

## Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

*www.PHFA.org*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2014

**Contact:** Scott Elliott  
717-649-6522 (cell)  
sellott@phfa.org

### **PAHousingSearch.com website achieves successes during first three years, serving nearly 10,000 housing searches a week**

*Online housing locator has proven its value most in the aftermath of storms*

HARRISBURG – Three years after its launch, PAHousingSearch.com has helped thousands of people more easily find housing in Pennsylvania. More importantly, after natural disasters, the housing locator website has been an invaluable tool for helping displaced families quickly find safe and affordable living space.

On the occasion of its three-year anniversary, more than 96,000 housing units have been added to PAHousingSearch.com, with an average of 2,500 of those units listed as available each day. Statewide, 2,300 landlords are actively listing on the service. Additional listings are added daily. On average, more than 9,600 searches a week are conducted on PAHousingSearch.com.

Called into action after Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011, in just three months after the storms, the service's supportive call center handled nearly 13,000 calls to list and find housing in affected counties of the state. More than 14,000 units were added to PAHousingSearch.com in the areas hit hardest. Having so many options helped people to more quickly recover from their misfortune by quickly relocating to safe, stable housing. After Hurricane Sandy in 2012, PAHousingSearch.com was again used extensively by the Commonwealth as a tool to find housing for families displaced by flooding and other damage related to that storm.

"Looking for housing can sometimes be tedious, but PAHousingSearch.com really simplifies the process," said Brian A. Hudson, executive director and CEO of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

"We're very pleased with the large number of Pennsylvanians who have been helped by this service during the past three years. Plus, after natural disasters, it's proven to be a tremendous resource for finding available housing quickly for families in need. People in search of housing in Pennsylvania should make it their first stop."

The homepage at PAHousingSearch.com was recently updated to enhance usability. Features available include basic, advanced and accessible searches to help people find housing best suited to their specific needs. Accessible searches let people with special housing needs, such as the elderly or those with physical challenges, locate housing with accommodations to help them achieve and maintain independence. Another tool – a proximity search on an interactive map – helps people find properties within a selected distance from work, school or other family members. The site includes a

variety of other helpful tools, such as a rental checklist, a rental calculator and a moving calculator. Best of all, searching for affordable housing is free.

The site is just as simple – and free – for landlords to use for posting available units and has features to list numerous units quickly and increase marketing reach across other online classified outlets.

A toll-free, bilingual call center is available to help landlords and people seeking housing from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m. weekdays at 1.877.428.8844.

Most of the listings on PAHousingSearch.com are for rental units, but a small number of for-sale homes are included. Homes that are available for purchase are limited to those that are a part of an affordable housing initiative, a foreclosure prevention program, or other specific community development or stabilization efforts. General for-sale housing is not available on this website.

PAHousingSearch.com is made possible by financial support from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Professional Affordable Housing Management Association and PHFA. Day-to-day operation of the housing locator is overseen by Socialserve.com, a not-for-profit that oversees housing locator websites in 37 other states and the District of Columbia.

# # #