

SentriLock Upgrade and Exchange Coming in December

In May 2017, the RAYAC Board of Directors and RAYAC Staff met to develop a new strategic plan to guide the Realtors® Association of York & Adams Counties into the “post-Bright MLS merger” future. One of our top priorities within the strategic plan is to maintain and improve lockbox services and value for our members by finding partners and enhancing services.

On August 10th, the RAYAC Board of Directors approved a recommendation from the Lockbox Committee and Budget Finance Committee to implement a Lockbox Upgrade & Exchange with SentriLock.

In early December 2017, representatives of SentriLock will come to the RAYAC office to meet with Brokers, Managers, Agents and Appraisers who have Gen I, Gen II and Next Gen lockboxes assigned to them that have been used since January 1, 2016. During the meetings, these Gen I, Gen II and Next Gen will be exchanged for a new Bluetooth Lockbox *at no cost to the Realtor®.*

Why the need to upgrade?

The vast majority of the lockboxes on listings in York & Adams Counties are over 13 years old. The lockboxes have been workhorses and have greatly surpassed their 7-year warranties. In the past year, we have started to see more failures in the field of these lockboxes.

The other downside to the lockboxes currently on listings is that only 50% of those lockboxes have downloaded the software to allow for mobile access. The upgrade to an all Bluetooth lockbox system will allow for agents to access all the lockboxes through a mobile app called SentriSmart.

This is a beneficial member value - taking a 13-year-old lockbox and replacing it with a brand-new state of the art technology lockbox that retails at \$96 plus tax at no additional cost the Realtor®.

The RAYAC Board of Directors strongly believes the association’s investment into an upgraded lockbox system will greatly improve our member’s experience in utilizing our lockboxes.

What are the benefits of the Bluetooth lockboxes?

- **Mobile Access.** The Bluetooth lockboxes work remarkably well with the SentriSmart Mobile App. The feature allows the lockbox to communicate directly to the smartphone via SentriSmart and is independent of cell signal. This means members can use their phones fully as their access device (even in dead zones), opposed to using their SentriCard. This means no more issues revolving around an expired card or calls into the support department to troubleshoot a defective card. The app also allows agents to assign a lockbox to a listing, open the shackle, view the access log, plus a whole lot more.
- **Instant Showing Notification:** When the lockbox is opened with the SentriSmart app it sends an instant showing notification to the listing agent when the key compartment is open, verifying that someone DID in fact open the key compartment.
- **Enhanced Battery Life:** The power consumption on the motherboards for the new Bluetooth lockboxes have been reworked to provide longer battery life. The averages are 99% of the lockboxes will experience over 6 years of battery life, 95% will experience over 7 years, and 90% will experience over 9 years.
- **Data Integration:** When a lockbox is accessed, the lockbox will reach out to RPR or Homesnap, and pull up the property information on the listing. This means agents can always have the most up-to-date information from these software programs without having to search for it.

- **Listing Assignment:** When an agent releases the shackle on the lockbox, the app asks you if you would like to assign the property to an MLS listing. If the MLS listing has not been populated into the system, you can still assign the listing by placing in the numeric portion of the street address into SentiSmart. As long as you enter the listing into the MLS within 7 days, it will assign the lockbox for you.
- **Agent Safety:** A member can activate this feature in the SentiSmart app settings tab, which requires the member to enter an emergency contact from their contact log. When they access a lockbox, a timer starts, then prompts them to confirm their safety. If they don't respond to their safety confirmation check, an emergency message goes out to their pre-determined emergency contact letting them know their location. They also can press "I'm Ok" or "Send Alert" immediately.
- **Easier Access for Out of Area Agents:** With the Bluetooth upgrade, RAYAC will be better able to give lockbox access to out of area agents. Rather than those agents needing to come to the RAYAC office to pick up a keycard, RAYAC staff can instruct them to download the app with login credentials. They can show a property within the hour of calling in.

How will the exchange of the lockboxes take place?

The free lockbox exchange will only be made available for Gen I, Gen II and Next Gen lockboxes that have been used from **January 1, 2016 through August 10, 2017**. SentiLock will provide RAYAC a list of the serial numbers of these lockboxes which will be forwarded to Brokers, Managers, Agents or Appraisers so that they will be able to gather the lockboxes for the exchange. Only the lockboxes on the list will be exchanged for the Bluetooth lockboxes at the meetings with SentiLock in December.

December has been chosen for the exchange as this is historically the month in which there are the lowest number of listings. While we understand that having to temporarily remove lockboxes from listings is inconvenient, we feel the benefits of a new lockbox system will be worth it. Realtors® will have multiple times to choose from during a weeklong exchange at the RAYAC office.

Training on how to use the Bluetooth lockboxes and SentiSmart Mobile App will also be presented during the exchange in December. Agents will also be given a new SentiCard which has a larger data storage capability. Even though access will be primarily gained through the Mobile App, the SentiCard is still a back-up in the event the agent is unable to use their phone.

To ensure everyone is utilizing the updated technology of the Bluetooth lockboxes, all Gen I, Gen II and Next Gen lockboxes will be deactivated once the upgrade and exchange takes place.

It is imperative that lockbox holders meet with SentiLock in December. After the meetings, there will no longer be a one-for-one exchange available.

You can expect to receive a list of lockbox serial numbers that are eligible for the exchange in the next few days so that you may begin the process of gathering them for December. Over the next few weeks, RAYAC will reach out to those who have lockboxes assigned to them to schedule their meeting with SentiLock.

For those brokers who own and provide all the lockboxes for the agents in your office, we will be reaching out to you directly to determine the most convenient and easiest way for you and your agents to go through this exchange program.

What if I need more lockboxes than I am going to be given through the free exchange?

Anyone who has a defective lockbox or a lockbox box that hasn't been used since January 1, 2016, may purchase a Bluetooth lockbox for a 20% discount (\$76 plus tax) now through the last day of the exchange. After that all Bluetooth lockboxes will be \$96 plus tax.

Will the Bright MLS merger impact the lockbox systems?

Lockboxes are not included as part of the Bright MLS merger. You will continue to have lockbox access through RAYAC. Currently over 50% of the associations who are part of Bright are using SentiLock. It is our hope that eventually all the associations who are part of Bright MLS will be on one common lockbox product. Shanna Terroso reached out to Bright MLS about this issue and a taskforce is being put together to discuss how we can work towards that goal. Shanna will be serving on that taskforce.

We know having two different lockbox systems in place in Central Pennsylvania is frustrating for our members. Unfortunately, there is not an easy answer to address this issue for RAYAC. RAYAC is a boundary lockbox association in that to our northern and eastern borders are Supra user associations. Associations bordering our west (PenMar) and all the associations to our immediate south in Maryland are on SentiLock. RAYAC members and SentiLock subscribers in those associations can apply for a free reciprocal access to the lockboxes. RAYAC has over 1,200 reciprocal lockbox subscribers who have applied for access to RAYAC lockboxes.

To ease the use of out of area agents showing homes in York & Adams Counties we have developed the following tools:

- **One Day Codes** – Our One Day Code program rolled out in 2016. The idea behind the One Day Codes was to allow agents and appraisers of our neighboring associations (GHAR and LCAR) an easy way to access RAYAC lockboxes without having RAYAC listing agents meet them at the property. Though we have seen considerable interest in the One Day Codes, we also realize that having RAYAC members obtain the paperwork required to generate a One Day Code can be time consuming.
- **Free SentiCards and One Week Access** - Earlier this year, RAYAC began offering GHAR and LCAR members a free SentiCard with one free week of lockbox access. The idea behind this was to get a keycard into the hands of these agents and appraisers so that they could access the lockboxes without requesting a One Day Code. After the free week of lockbox access expires, these agents can contact RAYAC directly to renew their access and for a one week, one month, three months or annual subscription depending on their needs.
- **Reciprocity** - As for our neighbors to the south, we have had reciprocal access agreement with many Associations in Maryland for years. Recently, we reached out to all associations in Maryland and Pennsylvania that utilize SentiLock lockboxes and offered reciprocity. To date we have reciprocal agreements with 15 associations in PA, MD and VA. We currently have over 1,200 agents from these associations who have signed reciprocal agreements for RAYAC lockbox access.

If you have any questions about this exchange process, feel free to contact Shanna Terroso at shanna@rayac.com or 717-843-7891.