Rent Café—IHFA’s New Landlord Portal

Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA) launched a new web-based landlord portal called Rent Café last month. Rent Café provides landlords with convenient, online access to all your IHFA documentation and also helps us transition to a paperless means of doing business. It is important to note that IHFA will stop sending Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) advices through the mail as of December 1, 2017 and will instead deliver these documents through Rent Café.

Rent Café allows you to:
- Confirm your personal information such as mailing address, email and phone numbers to ensure quality, uninterrupted communication between you and IHFA.
- View your rental payment transactions on your ledger.
- Find contact information for the housing specialist assigned to your tenants.
- View unit information such as holds/abatements as well as current and historical inspections.
- View attachments IHFA has uploaded for you regarding Notice of Adjustments and other communications.
- View helpful documents for owner/landlords pertaining to housing authority programs.

Create your account:
1. All landlords need to create an account on Rent Café at this link: rentcafe.com/landlord/idaho-live/login.aspx
2. Select “Click Here to Register.”
3. Enter the registration code provided in the letter from IHFA, then click “Go.” If you do not have your IHFA letter, contact your local branch office.

If you have any problems setting up your account, please view the account set-up tutorial provided at: bit.ly/RentCafeSetup or contact your local branch office housing specialist or IHFA’s Boise office at 855.505.4700.

Frequently Asked Questions about Rent Café

Q1: Will I still receive my printed direct deposit statement in the mail?
A: No. As of December 1, 2017, IHFA will no longer mail Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) direct deposit statements or check advices. You will need to log into the Rent Café portal to find copies of statements and advices. It is very important that you register and become comfortable using Rent Café prior to that date.

Q2: Is my information secure on the Rent Café portal?
A: Yes. Rent Café uses Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption technology, which means all of your information is encrypted as it passes across the Internet and no one else can access it.

Q3: What if I forget my user name or password?
A: Your user name is your email address. If you forget your password, simply go to the login page and click on “Forgot Password” located below the log in fields. An email with a link to reset your password will be sent to you in minutes.

Q4: What if I reset my password, but I am still unable to log-in?
A: Our password reset procedure is designed to be as simple and automated as possible to help ensure you can get immediate access to your information. If you use the “Forgot Password” function, but are still unable to log into our site, please contact your local branch office, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

IHFA Direct Deposit Advices—The Five Benefits of Going Paperless

IHFA has moved towards a paperless system and will no longer send Direct Deposit Advices through the mail. It may seem daunting to convert from a paper-based system, but there are many benefits that will assist your business.

1. **Ease of access to your information**
   All of your documentation is available in one place on IHFA’s Rent Café.

2. **Security**
   Electronic documents are more secure than printed documents because of website encryption. You can be assured that no one but you or your authorized representative has access to your information.

3. **Time Savings**
   No more time spent searching for lost and/or misfiled documents.

4. **Cost Savings**
   Minimizes the need for more physical storage and decreases printing costs.

5. **Disaster Recovery Prevention**
   There is no need to worry about recovering documents in the event of a fire or water damage.

IMPORTANT! Sign up today to start receiving your HAP payments via direct deposit. Beginning in January 2018 this will be mandatory. Please contact your local IHFA branch office for a form to set up direct deposit HAP payments, if you have not done so already.
ProgramSense

Landlord Workshops in November

Join us to learn about the new Rent Café landlord portal website and all the new tools it makes available to you. Trainings will be held at your local IHFA branch office this month on the following dates:

- Lewiston (208.743.0251)—November 15, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. 2338 Nez Perce Drive (NOTE: New branch office location.)
- Coeur d’Alene (208.762.5113)—November 16, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. 915 W. Canfield, Coeur d’Alene
- Twin Falls (208.734.8531)—November 17, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. 844 Washington St. North, Twin Falls
- Idaho Falls (208.522.6002)—Workshop was held in October; stay tuned for upcoming workshops!

Time will also be devoted to discussing Housing Choice Voucher program issues important to you and your renters. Past training topics include Fair Housing issues such as evictions, service animals and Housing Quality Standards inspection issues. These workshops are only available for participating owners, landlords, and property management staff.

Workshops are free, but seating is limited. Please contact your local branch office as soon as you can to register to attend training!

QuickTips

Don’t forget to provide your local IHFA branch office with all notices given to tenants about lease violations, the only way to help your tenants comply with their lease terms. The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu, without a fever, and include:

- Dizziness
- Severe headaches
- Nausea
- Sleepiness
- Fatigue/weakness
- Disorientation/confusion

Keep your renters safe! Follow these guidelines from a leading manufacturer of fire and CO equipment safety products:

- Properly equip your unit with carbon monoxide alarms on every level and in sleeping areas. The only way to detect CO gas in the home is with an alarm.
- Have a qualified technician inspect heating systems, vents, chimneys and flues every year.
- Regularly examine vents and chimneys for improper connections, visible rust and stains.
- Install and operate appliances according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Keep the appliance installation areas clear.
- Be aware of potential carbon monoxide sources.
- Keep all windows and doors open when using appliances that may produce carbon monoxide.
- Make sure your renters never leave a gas appliance in a closed bedroom.
- Never allow your renters to use a gas range.

For more information about CO, call the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare’s Indoor Environment Program at 1.800.445.8647.

Contact the IHFA branch near you.

Need more information?

Contact your local IHFA branch office.

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Association of Idaho Housing and Finance

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning and Housing Quality Standards

A hot topic trending at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and housing authorities across the nation is Carbon Monoxide Poisoning and the safety of assisted housing tenants.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It is a highly poisonous gas that inhibits the blood’s ability to carry oxygen and can be fatal when inhaled. Any malfunctioning or improperly installed fuel-burning appliance in the home can produce dangerous levels of CO, which are undetectable without an alarm.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Can be caused by improperly installed or malfunctioning heating, water heating, or cooking equipment
- Can be caused by using a gas range or stove in a closed room
- Can be caused by using a gas powered appliance in a small enclosed space
- Can be caused by using certain types of charcoal

Keep your tenants safe! Follow these guidelines:

- Properly equip your unit with carbon monoxide alarms on every level and in sleeping areas. The only way to detect CO gas in the home is with an alarm.
- Have a qualified technician inspect heating systems, vents, chimneys and flues every year.
- Regularly examine vents and chimneys for improper connections, visible rust and stains.
- Install and operate appliances according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Only purchase appliances that have been approved by a nationally-recognized testing laboratory.
- Never allow your renters to use a gas range/stove.

For more information about CO, call the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare’s Indoor Environment Program at 1.800.445.8647.