



**DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES
Customer Service Annual Report
2017**



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FY17 Highlights

- Improve tracking, responsiveness and time-to-resolution of all correspondence (written, telephone, electronic & in person).
The Department set a goal of acknowledging all inquiries within 24 hours of receipt. We need to refine the tracking element of this activity to accurately report on performance.
- Improve customer services skills of employees and managers through formal training classes and informal coaching on customer service best practices.
We provided three (3) all-staff formal training classes and encouraged informal coaching by providing best practices and monthly Customer Service Tips for division level staff meetings.
- Improve the processing times of agency services to help citizens and businesses accomplish their transactions with the state.
General Services is working with the Maryland Department of Transportation to simplify the architectural and engineering design process by streamlining regulations.

General Services led efforts in 2016 to streamline the Construction Change Order process as a result of legislation enacted that year. Upon passage of the legislation, General Services reviewed its internal processes to streamline the paperwork associated with a change order. Divisions collaborated to eliminate redundant forms and make paper processes electronic. The reforms have significantly decreased processing times. A vendor now receives a change order in two weeks rather than three months for a \$50,000 or less change order. (Those over \$50,000 must be approved by the Board of Public Works) These improvements resulted in fewer internal steps, greater efficiencies and a more transparent process.

General Services provides technical reviews for the design of state-funded K-12 public school projects. The more quickly these reviews are completed, the faster the construction opportunities are available for Maryland businesses, and the more reliable the process is for K-12 schools in timing their projects. General Services recognized the need to expedite the reviews and did so by combining procurements to reduce the design review timeline by two weeks.

FY17 Highlights (continued)

General Services served on the Governor’s Commission to Modernize State Procurement, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Rutherford. The Commission completed its work in December 2016. General Services actively worked on legislation introduced during the 2017 legislative session to address the recommendations of the Commission to Modernize State Procurement.

The efforts of the Commission and the related legislation addressed issues that ultimately improve customer service, including but not limited to, increased competition for State contracts, lower transaction costs and improved professional development of Maryland’s procurement workforce.

- Update online publications, forms, FAQs, and pertinent information on our website so that citizens and businesses can find relevant information quickly and accurately.

General Services continues to make improvements to its website and is working with the Department of Information Technology to further refine and enhance our online presence.

The following improvements were made to the DGS website in FY17:

- added a meeting and events calendar to the front page
- added a link to the customer service promise and survey
- developed new icons for clear, visual access
- provided a link to the Maryland Open Data Portal
- created a page titled “Caught Doing Great Service” that recognizes employees that provide superior customer service
- added “DGS in the News” page that highlights stories published in print and electronic media

Recognition Given to Employees

Governor’s Customer Service Heroes Award-recognizes and celebrates state front line workers for their customer service excellence

April 2017 - Frank Pullifrone-Facilities Planning, Design & Construction
1st recipient of the award!

General Services Employee of the Month-recognizes an employee previously nominated for “Caught Doing Great Service” that demonstrates a commitment to the Governor’s Customer Service Promise

June 2017 - Maurice Jeffreys
 May 2017 - Colleen Haynes
 April 2017 - Brian Tressler
 March 2017 - George Gibson
 February 2017 - Frank Pullifrone
 January 2017 - Ronald Moulden
 December 2016 - Bert Mahla
 November 2016 - Rosalyn Greene
 September 2016 - K-9 Champ
 August 2016 - Ebonize Richardson
 July 2016 - Anthony Faust

General Services Caught Doing Great Service-recognizes employees that provide superior customer service

June 2017 - John Roche, Christine Stenhouse & Ben McNair
 May 2017 - Clarence Felder, Hugo Guevara & Lew Shapiro
 April 2017 - Lisa Brittain, Judy Fauntleroy & Brenda Redding
 March 2017 - Randolph Wilson, Alfred “Kash” McGuire & Becky Vodusek
 February 2017 - Cathe Anderson, Delissa Fenner, Ray Kaliush, Lavern Murray, Michele Sanders & Sean Stinnett
 January 2017 - Cristen Ervin
 December 2016 - Angela Allen, Sheri Jackson, Dave Kelleher & Darryl Andrews
 November 2016 - John Evianiak & Deirdra Glover
 October 2016 - Charles Clark, Alan Gwynn, Jerry Harris, Dan Heyman, Nick Matula, Ghadir Sara, Lawrence “LT” Taylor, Renee Thompson & Eric Yealdhall

Leadership Analysis of FY17 and Summary of FY18 Approach

The Department of General Services is committed to the Hogan Administration's Customer Service Promise and has invested significant resources in the agency's customer service initiative. This ongoing effort has led to customer service improvements in our agency. We recognize and fully support the evolving nature of this program and look forward to greater customer service improvements.

- We will implement additional customer services training programs in FY18 for all DGS employees.
- We will continue to review and adjust agency business hours to better align with customer demand.
- We will continue to recognize and award exceptional customer service.
- We will study the feasibility of implementing an internal tracking system for all electronic, telephone, written and in-person correspondence.
- We will continue to look for ways to improve the processing times of our services in order to help citizens and businesses more easily conduct their transactions in a timely manner.
- We will update online publications, forms, FAQ's and other pertinent information on our website.
- We will explore other ways to use social media to get the word out about our services, events and news.
- We will aim to improve our customer service survey results by reducing, or preferably eliminating, "dissatisfied" results and thus boosting "satisfied" responses.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of DGS to be the accessible, accountable support agency delivering expertise, essential services and facilities operations and management to the State in order to enhance the quality of work/life environments for our stakeholders and the citizens of Maryland.

Vision

To be the premier partner to our sister agencies, delivering support, expertise and essential services as needed to facilitate their missions on behalf of the citizens of Maryland.

Detailed FY17 Results and FY18 Plans

The Department of General Services set out in FY17 to improve tracking, responsiveness and time-to-resolution of all forms of correspondence. We provided three formal training classes for all staff and various informal coaching on relevant best practices in customer service. General Services worked with the Department of Transportation to simplify the architectural and engineering design process by streamlining regulations. General Services also led efforts in 2016 to streamline the Construction Change Order process. Internal processes were revised to streamline paperwork, redundant forms were eliminated and some paper processes were converted to electronic. These reforms have decreased processing times significantly. General Services continues to make improvement to its website and is working with the Department of Information Technology to further refine and improve our online presence.

General Services remains committed to implementing our Customer Service activities and further improving customer service. In FY18 we plan to implement procedures to improve the tracking, responsiveness and time-to-resolution for all correspondence (electronic, telephone, written and in-person); provide further opportunities for formal training; continue to find ways to simplify and streamline processes; and provide citizens relevant information accurately and quickly through our website.

Customer Service Survey Results

Overall survey results show a 72.7% “Very Satisfied”, 7.6% “Somewhat Satisfied”, 4.1% “Neutral”, 2.7% “Somewhat Dissatisfied”, and 12.5% “Very Dissatisfied”. The breakdown questions survey results remained consistent with the overall results. General Services aims to reduce the “Somewhat Dissatisfied” and “Very Dissatisfied” results by providing training to help achieve satisfactory survey results in FY18.

Status of Customer Service Training

General Services provided three all-staff training sessions focused on customer service. Two of the trainings were conducted by an outside contractor that reached a large percentage of employees. It is difficult to analyze how the training impacted customer service but it did begin a customer service conversation and raise awareness within the agency and among employees. General Services plans on training employees in FY18 by publishing a different “Customer Service Tip” in each monthly installment of our newsletter and reinforcing the tip at monthly all-staff meetings with interactive discussions.

Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries

General Services has emphasized the importance of timeliness to customer inquiries in our trainings and will continue to address this subject in upcoming communications. We monitor the customer service survey results and promptly address any comments, both positive and negative. We are studying how to enhance tracking in order to further improve time-to-resolution on customer inquiries.

Best Practices

Expectations have been set within the agency through our training and communications. Supervisors and employees are promptly made aware of any comments relating to timeliness.

Plans for Improvement

We would hope to implement an internal tracking system to be used along with the survey results data. We would like to also establish resources and responsibilities for division heads and make employees more aware of our customer services aims, responsibilities and, ultimately, benefits.

Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

Making Agency Services Available Online

This agency continues to make improvement to our website. In FY17 we added the following to the front page of the website: a meeting and events calendar, a link to the customer service promise and survey, new icons for clearer and more accessible navigation, a link to the Maryland Open Data Portal, a link to a newly created page titled “Caught Doing Great Services” that recognizes employees that provide superior customer service and a link to “DGS in the News” page that highlights DGS news stories. General Services is currently working with the Department of Information Technology to further refine and enhance our online presence.

The Maryland Capitol Police of the Department of General Services provides access to the following on our website: ID request form, visitor management access system forms, the Police Directors Manual, and the public events application permit. Customers may also subscribe to Nixle which provides public safety notification services for government agencies to send messages to local residents via phone, email and the web.

The Office of Real Estate provides the following online information:

- The State's office lease and parking requirements for current and prospective landlords. This includes general specifications and standards, lease compliance guidelines, emergency release guidelines, and the standard lease form.
- Current Request for Proposals, along with instructions on how to receive the full package, for the annual title company procurement and new lease procurements.
- How to apply to be approved for the General Services approved appraiser list. This allow approved appraisers to receive future bid solicitations and receive awards to perform appraisal work for various State agencies.
- Brief descriptions of real estate properties for sale along with contact information.
- A notice of the Deep Creek lake Buy-Down Project is available along with the required forms needed to begin the process of acquiring a parcel.

Processing Times for Customer Transactions

The Facilities Planning, Design & Construction Division updated their design policy manual, added a change order guidelines document and simplified the change order form utilized by contractors. These documents are posted on the agency website.

The Facilities Operations and Maintenance Division is implementing an online maintenance management system called eMaint. This cloud-based work order system is expected to improve the management and timeliness of maintenance requests resulting in greater productivity. This Division is currently updating the parking policy for all General Services owned, operated and managed parking facilities in order to streamline policy that it is consistent and understandable for our customers.

Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands

The General Services Facilities Operations and Maintenance division adjusts its maintenance, housekeeping and painting schedules in order to accomplish their duties with the minimal impact and disturbance to their agency customers. For example, the State House cleaning staff begins their work at 5:30 am in order to complete prior to staff arrival.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

General Services uses Facebook and YouTube to keep the general public and our sister agencies informed about what we do. Social media postings help explain the varied and unique responsibilities of General Services. The agency recently created a LinkedIn profile that will create wider professional connections. We will continue to improve our use of social media in FY 18.

