

Clark County Utilizes AI-enabled Solution to Help Residents Secure Critical Housing Assistance

IBM Watson Health Citizen Engagement is supporting Clark County to help thousands of residents struggling with housing payments due to the coronavirus pandemic get access to vital emergency funds

LAS VEGAS and CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Oct. 22, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Clark County and [IBM Watson Health](#) (NYSE: [IBM](#)) today announced the deployment of the AI-enabled [IBM Watson Health Citizen Engagement](#) platform designed to help make vital social services, including housing assistance, available to residents impacted by the unprecedented shutdown of tourism, entertainment and dining in Greater Las Vegas. IBM collaborated with Clark County to deploy a suite of services including IBM Watson Health Citizen Engagement to help support Clark County's CARES Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) to allow citizens to register, apply, upload documents and receive funds set aside for emergency housing assistance.

The CHAP platform was designed and developed to adapt to the unique challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. [IBM Watson Assistant](#) hosted on IBM Cloud provides residents with a dynamic AI virtual agent on the CHAP portal to ask questions and prescreen for the benefit program. Citizen Engagement portal design flexibility is designed to allow residents to apply and track their applications using various web browsers including mobile and tablets platforms.

The CHAP platform also supported remote processing – a priority given that most Clark County social services employees were forced to respond and process requests in a remote environment following the closure of government offices. The solution was deployed in just 11 weeks, a process that typically can take approximately eight months – a testament to the speed at which IBM technology can be deployed and the commitment from both teams to move fast and with a sense of urgency.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the lives of the residents of Greater Las Vegas and Clark County," said Assistant County Manager Kevin Schiller. "We had a profound need to immediately address an unprecedented number of claims and, on top of that, navigate the issue that most of our government services were not open to the public and the staff processing assistance claims were forced to work in remote environments. Our priority is to support our residents with a simple, secured solution that allows for mobile access, and this solution provides a resource for this complex and time-sensitive effort."

"We are committed to using AI and other emerging technologies to proactively tackle vital services, such as housing assistance, from any device for our community," said Clark County Chief Information Officer Nadia Hansen.

"Clark County moved quickly to support its most vulnerable residents – many of whom were facing eviction. The CHAP platform, leveraging IBM AI and Cloud technology, provides a model for rapidly closing a critical gap to help support people when they need it most," said Dave Liederbach, General Manager, Health and Human Services, IBM Watson Health. "IBM Watson Health Citizen Engagement can serve as a valued, responsive solution for more governments and municipalities that are wrestling with these critical challenges."

IBM Watson Health Citizen Engagement is a digital services platform for government that is designed to enable development and deployment of configurable, responsive and secured web applications built specifically for public services. Configurability provides the means to add, remove and modify functionality without costly and time-consuming coding – a key factor for emergency efforts. The solution is integrated with [IBM Watson Assistant](#), which uses natural language processing to provide a human-centred experience and pre-built business processes for helping to manage citizens' interactions with government.

The CHAP serves residents of Clark County who have experienced substantial financial hardship and now lack sufficient income or resources to pay their housing costs because of the COVID-19 emergency or the response to that emergency. CHAP funds are specific to the payment of rent, mortgage, utilities, utility deposits, security deposits and emergency lodging as well as payments for services that are made directly to a landlord, mortgage company or utility company.

About IBM Watson Health

IBM Watson Health is a data, analytics, and technology partner for the health industry. Supported by the innovation of IBM and intelligence of Watson, we are committed to helping build smarter health ecosystems. Through the combination of our deep industry expertise in health, data and analytics, actionable insights, and reputation for security and trust, Watson Health is working together with its clients and partners to help them achieve simpler processes, better care insights, faster breakthroughs, and improved experiences for people around the world. Learn more at www.ibm.com/watson-health.

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About Clark County

Clark County is a dynamic and innovative organization dedicated to providing top-quality service with integrity, respect and accountability. With jurisdiction over the world-famous Las Vegas Strip and covering an area the size of New Jersey, Clark is the nation's 11th-largest county and provides extensive regional services to 2.3 million citizens and 45.6 million visitors a year (2019). Included are the nation's 9th-busiest airport, air quality compliance, social services and the state's largest public hospital, University Medical Center. The County also provides municipal services that are traditionally provided by cities to 1 million residents in the unincorporated area. Those include fire protection, roads and other public works, parks and recreation, and planning and development. For more information, visit www.ClarkCountyNV.gov.

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