



entrata[®]

Smarter Rent Collection Starts with AI

How to streamline payments, reduce delinquencies, and empower your multifamily site teams.

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INTRODUCTION

Is the Rent Collection Process Broken?

An efficient rent collection process is essential to the success of any multifamily operation. When this process breaks down, it quickly becomes one of the most stressful, time-consuming, and unpredictable aspects of the job. Worse, it places the financial health of the entire property portfolio at risk.



What Does a Broken Process Look Like?

Many properties still rely on outdated methods like tracking delinquencies in spreadsheets, sending manual reminders, or even mailing paper notices. These practices take up valuable time and leave room for human error. Each month, site teams may spend hours chasing down late payments, managing awkward conversations, printing notices, and updating ledgers by hand.

This reactive, manual process is inefficient and unsustainable, especially across larger portfolios. When rent is not collected on time, the consequences compound:

- **Cash flow is disrupted**, which affects the ability to pay vendors and meet other financial commitments

- **Delinquencies increase**, requiring more time and money to pursue collections and raising the risk of bad debt
- **Staff burnout intensifies**, as teams are forced to juggle resident engagement with growing administrative tasks

According to the National Apartment Association (NAA), property managers lose an average of \$92 per unit each year to collections and bad debt. That number may not sound significant at first, but for a portfolio of 5,000 units, that amounts to nearly half a million dollars, likely written off annually¹. Even recovering half of that represents a meaningful return on investment.

In this ebook, we will explore how inefficient rent collection impacts both operations and the resident experience. We will also outline what an ideal rent collection process looks like and show how Entrata Payments AI can improve team efficiency while removing a major burden from your staff's daily responsibilities.

¹ [NAA Debt Collection Best Practices](#)

SECTION I

Impact on the Resident Experience

Inefficient rent collection does not only affect site teams. It also creates unnecessary friction for residents.

When rent policies are unclear — such as when payments are due, when late fees apply, or how payments can be submitted — residents are more likely to experience confusion and frustration. The result is often late payments that could have been avoided. Clear, proactive, and personalized communication helps build trust and keeps residents informed every step of the way.

Most residents intend to pay rent on time. However, those experiencing financial hardship may feel anxious or overwhelmed. Receiving a mailed notice or impersonal warning can come across as cold or aggressive. This adds stress to an already difficult situation.

On the other hand, properties that invest in building strong, ongoing communication with residents are better equipped to manage these moments with empathy. When trust has already been established, it is easier to collaborate on a plan and help residents get back on track.



Friction in rent collection doesn't just delay payments, it erodes trust. Clear, empathetic communication turns a transaction into a relationship.



Properties with limited visibility into account balances, rigid payment options, or unclear paths to resolution often make matters worse. Residents need simple access to real-time account information and flexible payment options. Whether paying through a resident portal via ACH or credit card, or in person by check, the process should be intuitive and accessible.

When rent payments are streamlined and friction is minimized, the likelihood of delinquencies decreases and resident satisfaction improves.

SECTION II

AI-Driven Rent Collection

Scaling rent collection effectively requires more than just payment portals and templated email reminders. A truly modern, successful approach relies on three essential pillars.

1. Automation

One of the biggest challenges with traditional rent collection is the amount of time it takes, often with underwhelming results. A modern solution leverages AI to automate repetitive outreach, track payments, and reconcile ledger entries with precision.

Thanks to advancements in natural language processing and machine learning, today's AI payment agents can engage with residents in ways that closely resemble human interaction. These tools have evolved far beyond early-generation chatbots and voice assistants, which were often limited to rigid, scripted responses. Residents can now receive support that feels personalized and intuitive, rather than frustrating or impersonal.

2. Human-Like Connection

Most people have experienced the frustration of trying to reach a real person through an automated phone system or live chat. With conversational AI, that challenge is no longer a barrier. These AI tools can identify resident issues, suggest solutions, and provide payment options, all with minimal need for human involvement.

What sets conversational AI apart is how natural the experience feels. Residents may not even realize they are interacting with AI. These systems can send personalized texts or emails, communicate due dates, follow up when payments are past due, and work with residents to arrange solutions. The key is that each message is timely, relevant, and written in a tone that encourages cooperation.



To scale rent collection successfully, you need more than reminders and portals. It takes automation, empathy, and resident-first tools that build trust at every step.

While collecting rent is the primary goal, effective communication should also foster empathy and respect. AI enables this through personalized messaging that avoids the cold, robotic tone of traditional notices. Instead, residents receive helpful, approachable messages that support engagement and reduce friction.

3. Resident Empowerment

A strong rent collection strategy gives residents control. AI solutions should enable self-service options that allow residents to pay on their own schedule, using their preferred methods.

Ideally, AI payment agents will encourage residents to enroll in automatic payments, which dramatically reduces the chances of late rent. Even if residents choose not to enroll, AI can still support them with timely reminders, flexible payment options, and information on how to split payments when needed. This flexibility helps residents feel supported and builds trust with the management team.

SECTION III

Entrata Payments AI Is the Answer

Entrata Payments AI transforms rent collection into a proactive, intelligent process. It automatically sends payment reminders and account notifications through SMS, email, and Entrata's ResidentPortal app. Messages are timed for maximum effectiveness and personalized based on resident behavior, ensuring that account information reaches residents when they are most likely to take action.

With reminders that are clear, actionable, and conversational, Payments AI increases the chances of on-time payments while reducing the need for site team involvement.

Proactive, Personalized Messaging

Rent reminders are no longer generic, one-size-fits-all blasts. Payments AI tailors its cadence and language to each resident's behavior, including payment history, current balance, and lease terms. Site teams no longer need to manage the timing, content, or tone of each message. The intelligent engine behind Payments AI ensures every communication is timely, relevant, and fully automated.

This level of precision drives faster resolution. Properties using Payments AI report **a 30% reduction in average days delinquent across their portfolios²**.

Significant Time Savings

Following up on late rent can take dozens of staff hours each month. Payments AI handles this workload automatically by initiating outreach, managing resident questions, and escalating only when necessary. On average, property management teams using Payments AI reclaim more than **175 hours of staff time per month, per portfolio³**.

This allows site teams to shift their focus to what matters most, delivering an elevated resident experience without worrying about whether rent is being collected.

A Fully Integrated Solution

Because Payments AI is built directly into the Entrata Property Management Operating System, it draws from real-time data on resident balances, lease status, contact preferences, and transaction history. There are no third-party APIs to manage, no syncing delays, and no need for duplicate data entry.

The result is a consistent, transparent, and auditable collections process. Finance teams benefit from cleaner reporting and fewer manual errors, while residents enjoy a smoother, more responsive payment experience.



Tailors reminders to each resident's behavior, history, and lease.



Automates timing, tone, and delivery—no site team input needed.



Cuts average days delinquent by 30% portfolio-wide.

² [Entrata 2024 Summit Product Launch](#)

³ [Entrata Product Benchmarking Data, 2024](#)

SECTION III

Entrata Payments AI Is the Answer



Stay Ahead of the Competition

AI-powered rent collection is not a trend — it is a competitive advantage. Properties that want to maximize efficiency and support resident satisfaction need to embrace the value that AI provides. Payments AI is not designed to replace site teams. Instead, it supports them by automating routine, time-intensive tasks and freeing up capacity for high-impact work.

Leading operators are already adopting AI as a core part of their collections strategy. **Western Wealth Communities**, a full-service property management company operating in Arizona, Nevada, and Texas, reported a **40% increase in rent collection rates within the first 60 days** of implementing Payments AI⁴.

Strengthen the Bottom Line

With rising operating costs and limited staffing capacity, rent collection must be as streamlined and automated as every other part of your tech stack. Entrata Payments AI helps property teams reduce delinquencies, recover time, and keep revenue flowing — all without adding unnecessary complexity.

⁴ [Entrata 2024 Summit Product Launch](#)



We chose Payments AI to help automate the rent collections process and provide an immediate response to balance due questions from our residents. It frees up additional time for our property teams to focus on other high-value tasks such as new leasing and renewals.

Western Wealth Communities

CONCLUSION

Collections, Reinvented

Entrata Payments AI transforms rent collection from a time-consuming, manual task into an intelligent, streamlined workflow. By combining automation, behavioral logic, and real-time data, it empowers property managers to:

- Increase the amount of rent collected
- Reduce delinquency rates
- Save time and reduce team workload
- Maintain more consistent cash flow
- Improve operational performance

With intelligence embedded directly into the rent collection process, Entrata gives operators the tools they need to scale with efficiency and respond to today's economic challenges with confidence. In an environment where every dollar matters, smart rent collection is no longer optional — it is essential.

[Request a demo today](#) to see how Entrata Payments AI can optimize collections across your portfolio.

