

# **CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS**

## **Definition**

The City of Lawrence will interact with the community in a professional, responsive, caring manner that meets or exceeds the customer's expectations. We will provide accurate, timely, and courteous responses to their requests for information and services.

## **Telephone**

### ***Standards***

Phone calls should be answered within 3 rings

Voicemail messages should be acknowledged within 24 hours

If a caller is placed on hold, the caller should be contacted again within 60 seconds

Phone calls should be answered according to department protocol, which should include providing the employee's department and first name

Department main telephone lines should be answered by a person

When taking a message, ask caller for pertinent info (Name, address, phone, and if a return call will be necessary)

Employees shall empty voicemail boxes as soon as possible so that new messages can be received

### ***How-to's***

Answer the Telephone:

- Calls should be answered in a courteous manner (with a smile)
- When answering calls for others, offer to transfer to voicemail, to park the call, or to take a message
- Remain calm and professional at all times, particularly when customers are upset or angry.
- Listen closely (repeating what a caller says shows you are listening)
- Try to make the caller feel comfortable – remember their name and use it
- Speak clearly to make sure you are understood
- If you say you will follow up with a customer, do so in a timely manner even if just to say you are still working on their request

Transfer a Phone Call:

- If a transfer is required, callers should be informed of the department where their call is being sent, as well as the name and number of a person in that department
- If a transfer is required, the person making the transfer should remain on the line until the phone is answered to notify the recipient of the name and purpose of the call

Leave a Message:

- When leaving a message for a caller, staff should leave their name, department, and phone number
- Voice Mail greetings shall be kept up to date and contain at least the following information:
  - Name
  - Department
- In case of an extended absence, the following information shall also be provided:
  - When you will return to the office
  - Alternate contact name and phone number

## **Personal Interaction (Counter, Facility, Field)**

### ***Standards***

Customers should be greeted promptly upon arrival unless part of a queue.

Customers should receive accurate information

If approached, employees should offer a greeting and offer assistance

If the employee is otherwise engaged when customer approaches, an acknowledgement (such as eye contact) should be made indicating the employee knows the customer is present

Counters should be staffed during business hours or signage referring the customer to an alternative location should be posted

### ***How-to's***

- Customers should be greeted in a courteous and polite manner and asked, "how may I help you?"
- If an individual appears to be looking for a particular location, employees should offer their assistance
- Customers should be given full attention of the employee – don't interrupt
- If a customer is at the wrong location, they should be provided with exact directions and a contact at the correct location.
- Customers should receive a receipt for every financial transaction with the City
- Employees in the field should be able to provide the city information number or appropriate department in response to citizen inquiries (employees should have card with number available)
- Employees should be aware that body language is noticed and should reflect a willingness to help (smiling, nodding, leaning in, open posture, etc. can ease tension)

## **Correspondence (Letters, Emails, Faxes)**

### ***Standards***

A reply should be provided in a timely manner unless further study is required in which case an interim communication should be provided

Correspondence should be proofed for spelling, grammar, and punctuation and reviewed by appropriate staff prior to release

Correct names and titles should be used

City stationery (letterhead, thank you notes, etc.) should be used

Envelopes/address labels should be typed, not handwritten

Employees with email should use their out of office assistant in case of an extended absence. The message should include the following information:

- Return date
- Alternate contact and phone number or email address

### ***How-to's***

- Correspondence should provide specific information in a courteous manner
- Correspondence should be distributed to all appropriate individuals
- Correspondence should acknowledge the receipt and/or source of the information being replied to if appropriate
- Faxes should include the department and phone number of contact or sender