GovPilot®

North Bergen Township, NJ

Population
61,627

System Replaced
Manual paper

GP Modules Deployed by North Bergen Township

- Open Records Requests

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS

North Bergen, a populous township in Northern New Jersey across the Hudson River from Manhattan, sought to streamline the government's Open Records Request (OPRA) process which relied on a time-consuming, inefficient manual paper process.

Challenge

As a large town, North Bergen receives 60 - 120+ Open Records Requests per month. The Clerk's Department faced difficulty ensuring that OPRA requests were processed in a timely manner. Prior to GovPilot, North Bergen relied on a manual process including paper forms, hand written transposing of information, and follow up phone calls. This often left the Clerk's Office overwhelmed by paperwork and struggling to process requests within the state mandated seven business day time period.

"It was all a lot of paper. Before GovPilot is was a paper trail." Said Head Clerk, Erin Barillas. OPRA requests were often received via email or fax, which then had to be printed out, and transposed by hand into the Clerk's Department paper log book. The request was then faxed, or scanned and emailed to the relevant department. That department would then fax or email the response to the Clerk's Department, which in turn had the requestor come to the office to pick it up, or faxed or emailed the response on to the requestor.

This led to a backlog in the processing of OPRA requests, which often meant a difficulty in the department to fulfill requests within the state-mandated seven business day requirement.

Solution

The North Bergen Clerk Department adopted GovPilot to digitize their OPRA request, processing, delivery, and filing processes. With GovPilot, the paper processes and manual tasks which once made the OPRA process cumbersome and time consuming, have been digitized and streamlined.

The staff now saves hours per day and no longer operates with a backlog of OPRAs to process. Records are stored digitally and are easily searchable in a matter of clicks, rather than filed away in the basement.

Results

No Backlog

Eliminated, and now operates without a backlog of pending OPRA requests despite receiving 60 - 120 per month.

72% Reduction

Reduced completion time on complex OPRA requests from average of seven business days to two.

4 Steps in 1

Replaced four time-consuming manual tasks (print, transpose, deliver to relevant department, file) with GovPilot's digital processes.

80% Decrease

Using a manual, paper process it took staff more than half a day to process and assign incoming OPRA requests. With GovPilot it takes just one hour.

> " Thank God for GovPilot because if we didn't have it while we were home [during COVID] we wouldn't have been able to process OPRAs at all. We were able to access the system remotely so everything was being done as if we were here in the office. "
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> **Erin Barillas,** Head Clerk