



## Executive Search



## Executive Director

## The Opportunity

The Houston Apartment Association (HAA) is conducting a search for its Executive Director (ED). Founded in 1960, HAA is the largest local apartment association in the United States and is an affiliate of both the Texas Apartment Association (TAA) and the National Apartment Association (NAA). HAA represents approximately 1,000 owner/management companies (representing 620,000 units) and 850 product/service supplier companies in the Houston and surrounding areas. HAA's ED serves under the broad direction of the Board of Directors (the Board) with more specific guidance of the Executive Committee. This position is open due to the retirement of the current executive after many years of service.

## HAA: An Overview

HAA is the leading advocate, resource, and community partner for quality rental housing providers in the Houston and surrounding area. The organization has a staff of 22 and a \$5.8M operating budget and is open to apartment owner-operators, builders-developers, management companies, and product and service businesses that serve the multi-family industry. HAA's membership represents more than 90% of the Houston and surrounding areas' apartment homes.

## About HAA's Work

HAA is in the second year of a three-year strategic plan aimed at enhancing member benefits and improving internal operations. The plan includes six areas of focus:

- Recruiting and developing industry talent
- Developing and enhancing programs, products, and services
- Implementing effective technologies to enhance the member experience and staff efficiency
- Expanding wide-ranging legislative advocacy and Political Action Committee (PAC) awareness
- Cultivating community partnerships and promoting positive public awareness of the industry
- Developing leadership through onboarding new members and creating leadership paths for engaged members

## Structure of HAA

HAA is led by a six-member Executive Committee and a Board of Directors that sets the association's vision and direction and provides guidance to the ED. HAA's Board committees support aspects of the association's educational programming, conference planning, advocacy, outreach, and other activities. The association has three affiliated entities that are responsible for specific aspects of its operations:

- Houston Multi-Housing Corporation (HMHC) – HAA's publishing program
- Houston Apartment Foundation (HAF) – HAA's education and training programs
- HAA Political Action Committee (PAC) – HAA's advocacy and legislative activities

## Executive Director Role and Responsibilities

The ED will serve as the catalyst and implementer in ensuring that HAA, HMHC, HAF, and the HAA PAC make steady progress and meet their goals and objectives. As the chief staff executive and administrative officer, he or she will collaborate with the Board to develop a strategic vision for the association, one that accounts for changes in the industry and the interests of HAA's members. The ED will represent HAA in interactions with other associations, industry partners, government entities, public service groups, and other organizations that help further the interests of HAA's members. As the principal staff support to the Board, the ED will also perform the administrative and managerial functions necessary to efficiently operate the association.

## Critical Competencies for Success

### *Strategy and Governance*

- Serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board. Attends all meetings of the Board and keeps its members informed about the conditions and operations of the association.
- Coordinates a strategic planning process every three years (or as otherwise determined by the Board), along with the annual programming and budgeting process.
- Guides the development of policies, procedures, and programs; presents them for Board approval; and implements said programs following approval.
- Ensures that staff liaisons are assigned to all committees and task forces, and that the recommendations of those groups are submitted to the Board for approval.
- Collaborates with the Nominating and Leadership Development Committees to identify, recruit, and train future leaders of the association.
- Executes all decisions of the Board and delegates implementation, when appropriate.

### *Management & Operations*

- Manages and administers the day-to-day operations of the association, pursuant to its bylaws and policies; approves expenditures within the limits of the Board-approved budget.
- Hires, manages, and evaluates the professional staff; assists the staff in establishing annual goals and objectives; ensures that goals and activities to support the association's current objectives are implemented; aligns functional initiatives with the strategic plan.
- Develops and maintains a salary/compensation structure and administration plan for association employees, which is reviewed annually with the Board.
- Fosters a culture among staff that encourages and sustains innovation, appropriate risk-taking, trust, and accountability; encourages staff to seek new and creative ideas through education, research, and curiosity; promotes career development and advancement for staff.
- Executes contracts and commitments as authorized by the Board or established policies.
- Produces annual budgets and presents them for Board approval.

- Ensures that the financial goals of the association are met in a manner consistent with the objectives set forth by the Board. Safeguards the funds, property, and physical assets of the association.
- Provides monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports to the Board.
- Ensures that an annual audit is done by an external CPA firm.

#### *Member Services*

- Oversees recruitment and retention membership campaigns throughout the year. Works with membership staff to meet annual goals.
- Promotes interest and active participation in the association’s activities on the part of the membership and reports on HAA activities through regular channels of communication.
- Has oversight for all communications to the membership, including general mailings, news releases, web content, and social media posts. Serves as Executive Editor of the monthly magazine, *Abode*.
- Works with the Technology Committee and staff to identify new technologies and services that would benefit members and staff.
- Oversees the development of education programs that advance the professional, technical, and managerial skills of the membership.
- Oversees planning and execution of the association’s annual conference and expo.
- Ensures diversity in activities that add value to the member experience.
- Creates an environment and culture in which all members are treated professionally and equally, with respect and dignity regardless of their status.

#### *External Relations and Legislation*

- In coordination with the Board President, serves as HAA’s spokesperson.
- Communicates with Houston-based TAA and NAA delegates, alternates, officers, and Board members regarding upcoming meetings, activities, policy discussions, and action items. Also responsible for communications with TAA and NAA/NMHC staff.
- Works closely with staff to develop and implement government affairs and media/public relations objectives that enhance the rental housing industry’s influence with officeholders and agencies. Promotes increased public acceptance and support of apartment communities, careers, and apartment living lifestyles.
- Cultivates and maintains professional relationships with members, other associations, industry partners, government entities, public service groups, and other organizations that help further the interests of HAA’s members.
- Stays abreast of—and advocates for—legislation and potential legislation that would affect the multi-family industry.

## **Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities**

- Bachelor's degree. MBA or other post-graduate degree a plus.
- Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation a plus.
- Ten or more years of senior-level management experience. Association or nonprofit sector experience strongly desired.
- A strategic thinker with experience working with a governing Board to develop, communicate, and implement an organization's strategy and vision.
- Ability to lead, grow, and communicate with a diverse, ever-changing governing body and group of volunteer leaders.
- Experience managing a comparably sized budget and staff.
- Ability to lead the major functional areas of a business (i.e., administration, finance, membership, trade shows, government affairs, education, publications, and marketing).
- Ability to assemble, lead, and develop a management team that works as one to accomplish an organization's goals.
- Ability to represent the organization to the external community in a positive manner.
- Ability to travel for business.

## Compensation

A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract an outstanding candidate.

## To Apply

To apply, please send a cover letter and current résumé (Microsoft Word® format preferred) to [HAA@smartinsearch.com](mailto:HAA@smartinsearch.com). The cover letter should outline how your experience fits the requirements of the position, as this will be an important factor in considering your candidacy.

*HAA is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer committed to inclusion and cultural diversity in the workplace. Employment selection and related decisions are made without regard to sex, race, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, sexual preference, genetic information, or any other protected class.*

## Additional Information

For more information, contact:

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