



Success Story

Capital Park

Situation:

Capital Park Apartments is an affordable housing community with 318 resident households located in Columbus, Ohio.

As the property manager, Volunteers of America (VOA) had been struggling with delinquent rent payments, ineffective recertification process, recurring preventable maintenance issues, and overall communication with residents.

Staff was spending significant time handling exceptions to well-defined processes. Management was not happy with the number of residents who paid their rent on time and responded to recertification requirements. Communication regarding maintenance practices was ineffective, and resulted in avoidable costly and resource-consuming emergency repairs. In some circumstances, resident fees were triggered, thereby increasing the economic burden on tenants as well as resentment towards management. These issues were exacerbated due to poor management-resident communications since more than 90% of residents spoke only Somali, and a vast majority were unable to read either Somali or English.

Applications:

Use Magnolia Prime (MP) for rent reminders, recertification, maintenance reminders, and general communication.

Benefits:

- Staff now has the ability to communicate with the Somali resident population directly via phone. This has streamlined their work and resulted in a demonstrably more informed and more satisfied resident population.
- On-time rent payments went to nearly 100%; delinquent rent dollars were practically eliminated.

- Response to recertification requirements has increased to 95%.
- Maintenance costs have decreased since the number of residents prepared for maintenance issues has increased. Both maintenance staff and residents have benefited from decreased inconvenience of avoidable emergency repairs.
- Staff is extremely satisfied with Magnolia Prime, which makes them more efficient and effective in their work and in relationships with tenants.
- VOA has received very positive feedback from residents appreciative of the reminders that are saving them money and of the care and concern that management has demonstrated by using the system.

Challenges:

Historically, Capital Park used English-only fliers that were ineffective. Undelivered and unread fliers were often found littering the ground, creating an additional problem that frustrated residents, maintenance and management.

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Challenges *continued:*

One of Capital Park's biggest obstacles was getting residents to pay their rent on time, with only about one-half of them doing so. Ironically, many of the residents did have their rent checks ready but forgot to bring them to the office, and there was no effective way to remind them. The financial impact of delinquent rent payments had grown to the point where it threatened the financial viability of the facility.

Solution:

The introduction of Magnolia Prime has been extremely successful. It has enabled staff to send out the messages in Somalian, which has been a major home run for the whole community. With the use of Magnolia Prime, everyone wins. Information reaches residents on time, is immediately understood, and can be acted upon in an appropriate and timely manner.

Using Magnolia Prime's system for rent collection reminders has been very positive. Residents are pleased to be receiving notifications. Also, using MP has greatly decreased the amount of staff time dedicated to rent collections. Last, the financial outlook for Capital Park has gone from bleak to glowing. There is now a significant surplus in the bank account.

Due to MP's notifications, the staff has also witnessed a significant improvement in the recertification process. Compliance is up.

Maintenance notifications have been invaluable. For one, reminders go out, encouraging residents to let the cold water drip from the faucet in order to prevent freezing water from potentially bursting the pipes. As a result, the number of burst pipes has decreased by 94%, thereby having a significant effect on the maintenance budget and reducing the negative impact on residents' daily lives.

In all, use of the Magnolia Prime system has resulted in financial savings, less staff time spent on delinquencies, more satisfied staff, better informed and gratified residents, a positive relationship between residents and the on-site VOA management team, and achievement of VOA's role to "[create] ... positive change in the lives of individuals and communities we serve."

Testimonials:

"[Management] took the necessary steps to help me, [the] staff, and residents communicate better by hiring Magnolia Prime. Since having Magnolia Prime, our communication has increased significantly. [Magnolia Prime] is a wonderful program and it has done miracles for Capital Park Apartments."

– *Mevilyn R-B. (photo)*
Community Administrator
Capital Park Apartments

"I have noticed a great deal of positive change since Magnolia Prime was introduced. Communication is easier and management's ability to reach out and connect with residents has greatly improved. Relevant resident information arrives on time, which has benefited both parties – the office and residents."

– *Ibrahim A.*
Resident
Capital Park Apartments



Mevilyn R-B.

