

NYC Customer Service Newsletter

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City Agencies Participate in Customer Service Week – October 5-9, 2009

Customer Service Week began in the 1980's to provide organizations a way to celebrate with and recognize their customer service staff. This year 23 agencies have a wide variety of events planned to recognize this special week.

DOITT's 311 group will run the gamut of possible events, including brown bag lunch and learn sessions, continental breakfasts, a "chair parade", where staff decorate supervisors' chairs as a Siebel Service Request, a "come dressed as your favorite Hollywood star" event, and a more

formal awards and recognition ceremony.

The Mayor's Office of Film Theater and Broadcasting will have their Deputy and Associate Commissioner, as well as their Director of Production, working the front line by greeting customers at the reception desk and answering the main switchboard. MOFTB will also host a breakfast to recognize customer service staff and will distribute each day a Customer Satisfaction Exit Survey to its customers.

The Department of Citywide Administrative Services will feature,

among other events, customer service "how to" information sessions and the new Mayoral Video Message on Customer Service. DCAS will also host two sessions by David P. Snyder, author of "How to Mind Read Your Customers".

These are just some samples of the wide variety of activities that are planned for staff and customers for Customer Service Week 2009. This year promises to be another fun and memorable week for customer service staff and the City's customers.

Second Annual Mayor's Excellence in Customer Service Award & Recognition Program

On Thursday of Customer Service Week, the Mayor's Office of Operations Customer Service Group will host the second annual Mayor's Excellence in Customer Service Awards and Recognition Program at Brooklyn's Borough Hall.

This year the event will recognize programs or teams, as well as individuals, which have demonstrated innovation in customer service. Team categories include Call Centers and Phone, Correspondence,

Customer Service Centers and Walk-In Facilities, Inspectors, Internal Customer Service, General Practice or Program, Language Access, and Web Services.

Individuals will be selected based on the customer service values of respect, timeliness and quality. Teams will be selected based on innovation in customer service delivery; application of a creative solution to a definable customer service

challenge; and, measurable improvement in call center or customer phone service delivery.

The ceremony will be held in Brooklyn's Borough Hall, where Deputy Mayor Ed Skyler and Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz will speak and present certificates to each of the winning individuals and teams.

For more information contact Craig Hosang,
chosang@cityhall.nyc.gov

Ballfields Café, Location: [Central Park](#)
Heckscher Ballfields, south of 65th Street & west of the carousel

[Battery Gardens](#)

Location: [Battery Park](#)
Inside the park, opposite 17 State St.

Battery Park Snack Bar
Location: [Battery Park](#)
Enter at State Street & Battery Place

Comfort Snack Bar, Location: [Central Park](#), 830 5th Avenue (Arsenal bldg)

[Ferrara's](#), Location: [Central Park](#)
Merchant's Gate, Columbus Circle

Hudson Beach Café
Location: [Riverside Park](#)
105th Street and Riverside Park

Hudson River Café
Location: [Riverside Park](#)
Hudson River at West 70th Street
Riverside Park South

[Knish Nosh](#), Location: [Central Park](#)
5th Ave. at 106th St. (Harlem Meer)

[Little Vesleka](#), Location: [First Park](#)
75 East 1st Street (at 1st Avenue)

[New Leaf Café](#)
Location: [Fort Tryon Park](#)
1 Margaret Corbin Dr., W. 190th St.

[New York Milkshake Company](#)
Location: 342 E .47th St. (between 1st & 2nd avenues) across from the U N

North Meadow Recreation Center
Snack Bar, Location: [Central Park](#)
Mid-park at 97th Street

Picnic, Location: [Battery Park](#)
2 kiosks in the bosque

Pier I Café
Location: [Riverside Park](#)
Pier I at W. 70th St. and Hudson River

[Shake Shack](#)
Location: [Madison Square Park](#)
SE corner of Madison Square Park
near Madison Ave. and E. 23rd St

Sheep Meadow Café
Location: [Central Park](#)
Central Park between 69th and 70th
Terrace Drive and Sheep Meadow

[Tavern on the Green](#)
Location: [Central Park](#)
West 67th Street

[The Boathouse](#)
Location: [Central Park](#)
East 72nd Street & Park Drive North

[West 79th Street Boat Basin Café](#)
Location: [Riverside Park](#)
West 79th Street & the Hudson River

At Parks, Eating is Part of Recreating

Did you know that Parks operates 33 restaurants, food and snack bars throughout New York City? Well known parks' restaurants include Shake Shack in Madison Square Park, Lake Café in Cloves Lake Park, and Knish Nosh in Flushing Meadows Park. Thanks to these private concession businesses, park goers get a chance to eat while enjoying our parks, and the City gets added revenue. In fiscal year 2009, Parks' food concessions brought in over \$10 million.

This summer, Parks

conducted the first customer survey of diners at ten Parks snack bars citywide. Parks talked to 521 customers from Conservatory Waters, Crossroads Café, Ferrara Café, Hudson Beach Café, Knish Nosh, Little Veselka, NY Milkshake, Picnic Pier I, The Ballfields Cafe and Wendy's.

In general, customers were happy with the concessions. Ninety four percent (94%) of patrons rated the businesses good or better overall, with about the same percentage having

positive reviews of the food. Concessionaires offer a wide selection including paninis, falafels, soups, custards, and tarts, as well as traditional favorites including hot dogs, hamburgers, and pretzels. Customer service and cleanliness also got high marks.

Patrons had some ideas for improvements, including more vegetarian options, longer hours, and more restrooms.

For more information contact Keith Kerman at Keith.Kerman@parks.nyc.gov



Ferrara's Café, Central Park

Outer Boroughs Eateries

Bronx
Dunkin' Donuts, Location: [Hutchinson River Parkway](#)

Orchard Beach, Location: [Pelham Bay Park](#), Various snack bars

Wendy's, Location: [Keltch Park](#)

Brooklyn
[Crossroads To Go](#)
Location: Joralemon Street between Adams & Court

Golden King/Falafel Snack Bar
Location: 595 Bedford Ave. at the corner of

Bedford and Williamsburg St.

Queens
Astoria Pool Snack Bar, Location: [Astoria Park](#)
Seating area on the terrace above the pool house

Café on the Green, Location: [Cross Island Parkway](#), 201-10 Cross Island Parkway (between the Clearview Expressway and 202nd Street)

Knish Nosh, Location: [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#), 61-30 Van Wyck Expressway, overlooking Meadow Lake

Rockaway Beach Snackbar
Location: [Rockaway Boardwalk](#)
Three snack bars-- Beach 86th Street
Beach 97th Street, Beach 106th Street

[Terrace on the Park](#)
Location: [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#)
52-11 111th Street

[World's Fair Marina Restaurant and Banquet](#)
Location: [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#)
1 Worlds Fair Marina

Staten Island
Lake Café, Location: [Clove Lakes Park](#)
1150 Clove Road

[South Shore Country Club](#)
Location: [South Shore Golf Course](#)
200 Huguenot Avenue

[The Vanderbilt at South Beach](#)
Location: [Franklin D. Roosevelt Boardwalk and Beach](#), 300 Father Capodanno Boulevard

FDNY Certificates of Fitness Made Easy

In 2008, Mayor Bloomberg signed into law a new Fire Code for New York City – the first comprehensive revision of the New York City Fire Code in almost a century.

Among other things, the new Fire Code identified a group of hazardous materials – such as flammable solids, organic peroxides and water-reactive solids and liquids – that will now be regulated by the New York City Fire Department (FDNY). For example, anyone who handles or works with these materials, in certain quantities, must now have an FDNY-issued Certificate of Fitness.

To obtain a Certificate of Fitness, an applicant must satisfactorily demonstrate – through computer-based tests offered at FDNY Headquarters – that they are qualified to handle or work with these hazards within New York City.

As a result of these new Fire Code requirements, the FDNY Bureau of Fire Prevention was tasked with creating new Certificate of Fitness exams for the newly regulated hazards, and to develop study materials for the test-takers.

To accomplish this, the FDNY Bureau of Fire

Prevention convened a panel of subject matter experts consisting of uniformed and civilian FDNY staff, and industry and other City agency representatives. In one year, they created nine new tests and the companion study materials. The study materials are based on information drawn from the Fire Code, the Rules of the City of New York and nationwide and industry standards. Many study materials now include an on-the-job reference checklist after being certified.

Because this was a new regulatory regime for the affected industries, the FDNY sought to ease the transition and make the test preparation and test-taking as simple and effective as possible.

First, the FDNY offered all of the test materials for free on its website. Second, the FDNY attempted to make the very technical study material as user-friendly as possible, making frequent use of photos and graphics to illustrate what would be on the test. Third, FDNY made the test-taking convenient and quick. The tests are offered five days a week from 8:00am-4:00pm at the FDNY's Downtown Brooklyn Headquarters.

No appointments are necessary, except for groups of five or more. Lastly, since the tests are computerized, applicants receive their results at the end of the exam. Successful test-takers are immediately issued their Certificates of Fitness. Anyone who does not pass is given a report that itemizes the areas that they need to improve on if they plan to retake the test.

The FDNY has successfully accomplished its goal of an easy transition in its first year of testing or reviewing of their submissions; almost 800 people have taken the tests or submitted their applications; 537 have been successful through July 21, 2009.

And, the FDNY continues to assist Certificate of Fitness holders even after the exam. Over the last year, the FDNY held seminars at FDNY headquarters to acquaint the industry with the new Fire Code requirements and developed materials and checklists for use by the new Certificate holders on the job to reinforce what they had learned.

For more information contact Caroline Kretz at kretzc@fdny.nyc.gov

Certificate of Fitness Categories (with Pass/Total Test Taker Ratio)

Hazardous Chemicals (8/8)

Portable Mounted Outdoor Natural Gas Heaters (7/47)

Fire Alarms (35/66)

Portable Fire Extinguishers (123/143)

Fumigation & Fogging (10/11)

MICROTURBINE (8/10)

Space Heater for Construction (0/0: test not given yet)

Cleaning Commercial Cooking Systems (196/315)

Expeditor (150/192)



Director of Licensing Steven Ertrachter assists candidate who is taking newly automated touch-screen, virtual simulation test

CORE Survey Sample Questions

Ratings:

- 4=Excellent
- 3=Good
- 2=Fair
- 1=Poor

Building: Operations, conditions and cleanliness

Is the building easy to locate from the street?

Is the lobby area in good condition?

Are the building hallways clean and in good condition?

Are the elevators and/or escalators clean and in good condition?

Was there graffiti present?

Facility Service Center: Queuing and Service Accessibility

Are security guards professional, accessible, and knowledgeable to the customers?

Is the queuing process timely and efficient?

Are the front-line staff personnel professional, accessible, and knowledgeable to the customers?

Facility Service Center: Conditions and cleanliness

Is the facility accessible for LEP customers (notice of interpretation, translated signs, translated documents)?

Is the facility signage professional, accurate and in good condition?

Is the lighting sufficient and in good condition?

Is the floor or carpeting clean and in good condition?

Are the walls clean and in good condition?

Are the restrooms clean and in good condition?

Was there graffiti present?

Is there any litter or trash present in the facility?

Are there any hazards or high priority issues in the facility?

CORE Facility Inspections

The City of New York has over 300 walk-in facilities across the five boroughs that provide a wide array of services to its customers. Customers who come to our facilities should expect clean, safe and comfortable places to conduct their business. The conditions of a facility can leave a good or bad impression on a customer as much as interactions with staff.

In August 2009, the Mayor's Office of Operations' Customer Service Group, with assistance from the Customer Service Liaisons from DOB, Parks, TLC, DOHMH, HRA, NYCHA, DCA, DFTA, DHS and DOF, designed the Customers Observing and Reporting Experience (CORE) program for facility inspections. Modeled after the first CORE program, in which Operations staff and interns posed as customers and asked for

information or services, the latest version of CORE had the Street Conditions and Observations Unit (SCOUT) inspectors, who cover every City street each month to identify and report street conditions, visit over 300 walk-in facilities to report and rate facility conditions.

The CORE/SCOUT teams rated different aspects of facility conditions: location visibility, lobby condition, lobby security process, hallways, elevators, escalators and stairwells, signage, graffiti, bathrooms, lighting, floor and carpeting, walls and ceilings, windows, seating availability and condition, litter and hazards.

In addition to these physical conditions, inspectors also observed and reported on the demeanor of security guards and frontline staff as well as the availability of translation and interpretation services and documents.

SCOUT inspectors, who

arrived unannounced, entered their observations into a form available on their Blackberries. The form and its contents were then electronically submitted into a master database for analysis.

The data is currently being analyzed before production of a final report.

For more information contact Al Tuse: atuse@cityhall.nyc.gov

Sample Condition Photos

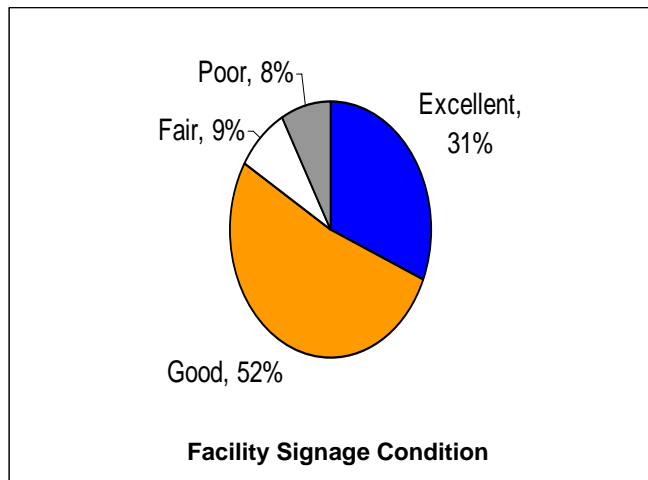


Exposed Wiring in Hallway



Graffiti in Men's Bathroom

Preliminary Results for Facility Signage Condition



Donuts at the Door – “Serving” Customers in a New Way

This was truly an unforgettable experience. The look on their faces was “full of surprise”, as DOT customers, who request permits for various types of construction projects and visit the office repeatedly throughout the year, walked into the Permit Management Office to find something they don’t see on a typical day - “Donuts at the Door!”

In July and August, DOT conducted its first two NYC Feedback surveys: at the Staten Island Ferry, St. George Terminal, and at the Permit Management Office, 55 Water Street. DOT distributed a total of 250 NYC Feedback cards at both sites, and customers completed 175

or 70% of the cards.

The service center visitors took time to have coffee and a donut before completing a NYC Feedback customer comment card.

Customers were guided by DOT Permit Management and Customer Service staff to drop their comment cards in a box. One customer recommended that “We should have food everyday that will put everyone in a good mood”.

DOT Customer Service, along with the Staten Island Ferry Passenger Information Office, also distributed NYC Feedback cards to tourists and commuters visiting that office for lost and found

items and local/regional tourist attraction information. One ferry passenger feedback card read “Excellent customer service...The fold out map is nice!”

DOT Customer Service staff analyzed the results (see sidebar) and shared the findings, along with recommendations on ways to enhance service based on the comment card responses, with DOT operational group managers.

DOT realizes more and more, when customers are approached with a smile (and a donut), that they respond in kind.

For more information contact Desiree Maple, dmaple@dot.nyc.gov

Staten Island Ferry

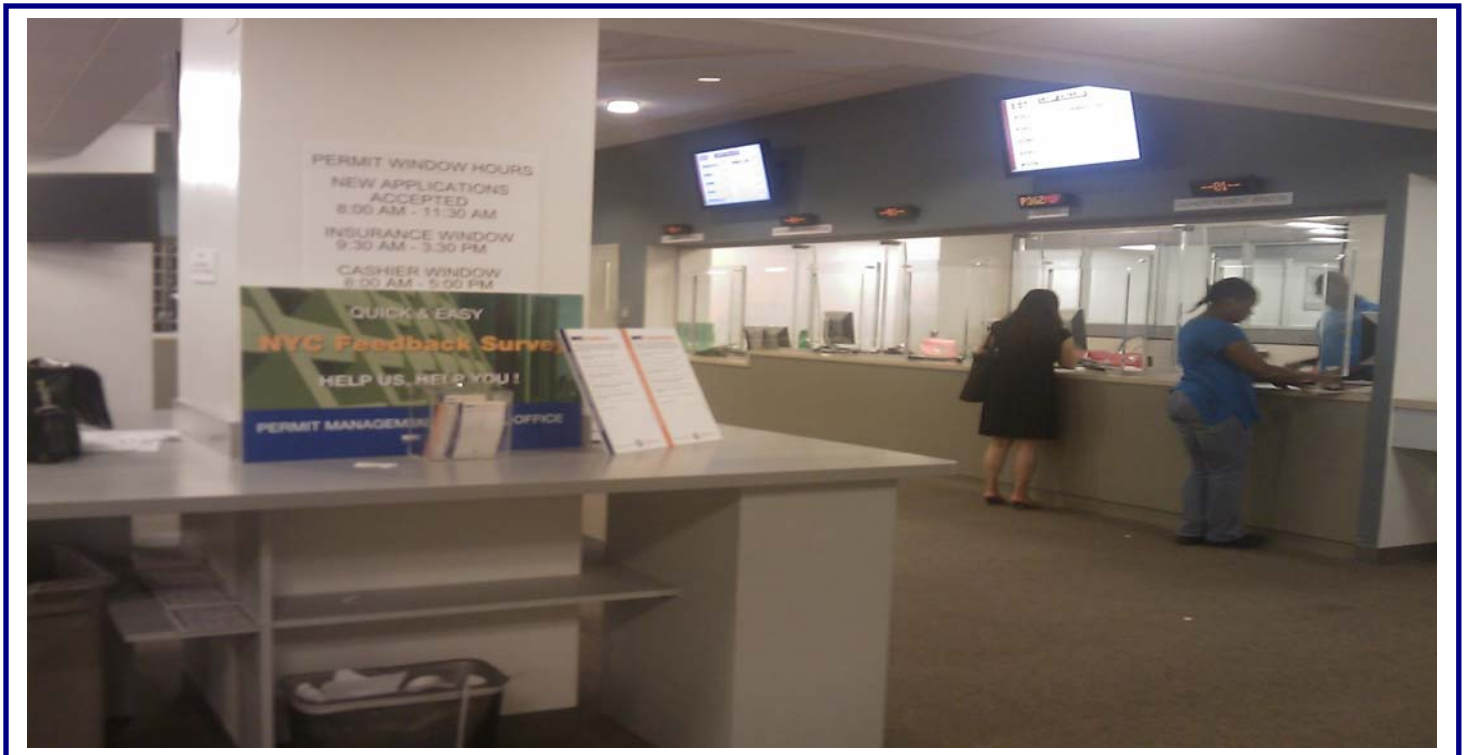
Overall Customer Satisfaction Rating

Excellent	64%
Good	31%
Average	3%
Fair	1%
Poor	1%

Permit Management Office

Overall Customer Satisfaction Rating

Excellent	26%
Good	31%
Average	19%
Fair	14%
Poor	10%



Customers at DOT Permit Management Office, 55 Water St., Manhattan

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NYCHA's "Advanced Procurement" Initiative

In December 2008, the New York City Housing Authority launched the Advanced Procurement initiative to improve the way the agency handles procurement. The Advanced Procurement project team conducted an assessment of how NYCHA purchases goods, services, and capital materials, and offered recommendations. NYCHA anticipates that Advanced Procurement will result in more standardized procurement procedures; increased compliance with relevant procurement laws; savings from combined purchases across NYCHA departments; and, significant service improvements to residents and other NYCHA customers.

Once the new system goes live in November 2009, communications with vendors will be enhanced via iSupplier, the new web portal for procurement. Vendors will register to use iSupplier by completing a simple online registration process. Once registered, they will be able to

download bid packages at no cost; receive Requests for Quotations (RFQ) via e-mail; submit bids online; and track account information, including status of invoices, purchase orders, and payments. (Vendors without Internet access may continue using the paper-based process.)

To market the new registration process to vendors, in August 2009 NYCHA began contacting vendors to confirm e-mail addresses and other contact information. Flyers and posters (see below) were also distributed to over 150 public housing development management offices for dissemination to contractors advising them of the new procedures. Flyers will also be distributed at upcoming events such as bid openings, networking events, and Minority-owned, Women-owned and Small Business Enterprises conferences.

NYCHA established a dedicated customer service phone number, (212) 306-8700, for vendors who need

assistance with the registration process, and created an email address (AdvProcurement@nycha.nyc.gov) where vendors can submit questions regarding Advanced Procurement.

The new procurement modules will also provide better service to NYCHA's internal customers – NYCHA departments and public housing development management offices – who are also involved in procurement. For example, NYCHA streamlined the drafting and approval process for RFQs by enabling buyers to access a repository of contractual clauses pre-approved by our Law Department, which will reduce the time to review, revise, and re-issue draft documents, and will eliminate the need to re-create proposals from scratch, saving time and producing accurate RFQs more quickly and consistently.

For more information, contact Aaron Trauring, Advanced Procurement Project Manager, at 212.306.3831, or Shaun Hession, Functional Manager, at 212.306.3590.

About the Customer Service Group

The Customer Service Group (CSG) was established by Mayor Bloomberg's Executive Order 115 to support and implement the mandates of the order. CSG is part of the Mayor's Office of Operations.

A Better Way of Doing Business with NYCHA

NEW ONLINE SYSTEM

Vendors will soon have a better way to do business with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). Beginning in fall 2009 NYCHA will implement iSupplier, a technology system that will allow vendors to electronically manage aspects of the procurement process with NYCHA. This will provide vendors with an electronic means to register with NYCHA, facilitate electronic bid submissions and give vendors greater visibility into their respective purchase orders.

What This Means For NYCHA Vendors

- Get Bidding Opportunity Notices
- Submit Bids Online
- FREE Training & Materials
- Track Payments Online
- FREE Bid Package Downloads

Using a procurement technology system that will ultimately provide better service to our residents and customers is a high priority for NYCHA. To use the new system, vendors will need to complete a simple online registration. Here are some tips to help you get started:

How? Using a computer with Internet access, you will need to register to use iSupplier. To begin this process, please e-mail NYCHA at AdvProcurement@nycha.nyc.gov and provide us with your company name and e-mail address(es) for those who will receive and reply to future procurement opportunity notices.

What? Nothing. In fact, you'll actually save money when you use the new system, because you will no longer need to pay bid package fees. Instead you can simply download bid packages from NYCHA's website.

Where? Online. Visit the Doing Business with NYCHA website: nyc.gov/nychabusiness. E-mail: Send your questions to: AdvProcurement@nycha.nyc.gov. Phone: Call (212) 306-8700 to speak with a representative.

When are these changes going to happen? Some aspects of this project will go into effect in October 2009. NYCHA will advise you of the exact dates by contacting vendors via e-mail or postal mail. Again, make sure that NYCHA has your most current contact information on file by writing to us at AdvProcurement@nycha.nyc.gov.

*NYCHA vendors without internet access can still do business with us as they have in the past.