the designated area has been established.”

- What does the designation of a traffic emergency zone do?

This allows for expedited procurement and waives certain permitting requirements.

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- Plan of Action

- Interim Repairs:

- Patching of longitudinal cracks at (mile posts 4 and 14.8)
 - Milling/Filling of asphalt to level roadway depressed areas (mile posts 11.6, 12.35, 12.5, 12.7, 13.7, 14.9)
 - Anticipate starting in early January 2026 and completing in 1-2 weeks
 - 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - Single lane alternating closure

- Permanent Repairs:

- Geotechnical investigation and evaluation for the permanent repair design is ongoing
 - Construction will be forthcoming
 - Lane closures will be necessary and will be announced when dates are determined

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Questions?