

The Housing Authority of the County of Cook modernized tenant file management, governance records, invoicing, and procurement workflows using DocuWare to improve compliance and operational efficiency.



**Housing Authority of
COOK COUNTY**

#175



Danita W. Childers, Executive Director, Kathleen Grady-Peralta, Chief Financial Officer & Chief Administrative Officer Housing Authority of the County of Cook (HACC), Cook County, Illinois
From paper-bound workflows to digital tenant records, automated procurement, and seamless audits, HACC accelerated operations.

“DocuWare allowed HACC to centralize critical tenant, governance, and financial records into a secure, auditable system supporting transparency and operational excellence. My goal is to make us fully digital, so that all of our staff is using DocuWare.”



- Location:** USA
- Industry:** Public Housing / Government
- Deployment:** Cloud
- Department:** Finance, Asset Management, Housing Choice Voucher
- Integration:** Yardi

Housing Authority of the County of Cook (HACC) manages over 13,000 households in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program.

HACC administers HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)-regulated housing assistance programs with an overall budget of over \$200 million. HACC manages over 2,100 conventional public housing apartments and 13,000 households in the HCV Program, including eligibility, leasing, identification and financial documentation. “When you equate 13,000 housing choice vouchers, into people, which equate into files, plus the number of years—that generates hundreds of thousands of documents,” says Danita W. Childers, Executive Director. Before DocuWare, HACC relied on a paper file system. “When employees worked from home, as part of the hybrid work model, they sometimes took files home and/or made copies of the file to take home,” says Childers. That presented various risks, she adds. “So my desire to mitigate the risks was to switch to an electronic file system.” HACC made a choice to modernize in 2025.

Bringing in DocuWare

After the DocuWare install, many old, labor-intensive processes were digitized, including invoice processing, procurement and operations.

“When HACC first moved here, the floor had to be reinforced to carry the weight of the files.”

Today, procurement files and contracts are centrally stored, improving version control and accessibility. Invoices are processed via a digital workflow. “When invoices arrive in the inbox, the AI reads the invoices, which are then logged into DocuWare to understand where they need to go and who is the authorized person to approve them,” says Kathleen Grady-Peralta, Chief Financial Officer & Chief Administrative Officer. “Because it’s electronic, we don’t have to get paper invoices and wait for people to sign them.” Currently, DocuWare houses about 45,000 documents with more scanned and added regularly. HACC anticipates reaching about 2.8 million documents by October 2026.

Audits Made Easy

HACC’s records are subject to audit by three or more entities every year. Therefore, ensuring audit readiness, as well as proper governance, file consistency, and secure access across departments is critically important. Prior to implementing DocuWare, the preparation for the audit was manual. “The staff person would move from property to property with a box of files in their car,” says Childers. “Now, when the audits happen, they just go into DocuWare, retrieve all the requested information and upload it to the auditor, whether from home or office.”

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Additionally, standardized indexing improves file consistency and audit readiness, making it easy to find the information upon request.

Big Savings and Plans for DocuWare Future

HACC envisions that DocuWare will become a centralized repository for HCV tenant files, including certifications and supporting documentation. Other departments, such as Human Resources, are also planning to switch to DocuWare and rid themselves of the paper files. "When HACC first moved into its current location, the floor had to be reinforced to ensure it could carry the weight of the files," says Childers. She adds that the agency also rents space in a document storage facility, so going fully digital may result in a \$60,000 a year saving on rent. "My goal is to make us fully digital," she says, "so all of our staff will be using DocuWare."

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