# Landlord Engagement and Housing Search Assistance

padmission.com/landlord-engagement-and-housing-search-assistance

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As homeless services systems scale permanent housing interventions like Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Rapid Rehousing (RRH) in communities, there is a tremendous opportunity and need to **strengthen and align efforts in landlord engagement and housing search assistance.** On May 15, 2020, <u>HUD issued guidance</u> on the HUD Exchange to Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) recipients and Continuums of Care (CoCs) on developing a "proactive, affirmative landlord engagement system" in communities.

We were pleased to be highlighted by HUD in this guidance where they encourage CoCs to "**develop a system-level tool or database to collect and maintain available units and landlord contact information.**" Padmission provides CoCs and homeless services organizations with the tools and technology to do just that.

Let's first look at how we define each of the key concepts.

We think of **landlord engagement** as the cumulative efforts of rental market research, outreach and education, recruitment, incentivization, and retention of landlords to expand housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

**Housing search assistance** includes the support provided to individuals and families to identify and secure safe, affordable, and accessible housing that meets their needs. Elements of support might include transportation, information sharing about available rental opportunities in the community, accompaniment in viewing rental units, assistance with applications for tenancy, advocacy for reducing tenant screening criteria, and ultimately successful lease execution and move-in.

### Evolution and The Case for Centralization

What these efforts look like from community to community varies a lot. Some communities have just a few providers operating rental assistance programs. Others have several providers and multiple programs operating in the same rental market, *often in competition with each other*! Where there are multiple provider agencies recruiting and managing landlord relationships exclusively for their own programs' benefit, we see disjointed experiences for landlord partners and uneven outcomes among agencies and the individuals and families served.

Like our friends at HUD, we believe every community should work towards a ***centralized approach to landlord engagement and housing search assistance***. The expertise and skill sets required to perform this function is distinctly different from traditional social work that is the foundation of most homeless services organizations. There is also efficiency to be gained through centralization that benefits all stakeholders. Minimally, standardization of core elements like marketing of housing program interventions and maintenance of a common list of participating landlords and available rental units in the community is achievable.

### Community and Client Centered Technology

Recognizing that all homeless services systems are unique in their local context and journey towards centralized landlord engagement, we've designed Padmission to meet communities where they are at. Padmission is highly configurable for use in a centralized or de-centralized approach to landlord engagement and housing search assistance.

### Our Approach to the Solution

Padmission is a web-based housing search platform that is custom built for homeless services systems to coordinate and enhance their landlord engagement and housing search assistance efforts. The platform facilitates collaboration, coordination and information sharing among multiple stakeholders in the community. Housing Locators are the administrators of the platform, which is a closed system, accessible only to users approved by the Housing Locator; including property managers, case managers and housing program participants who are searching for housing.
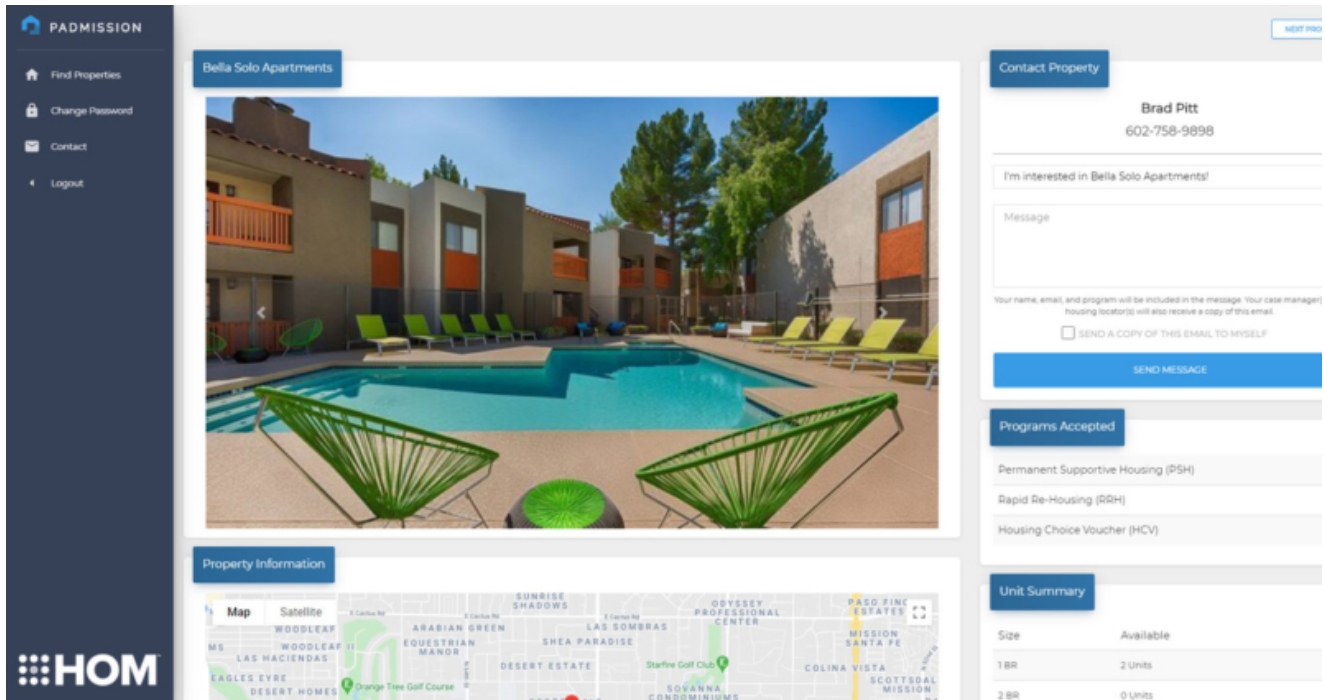
Padmission enables landlords to market their properties and available units to prospective tenants. Additionally, Housing Locators retain full control of the database and work alongside their landlord partners to add and update property profile listings so that availability information is updated and accurate. Case managers and housing program participants use simple or advanced search criteria to identify units available for lease and participation in the community's housing programs.

Housing Locators also have a host of reports and analytics in the platform to assist them in measuring their performance in landlord engagement, unit availability and housing search and lease-up tracking. We are also working closely with our customers and end users to identify features, integrations and analytics that further enhance our collective efforts to help people move from homelessness to housing in communities.

We would love to learn about your community's efforts to expedite the housing process and discuss how we can help.