



**Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Customer Service Annual Report
FY17**

Agency Contacts:

Summar Goodman

Director of Constituent Services

410-230-6069

Kimberly M. Burns

Chief of Staff

410-230-6016

Table of Contents

FY17 Highlights.....	4
Recognition Given to Employees	5
Leadership Analysis of FY17 and Summary of FY18 Approach	9
Detailed FY17 Results and FY18 Plans	9
Customer Service Survey Results.....	9
Status of Customer Service Training	10
Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution	10
Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries	11
Best Practices	11
Plans for Improvement	11
Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives.....	12
Making Agency Services Available Online.....	12
Processing Times for Customer Transactions	13
Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands	13
Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience.....	14

FY17 Highlights

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's (Department of Labor) primary focus is to safeguard and protect Marylanders. The agency is proud to support the economic stability of the state by providing businesses, the workforce and the consuming public with high quality customer-focused regulatory, employment and training services.

Under the leadership of Secretary Kelly M. Schulz, the Maryland Department of Labor served as a trailblazer in spearheading an agency-wide customer service training program shortly after Secretary Schulz joined the agency in January of 2015. Inspired by Governor Hogan's declaration that Maryland is open for business, Secretary Schulz made one of her first priorities to change the perceived "anti-business attitude" often associated with the Maryland Department of Labor. To do so required a shift within the organizational culture. The Maryland Department of Labor developed the first interagency customer service training program in the State. Secretary Schulz mandated that every employee not only attend the customer service training program— but also understood that they were an integral part of both the agency's overall plan and success.

The agency was fully engaged in activities related to improving customer service when Governor Hogan's Customer Service Promise launched in June 2016. This initiative allowed the agency to expand its activities to ensure that both management and staff were fully invested in providing the citizens on Maryland with exemplary service.

During FY17, the Maryland Department of Labor had a stellar year for customer service. The agency consistently saw positive results from the survey reports week to week. Overwhelmingly, each question reflected that the majority of consumers were very satisfied with the overall service, level of friendliness and courtesy, timeliness and responsiveness, accuracy and consistency, accessibility and convenience, and truthfulness and transparency.

In addition, the agency worked diligently to make significant strides in reducing the number of outstanding open cases in the governor's correspondence system, Intranet Quorum (IQ). At the beginning of the fiscal year, there were more than 500 unresolved cases in queue, and aging reports reflected that individual letters were more than 200 days old. To date, the average number of cases in queue is below 20, and they are addressed within the two week window established by the governor's office.

This report will outline how the Maryland Department of Labor's Customer Service Plan enabled the agency to more effectively enact the mission, continually improve service delivery, and reward outstanding employees all while building trust among constituents, stakeholders and customers.

Recognition Given to Employees

As a part of the Maryland Department of Labor's Customer Service Recognition Program, there were several phases to the initiative created to recognize great employees, motivate all staff and boost the morale within the agency.



Left to right: Commissioner Victoria Wilkins, Patrick Panella (award winner), Secretary Kelly M. Schulz and Deputy Secretary David M. McGlone

Phase I focused on individual recognition of exemplary employees with a Secretary's Citation. Secretary Kelly M. Schulz requested that each division leader nominate an employee that served as an example of what it means to go above and beyond the call of duty. The submissions were evaluated by the Secretary and senior staff, and a winner was chosen.

The selected employee was invited to the senior leadership team meeting and honored in front of the senior staff. The employee received a Secretary's Citation and a profile on the Maryland Department of Labor's website and social media pages. This process continued into FY17 and FY18.

Phase II focused on creating a special event to recognize all employees. In May of 2016, the Department celebrated the "State Employee Appreciation Day" by hosting a lunch time celebration to show appreciation for the staff. The event was carefully and thoughtfully planned and coordinated by the Office of the Secretary staff. The theme was team spirit, and employees were encouraged to dress in Orioles attire. Special highlights from the event include that staff members were personally greeted by Secretary Kelly M. Schulz upon arrival and served lunch by senior staff. With the Secretary volunteering as a greeter and the Assistant Secretaries and Commissioners serving lunch, those small touches gave employees the sense of their value to the organization. There was also a special appearance by the Oriole Bird. The staff enjoyed taking pictures with the Oriole Bird and the Secretary and connecting with colleagues from various units. Another aspect of the event included a chance to win door prizes. Each Division donated prizes for the event. The name of every employee was placed inside a prize drum and entered into a random drawing. As the Secretary drew the names, the winners ran up to claim their prizes as their colleagues cheered them on. They did not have to be present to win, and those winners that were not present at the event had their prizes hand delivered by management and in some cases the Secretary herself. There was a Maryland Department of Labor trivia game where staff members had a chance to win prizes when correctly answering questions about the history of the agency. In addition, there was a special dessert of cotton candy, handmade onsite by the agency's Chief of Staff for all attendees.



Senior leaders at the Maryland Department of Labor served lunch to the staff during “State Employee Appreciation Day.”

As a final surprise, the winners of the Secretary’s citation for customer service were announced at the event and surprised with tickets to enjoy an Orioles game with the Secretary in the Governor’s box. Pictures from “State Employee Appreciation Day” were made into a collage and circulated to various offices to keep the spirit of the event alive. The department held a very similar event in May 2017.

Within the Divisions, various managers chose to host special events to further recognize employees during the month of May. They continued the momentum by implementing recognition strategies to include the names of employees who received compliments from constituents being placed on bulletin boards in common areas for all to see. Employees were also being highlighted at staff meetings and reported that they began engaging in team building activities to help enhance the workplace culture which centrally focuses on providing exemplary customer service. In FY17, managers continued to be creative with recognition and team building activities, honoring employees for their customer service efforts.

Phase III included the initiation of the weekly employee electronic publication, “*OneDLLR Newsletter: Making Change.*” The newsletter was recently recognized as a best practice among state agencies. It highlights employee accomplishments, news that is important to employees including updates from the Secretary, new projects that will

affect workflow and a section for each division that brings staff up-to-date on the progress and latest news. It is designed to promote awareness of all of the great work accomplished throughout the agency and the dedication of employees. It also provided employees with helpful personal and professional information.



Our DLLR agency e-Newsletter was created using the Granicus website. Granicus allows government organizations to communicate with mass audiences and to reach their target audience at an unprecedented pace. The e-newsletter is a product of collaborative team effort and various contributions from the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Commissioner of Financial Regulation, Maryland Occupational Safety and Health, Division of Unemployment Insurance, Division of Labor and Industry, Office of Information Technology, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, Office of Administration, Office of Fair Practices and the Governor's Workforce Development Board.

On behalf of Secretary Kelly Schulz, the e-newsletter has afforded the agency the opportunity to provide and disseminate official information throughout the State on positive and critical employee practices and division activities. The e-newsletter is developed on a weekly basis and publicized statewide every Monday.

Leadership Analysis of FY17 and Summary of FY18 Approach

- The agency will continue with the top down approach to recognition by ensuring that the large-scale agency-wide employee appreciation events will continue to be planned by the staff of the Office of the Secretary.
- The agency will continue to recognize individual employees as well as build on division activities.
- The agency will continue the weekly electronic newsletter distributed to all staff.
- The agency will reinforce positive individual performance among employees.
- The agency will push nominations down from the director level to include nominations from program managers.

Detailed FY17 Results and FY18 Plans

Customer Service Survey Results

- Year-to-date (July 2017) the Maryland Department of Labor received a total of 1,308 survey responses from customers.
- Of that number, 1,019 reported that they were overall very satisfied with the service provided.
- The agency maintained an overall score of more than 80 percent on all areas, and the agency strives to continually improve that number as well as improve the image of the agency among the citizens of Maryland.

Status of Customer Service Training

Approximately 1,506 employees completed the Customer Service Training which equates to an 88.5 percent agency completion rate. The training was rolled out in two stages. The first stage included training the employees within the Division of Unemployment Insurance beginning in June 2015. The program was tailored to the specific job requirements and included scenarios that will be experienced by those in the division. Once this stage was completed, the training unit evaluated the feedback received from participants and used it to make improvements to the overall program. The second stage included opening the training up to all employees of the agency – both permanent and contractual. Overall, there were a total of 60 trainings held throughout the state from June 2015 to December 2016. The next series of customer service training will start in September 2017.

The Customer Service Training will continue to evolve to best meet the needs of our internal customers. The agency has utilized this as an effective tool for onboarding new employees. In addition, Secretary Kelly M. Schulz taped a video welcome message that is shown at all of the trainings. In the video, the secretary informs employees about the critical importance of displaying exemplary customer service at all times and sets the stage for what we anticipate will be a positive professional experience for all employees at the Department of Labor.

Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries

With the large volume of inquiries coming into the agency through various channels, the Maryland Department of Labor's goal is to continually strive to make timeliness a priority. Traditionally, the mail, fax and telephone have been the primary mode of contact, but in recent years, the agency has seen increased communication received from customers through email and social media. It is necessary to ensure that the staff

is aware of the various modes that customers use to communicate and enact a plan to systematically and effectively check all channels to respond in a timely manner.

Best Practices

Best practices for timeliness included the implementation of a new position to directly address the needs of constituents-- Director of Constituent Services. This person is responsible for tracking, monitoring and responding to constituent correspondence received via mail, the governor's correspondence system Intranet Quorum (IQ), email and social media. The person in this position acts as a liaison between the agency and the constituents to ensure that the citizens of Maryland are afforded an open line of communication as well as methods of resolution for individual concerns within a manageable timeframe. This person handles all IQ issues, customer service program issues, and survey responses.

Plans for Improvement

- Plans to improve response timeliness for the Maryland Department of Labor include:
 - As an extension of the Department of Labor's customer service efforts, citizens can access services online via www.dllr.maryland.gov, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Department will explore new ways to make the website more effective.
 - Determining if an email auto-response is appropriate and effective for the units that utilize it currently and if the use of auto-responses should be expanded

- Re-evaluating the telephone voice answering system to ensure that the information presented is clear and that customers are getting to the appropriate unit as quickly as possible
- Prioritizing major issues and addressing them first, a shift that developed within the Division of Unemployment Insurance, as they explored adjusting service hours to devote more time to researching and resolving complex customer issues
- Creating draft responses for frequently asked questions that help process minor issues faster
- Creating easier methods to check the multiple channels of communication

Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

- Improving the customer experience from multiple perspectives includes motivating staff to continually strive to improve efficiency, responsiveness and consistency -- thereby strengthening the relationship between the Maryland Department of Labor and the business community
- Utilizing the social media pages as an informational channel to provide updates on services and drive traffic to the website for customer service concerns.

Making Agency Services Available Online

- The Maryland Department of Labor's website is undergoing a renovation to guarantee that the agency is providing the most reliable, up-to-date information to consumers in three clicks or fewer.

- The functionality on the website also allows customers to verify licenses of potential service providers, apply for work permits, renew licenses online, apply for weekly unemployment benefits and other options.
- Constituents also have an open channel of communication through social media where they are able to receive information via direct messages.

Processing Times for Customer Transactions

- In FY17, the Maryland Department of Labor wanted to focus on improving the customer experience – particularly with one of the larger divisions – Unemployment Insurance. In doing so, the agency commenced work on a project deemed the UI Modernization, which will not only improve customer transactions, but efficiency and timeliness as well.

Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands

- The Division of Unemployment Insurance has considered the possibility of modifying the hours of the Claim Center. The Claim Centers are not open to the public but serve as call centers to assist customers with issues relating to their unemployment claims over the phone. The centers take calls from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. each weekday. The decision of adjusting the hours of the centers to Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. excluding State holidays has been discussed and implemented. The reason is to allow claim center specialists the ability to provide individual, uninterrupted service to complex cases during the afternoon hours of 2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

- Currently, social media is a major vehicle of the agency's customer service initiative. Customers feel comfortable communicating with the agency through the Facebook and Twitter pages. The agency receives customer service inquiries daily through these channels. When posted on the main wall, customers are encouraged to direct message the agency to protect confidentiality. This will continue to be a customer service mainstay moving forward.
- We are focusing on efforts to enhance the multi-lingual flexibility of the Department of Labor social media experience. This includes making sure customers are able to translate our web pages in many other languages by using a simple Google translate button at the bottom of each page. In some cases, the Divisions have chosen to craft a bi-lingual page (usually in Spanish-English) to help visitors better navigate the site.



KELLY M. SCHULZ, SECRETARY

INTERNET: www.dllr.maryland.gov

PHONE: 410-230-6020

FACEBOOK: [DLLR.MARYLAND](https://www.facebook.com/DLLR.MARYLAND)

TWITTER: [@MD_DLLR](https://twitter.com/MD_DLLR)