

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS MANAGEMENT MANUAL**

**Personnel  
Directive**

Subject: METHODS TO IMPROVE  
EMPLOYEE COURTESY

***ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES***

June 20, 2007

PERSONNEL DIRECTIVE NO. 46

BACKGROUND

The main function of the Department of Public Works is to provide services to the public. It is important that these services be rendered in a manner that ensures that the satisfaction of the customer is the primary focus of our activities. The Board of Public Works adopted a Customer First Initiative on February 14, 2001 that created the policy, structure, principles and standards necessary to implement a comprehensive customer service program throughout the Department.

The Customer First Initiative was developed through the Department's Joint Labor-Management Strategic Planning process. The Initiative includes a Customer Service Policy, a Joint Letter of Commitment signed by management and labor organizations, the formation of a Department Oversight Committee, support for training, Customer Service Principles and Standards, support for a centralized One Call Center in the Department, development of timelines for services provided by the Department, development of employee outreach programs, and distribution of public outreach materials and telephone numbers.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

On February 14, 2001, the Board of Public Works adopted a Customer Service Policy for the Department of Public Works as follows:

"The Department of Public Works is committed to providing excellent service to all of our customers. The Department shall strive to provide the necessary support to our employees to allow them to excel in the performance of their duties. The Department shall work through the joint labor-management process to ensure that the quality of service provided by every employee reflects the Department's shared belief that meeting the needs of our customers is our first priority."

PROCEDURE

Managers and Supervisors are hereby instructed to ensure that employees under their control adhere to the following Customer Service Principles and Standards. This may involve training, monitoring and the application of discipline if necessary.

CUSTOMER SERVICE PRINCIPLES

The Board of Public Works adopted the following principles to provide Department employees with broad guidelines to follow in all customer-related activities:

We take pride in our commitment to customer service. We...

- Extend service with a smile – both in person and on the telephone.
- Respond with enthusiasm and flexibility to assist our customers.

We take personal responsibility in helping our customers get the information they need. We....

- Assure each customer that we are willing to help resolve his or her concern.
- Treat each customer's concern individually and separate from the previous caller's concern.

We provide quick and responsive help. We...

- Respond honestly to each customer. When we do not know the answer, we commit to getting the answer.
- Perform the necessary follow-up to ensure resolution to each customer's concern.

We give our customers confidence in our services. We...

- Ensure reliability by delivering quality service — consistently, dependably and accurately.
- Listen attentively and patiently to the customer's concerns without interrupting them.
- Provide realistic timeframes on service requests.

We take ownership of our customers' problems. We...

- Listen to our customers and strive to recognize their needs.
- Politely seek to obtain the necessary facts to resolve the customer's concern.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

The Board of Public Works adopted the following customer service standards that all employees should endeavor to utilize during customer contact on the telephone or in person:

- Phone calls will be answered within three rings.
- Voicemail messages will be updated daily and include an alternative number to call for immediate assistance.
- Callers will be advised that they have reached the Department of Public Works as a part of the greeting.
- Callers will not have to wait or be placed on hold for longer than 2 minutes without being advised of the expected length of their remaining wait time.
- Callers will be transferred no more than one time.
- The customer will be given a timeframe for service delivery and/or follow-up by staff.
- The customer will be addressed in a cordial and professional manner.
- Customers will be acknowledged promptly upon entering an office or approaching field personnel.

- A waiting customer at an office or counter will be acknowledged and told that he or she will be served shortly.
- A customer waiting at a Public Counter shall be given priority service with no distraction of staff by telephones.