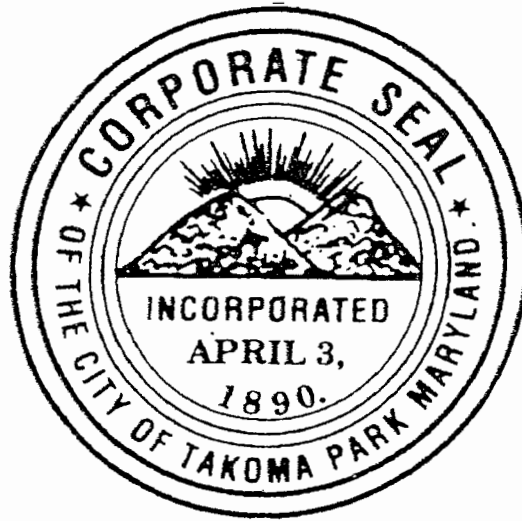


City of Takoma Park



Customer Service Standards Employees' Mission Statement

Our mission is to champion quality and efficiency through a dedicated workforce and a cooperative spirit between City employees and our customers. Customer service is the reason for our existence as a city government. Our customers have an absolute right to respect, personal assistance, honesty and competency, regardless of age, color, creed, disability, religion, marital status, national origin, gender or sexual orientation. Our Mission is to provide timely and effective service to all of our customers, to deliver that service with reason and understanding, and to perform our duties as a cohesive team.

Introduction

Good customer service is every City employee's responsibility, not just those employees who staff the front office or the reception desk. Each time we come in contact with a customer by phone or in person, we represent the City of Takoma Park. Our goal as employees is to provide service that always exceeds the customers' expectations.

To assist us in achieving a high standard of service, the Customer Service Standards Implementation Team has created the attached standards which will govern all of our interactions with customers.

The following steps shall be taken by the Customer Service Standards Implementation Team to implement these standards within the City's work force:

- 1) These guidelines will be introduced to all new employees as part of their orientation program;
- 2) Mandatory customer service training will be conducted on an annual basis for all City employees;
- 3) To measure the effectiveness of this program, Department Heads will evaluate customer service practices through various methods including surveys, staged visits by community members (who will provide their feedback to Department Heads), or through other means that will be determined by Department Heads, as needed. Measurement of quality in customer service is considered an essential and mandatory component of this effort and will be used as a tool to assist City staff in improving their skills in customer service. This will be an on-going program.

All employees will be held accountable for providing positive on-going customer service. Employees will be evaluated on how well they adhere to these standards through the City's performance evaluation process.

City of Takoma Park's Customer Service Standards

Telephone

- A designated person will answer the telephone during regular operating hours; offices will be covered at all times so that someone is available to answer the main number in each department. If the designated person is not available, each department will create a system that ensures that phone calls are answered by a designated backup. The backup person may be the Customer Service Representative or a department staff member. Department Heads/Team Leaders shall cooperate with each other and make staff available for phone and visitor coverage.
- The phone will be answered promptly in a professional, courteous and friendly manner at all times. The front line Customer Service Representative should answer the telephone, as follows: "City of Takoma Park, this is (name) , may I help you?"
- The person answering the phone will make every effort to understand the nature of the call and, when appropriate, provide the caller with the requested information. If it is appropriate to transfer the call, the caller will be informed where they are being transferred and provided the name of the person and the extension number to which they are being transferred.
- Calls will be answered in the order received; callers will be asked if they may be placed on hold, with the first call being serviced first. Ideally, telephone calls will be answered by the first or second ring.
- When a caller asks for a specific person or department, they will be provided with that person's or department's telephone number and/or extension number for the caller's future use, and then they will be transferred accordingly.

Voice mail

- Each employee's voice mail greeting will include their full name, department, an explanation that they are unable to take a call at this time, information on how to leave a message, and the option to push "0" to speak to someone. All greetings shall be kept up to date and will be recorded in a professional manner.
- If a person is going to be out of the office for any length of time, their greeting should state that they are away from the office and indicate when they will return. Voice mail messages should be responded to the same day they are received, but no later than 24 hours.

- Callers will receive a timely response to a request left on voicemail, or an interim reply explaining the delay (generally, callers shall be contacted within 24 hours of their initial call to the City).

Public Amenities

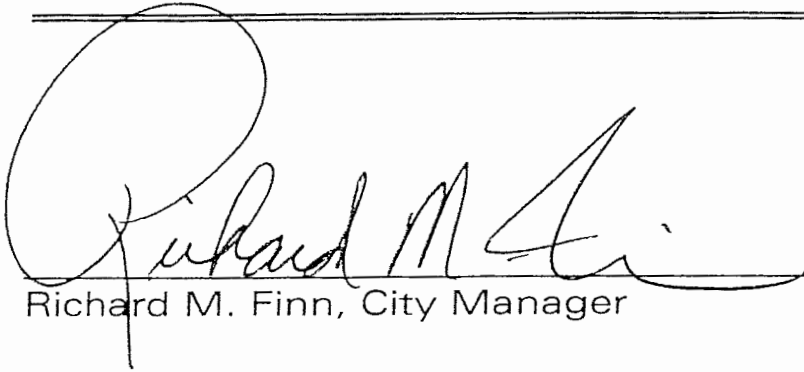
- The Public Works Building Maintenance Team will provide:
 - Clean and properly maintained facilities that are fully supplied, and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act;
 - An appropriate and timely response to an identified problem at a City facility during normal business hours. Emergencies after hours will be handled according to City policy;
 - Signs that show the hours of regular operation.

Written Correspondence

- Written correspondence will be formatted according to the City's Correspondence Guidelines, proofed and edited, and contain clear and concise information.
- Customers will receive a timely response to their written request, or an interim reply (customers shall be contacted within 48 hours of receipt of their written request).
- Fax cover sheets will include name, telephone number, and department of the sender, and name and fax number of the receiver

Office Visitors

- Customers will receive a timely, courteous acknowledgment, including eye contact and a positive greeting that the employee knows they are there, especially if the employee is on the telephone or already servicing another customer.
- Helpful, knowledgeable, accurate information will be provided in a professional and pleasant manner.
- Each department/team shall have staff available during business hours to provide customer service.



Richard M. Finn, City Manager

5-13-02

Date



Peggy F. Forster

5/13/02

Date

Chair, Customer Service Standards
Implementation Team