



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2017.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Loudoun

Program Title: Improving Citizen Services with Electronic Forms

Program Category: Parks & Recreation/Information Technology

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Wendy Wickens /Steve Torpy

Title: Director

Department: Information Technology / Parks and Recreation

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Tim Hemstreet

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

OVERVIEW

With children sleeping at home, parents pitched tents to stake their place in line. Others arrived throughout the night and during pre-dawn hours outside the entrance to the Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS). It was March 2015, registration day for summer camp. With 60 locations serving over 5,000 children, the programs were in great demand, but the registration process was antiquated at best.

PRCS offers certain programs, including full-day camp and after-school care, which follow the Commonwealth of Virginia child day care licensing standards. Although families can register for programs offered at more than one location, the former process required that each registration for each child be handled in person at each location. Duplicate copies of participant paperwork were kept as a central record, and copies were needed for each location. Staff was required to have paperwork on hand at all times (secured in locked boxes) during program hours and while traveling to locations.

To solve this multidimensional problem, an interdepartmental project team worked for over 18 months on engineering a solution that integrated software systems, including RecTrac Parks and Recreation Management Software and Laserfiche Enterprise Content Management Software. The process also had to adhere to Virginia state licensing guidelines. All forms associated with registration for these licensed programs had to be reproduced and made accessible for the public to submit electronically. The solution produced real results for the department, including a decreased need for physical storage space, a reduction in the amount of staff time spent handling paper documents, improved information security and increased customer satisfaction.

PROBLEM/CHALLENGE

PRCS handles registrations annually for programs, including after school care and full-day camp, which meet the criteria for licensed child day centers established by the Virginia Department of Social Services. During the annual registration for these programs, required paperwork was captured for each participant in order to meet state licensing standards. Historically, the department required families to complete this process in person, which caused long lines and delays in registering. On-site storage of the documents required over 200 sq. ft. of space and extensive staff time to maintain and prepare records for program use. Data accessibility and retrieval was slow, resulting in staff sorting through exhaustive volumes of paper, as well as increased communication issues. Locked boxes were required in order to maintain physical copies of the central record for each participant during program hours and while traveling to off-site locations, burdening staff and also exposing a potential security risk.

IMPLEMENTATION

Through an innovative collaboration, PRCS and the Department of Information Technology (DIT), working with software vendors and the state licensing agency, created an in-house model for electronically collecting, managing and interacting with customer data using an integration with RecTrac and Laserfiche software systems. The solution also included providing staff with an iPad or iPhone for viewing, interacting with and managing participant documents.

The implementation required an 18-month planning period to accomplish the complex integration of RecTrac and Laserfiche. The project utilized existing DIT and PRCS staff resources and software expenses so that no additional funding was required. The project team worked to create eleven electronic forms to capture data from customers and provide staff with

internal forms for reporting. Throughout this period, the team transitioned the project through multiple phases of development and testing. Electronic training materials were developed for staff and parents, and in-person trainings were held to teach staff how to interact with the data.

RESULT

The project went live in March 2016 and customers were able to submit all required paperwork online for licensed program registration. During the initial implementation period 98% of initial registrations occurred online, eliminating hours of processing mail-in paper forms. In a two month period staff time spent processing paper forms was reduced by 200 hours. Additionally, over 8,000 customer forms have been submitted resulting in 145,761 documents being stored electronically.

Advanced integrations allowed the team to increase data accuracy and integrity, while streamlining the process for the customer and employees. Additionally, staff is now able to receive participant information updates in real time, and files are stored electronically on iPads, increasing security of and access to the information.

Through this collaborative process, DIT and PRCS staff have been asked to present at regional and national Laserfiche conferences regarding the use of public facing forms to better serve citizens. The project also garnered recognition with a feature story in American City County Magazine.

SUMMARY

The record population growth in Loudoun County, Virginia over many years resulted in higher demand for the programs and services provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services. The registration process used by families to enroll in certain programs that

meet the Commonwealth of Virginia Child Day Care Licensing Standard was paper-driven and ineffective in servicing the increased demand.

An interdepartmental project team worked for over 18 months on engineering a solution that integrated multiple software systems, including RecTrac Parks and Recreation Management Software and Laserfiche Enterprise Content Management Software. Collaboration with state licensing officials ensured that the process adhered to the Commonwealth of Virginia state licensing guidelines. All forms associated with registration for these licensed programs had to be reproduced and made accessible for the public to submit electronically.

The solution offered customers the opportunity to submit required forms and paperwork online for licensed programs for the first time in the history of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services. The solution, born out of collaboration, reduced the need for customers to visit multiple locations and submit duplicate paperwork and, in the process, eliminated the need for over 200 square feet of space previously dedicated to storing filing cabinets.

Collaboration between county departments, software vendors and state licensing officials brought about a successful solution, relying on technology and a desire to improve the customer registration experience. Due to the outcome of this collaborative process, the model has been shared with other localities across the country.

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**GOVERNMENT
PRODUCT NEWS**

Paperless, automated system simplifies registering for recreation activities in Virginia

Michael Keating | Government Product News

Mar 20 2017

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COMMENTS



In the photo: Loudoun County families waiting to register their kids for programming provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services before the county used Laserfiche to create an online form and automate the process. The paperless system has helped reduce or eliminate registration lines.

Loudoun County, Va., has one of the nation's highest median household incomes and is consistently ranked among America's fastest growing counties. These factors have led to an increasingly high demand for public services, including programming provided by the county's Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services.

The activities for youngsters and residents of all ages include arts and culinary classes, sports, outdoor adventures and more. The activities are so popular that recently, parents lined up for hours to register their children. Jakub Jedrzejczak, Loudoun County database administration team manager, recalls one year when parents began lining up at the department's office at 10 p.m. the night before registration opened.

"These programs are great for local families," Jedrzejczak says, adding that he enrolls his daughter each year. "But registration was not easy, because you have to provide a lot of paper documents for identification, health and safety reasons." Because the entire process was paper-driven, it was time-intensive and error-prone.

Loudoun County's consistent growth meant that lines will only get longer unless

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something changed, so Jedrzejczak and the IT department began digitizing and streamlining registration. They used the county's Laserfiche enterprise content management system to create an online form that residents could submit from home or via a mobile device. The initiative to automate parks and rec program applications was completed in 2016.

Laserfiche enabled department personnel to also build an automated workflow for the registration process. Once someone submits the electronic form, Laserfiche automatically sends it to the relevant employees for review and approval. The information is all stored in an electronic repository, eliminating the need for paper copies and physical file cabinets.

Authorized personnel can search and retrieve documents from a computer or mobile device with a few clicks, which has transformed the experience for employees responsible for the safety of participants. Before implementing the system, staff would head out to host activities with a locked filing box filled with each participant's paperwork in case of an emergency. Now, information is accessible via a tablet computer.

The new process also reduces manual data entry. Online forms allow users to submit information only when it is complete, plus, forms auto-populate fields with information if it is already in the system — for instance, when the user is a returning registrant.

"It's frustrating for a person to stand in line, then find out their child is not registered because of a mistake in the paperwork," Jedrzejczak says. "Having accurate and complete information is one of the greatest benefits. We can control the data and make sure that it's complete—it eliminates a lot of problems."

Before reengineering the process, creating files consumed more than 320 hours. Creating files now takes just 24 hours — and this is just one small component of registration. The county received more than 11,000 online program form submissions in 2016, and continues to explore other processes that can be streamlined and automated with Laserfiche.

Go here for information on Laserfiche.

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