



CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

On January 16, 2007, DPSS implemented the Customer Service Center (CSC) as a six-month pilot. The CSC was initially piloted in conjunction with the San Gabriel Valley District and assumed responsibility for the incoming participant telephone call load previously handled by the district office, excluding certain specialized files.

The CSC provides participants with a single point-of-contact by allowing them to call a toll-free telephone number and speak to a knowledgeable Customer Service Representative (CSR). Additionally, the CSC has provided participants with expanded access to an Eligibility Worker with the elimination of telephone hours. The CSC is available during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The CSC currently services CalWORKs, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, and General Relief participants and provides menu selections in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Vietnamese.

Among the main goals of the CSC was a desire to provide more efficient customer service while reducing the burden on participants to make unnecessary trips to the district office. By facilitating their contact with a knowledgeable Customer Service agent, participants are now able to obtain the services they need without the need to speak directly to their case-carrying EW.

The CSC utilizes an Internal Services Department (ISD) hosted call center system using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) that combines call distribution capabilities with data collection. Access to the CSC is provided through a toll free telephone number that links all customer communication through one virtual access point. A state of the art tracking system tracks each call from first point of contact to resolution and interfaces with the Department's LEADER system. Calls requiring additional case action follow up by district eligibility staff are connected via the Frontlink tracking system and controlled for appropriate resolution. Emergency calls are automatically connected to agencies throughout the County.

STATUS UPDATE

In the few short months since implementation, the CSC has exceeded expectations by netting numerous successes. Swift action on participant inquiries and an expanded level of access to case information has stabilized the call volume and minimized the need for participant follow-up calls. This improved level of service and accountability has also resulted in a 33% reduction in lobby traffic at the initial pilot district (San Gabriel Valley). The success has been documented by nearly universal approval of the CSC from both participants and departmental staff alike. Customer satisfaction surveys of participants have returned a 99% satisfaction rate.

The success of the CSC can also be attributed to improved communication between the CSC and District Office. Follow-up calls are forwarded to District management for immediate resolution and response. Periodically meetings between CSC and District Office supervisors allow the team to strategize and improve the level of interoffice communication. This has resulted in more uniform case documentation that lends support to providing current and accurate information to participants at both the CSC and District Office interactions.

The early success resulted in the integration of two additional District offices, Norwalk Office in May 15, 2007 and the El Monte Office in August 21, 2007. The CSC supports three districts with a caseload of over

104,000. As a result, the average call volume at the CSC has increased to approximately 55,000 calls per month. The average tracking tickets have increased to just about 34,000 tracking tickets per month. The additional districts further confirmed the success of the CSC and validated the openness and well receipt of the CSC by our participants and community.

Long-term expansion beyond this third District Office will involve the development of additional call center locations in order to support all 32 line offices throughout the Department. We have also begun working on development of a self-service component of our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System which will enable participants to retrieve case-specific information without the need to speak to a live customer service agent. A successful IVR would produce a significant call offload, resulting in a reduction in the total number of agents necessary to handle the expected call volume for full departmental rollout. The Self-Service Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system is expected to go live on January 22, 2008.

CSC SYSTEMS

The customer service center uses several software systems such as:

- Cisco Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP):
This technology combines call distribution capabilities with data collection and links all customer communication through one single point.
- Frontlink Tracking System- Lagan Technologies:
CSC's main system agents utilize to create and track participant's requests via an electronic tracking ticket. The Frontlink tracking system interfaces with LEADER system via host to host.
- IEX Corporation Forecasting System- Information Exchange:
CSC's forecasting tool which allows our staff to plan and forecast, agent schedules, and reports on future call trends.
- NICE Reporter- Neptune Integration Computer Engineer:
This system allows management to evaluate and monitor agent calls through call recordings.
- PLASMA wide screen panels:
These screens receive data from CSC systems and displays data/information such as average call wait time, number of call received, and number of call in Queue.

Reporting systems:

- Oracle Discover Plus System:
This system extracts tracking ticket data from the Frontlink database and allows a user to run reports on all tracking tickets created by agents.
- Cisco Webview Reporting System:
This system will produce reports on call volume by program, language and by agent.

Future Departmental expansion of the DPSS Customer Service Center will ensure that DPSS is able to continue to provide our customers with easy access to quality information and services that are both responsive and beneficial to their needs.