



Market
PHA

Portfolio
1,320 units
900 housing choice vouchers
100 tax credit units

Client Since
2018

Highlighted Product
[RENTCafé PHA](#)

The Benefits
Improved service delivery to waitlisted households, applicants, residents and participants by making critical workflows available online, 24/7.

About Hagerstown Housing Authority
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“ By serving our community online with RENTCafé PHA, we've reduced in-office requests for assistance by 50%. ”

George Stull, Director of Information Technology

The Company

Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA) has been serving its residents for more than 65 years. As a high-performing housing authority, as distinguished by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HHA owns and/or oversees 1,320 dwelling units in 11 communities and more than 900 Housing Choice Vouchers for use by residents who do not dwell in HHA-owned properties. Approximately 12% of the city's residents are assisted by HHA housing resources.

The Challenge

Service Continuity While Socially Distant

Like organizations of every industry across the country, HHA faced an unexpected challenge when the need to operate socially distant suddenly arose in the spring of 2020. In the past, HHA had experienced significant walk-in traffic from community members to ask questions, apply for housing, make payments and other common PHA business transactions. Even though HHA closed their office to the public, the agency used cloud-based Yardi software to continue serving waitlisted households, applicants, participants and residents, and landlords.

The Solution

RENTCafé PHA

Revolutionize the way households sign up for waiting lists, qualify for your properties and communicate with your staff. RENTCafé PHA replaces handwritten notes, physical file storage and lengthy applicant interviews with a private, online user experience.

The Story

Connecting with the Community

HHA implemented Yardi Voyager PHA and its integrated software functions in 2018. That timing proved perfect as the agency suddenly faced the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. “The coronavirus is an awful situation, of course, but it has given us an opportunity to help our staff realize the benefits of cloud-based software, as well as online solutions for our applicants and residents,” says HHA director of information technology George Stull.

Using RENTCafé PHA, HHA makes it possible for interested households to place themselves on its waiting list. The process is handled completely online without the need for an office visit. That feature is particularly timely for HHA given the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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The waiting list for housing assistance from HHA grows daily as economic variables affect residents. “There has been a definite uptick in need for housing assistance. Our properties are in demand, and the waiting list of housing choice vouchers is growing,” says Stull.

Applicants for housing, once they reach the top of the waiting list, can also take advantage of the paperless, online workflow provided by RENTCafé PHA. The solution enables HHA applicants to securely submit personal information, including household data, income documentation, bank account statements and more. Since HHA receives this data digitally, there’s no need to print forms, decipher handwritten responses or store packets of paperwork.

Current residents have also received benefits of connecting remotely with HHA. Since mandatory stay at home measures have been in place, residents use RENTCafé PHA to complete their annual recertifications online. HHA reports positive user feedback as residents have successfully filled out forms, signed them electronically and sent them in for HHA review.

Online payment processing is another benefit for clients that HHA can offer since upgrading to Voyager. By providing online access to resident accounts, using Yardi Payment Processing, HHA residents can go online to check the status of their account. It’s also helped HHA residents experiencing job losses or other economic flux due to the pandemic, the ability to login and complete interim recertifications.

The cumulative effect of making HHA services available online has helped reduce office visits and enabled staff to focus on higher-value tasks. “By serving our community online with RENTCafé PHA, we’ve reduced in-office requests for assistance by 50%,” says Stull.

Connecting Staff

Clients are not the only beneficiaries of HHA’s investment in technology. HHA also gained intra-office efficiencies by implementing Yardi Voyager PHA. Now all departments, including accounting, are on a centralized operating platform saving time and money. “In the past we were running several instances of the software, as well as a separate system for accounting, to accommodate our mixed portfolio of affordable housing properties. Voyager puts everything at our fingertips without excess logins or software licenses,” says Stull.

As a high performing agency as ranked by HUD, HHA places a high priority on compliance. “We know how compliance works and have had success with complicated mandates. Yardi’s software makes us more efficient. For example, the subtle notifications that advise users when a piece of data is missing, or a step has not been completed. That type of feedback helps us see right away when there is something to correct,” says Stull.



Client Success

Hagerstown Housing Authority



HHA also implemented Yardi software for purchase orders, budgeting and forecasting, document management, resident screening and more. "I'm not sure how we'd be operating during this time of uncertainty if we hadn't migrated to the Voyager platform and included RENTCafé PHA," says Stull.

Hagerstown Housing Authority has also implemented Yardi Voyager PHA, Yardi Voyager Affordable Housing, ScreeningWorks Pro, Yardi Payment Processing, Yardi Budgeting and Forecasting, Yardi Document Management for SharePoint, Yardi Inspection, Yardi Advanced Maintenance, Yardi Inventory Control

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