Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Customer
Promise
Friendly
Courteous
Timely
Responsive
Accurate
Consistent
Accessible
Convenient
Truthful
Transparent

CHANGING
Maryland
FOR THE BETTER

Governor's Customer
Service Initiative
Annual Report 2022

Dear Marylanders,

When our administration first established the Governor's Customer Service Initiative in 2016, we were determined to establish a strong service culture in state agencies, improve customer service training for state employees, and create new service performance metrics to track improvements in our customer service over time.

I am proud to present highlights of that progress here in the Fiscal Year 2022 Statewide Customer Service Annual Report. This year's statewide customer service report focuses on the progress our state agencies have made over the last six years, and highlights the efforts of our hard working state employees that serve Marylanders day in and day out.

Since our commitment to improving our state's customer service began, the tireless work of our employees and their passion for public service have allowed us to bring our Customer Service Initiative to new heights. While there is always room for improvement, all of our state agencies have reaffirmed their commitment to delivering on our Customer Service Promise.

I encourage you to take a look at maryland.gov/customerservice for more information on our administration's customer service promise, browse past reports, and view examples of recognitions that state employees have received for being champions of customer service for all Marylanders.

On behalf of the State of Maryland, thank you to all of our survey respondents and dedicated state employees as together we are all working to change Maryland for the better.

Sincerely,

Larry Hogan
Governor

Governor's Customer Service Initiative Annual Report 2022

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History of Governor Hogan's Customer Service Initiative

In 2014, Larry Hogan campaigned on the promise to make Maryland more business friendly. When he became Governor in 2015, he established through Executive Order the Regulatory Reform Commission, led by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, to examine and make recommendations on how Maryland government could become more efficient and responsive to citizens and businesses.

In its initial findings, the Commission made several recommendations centered around improving and creating standards of excellence for customer service. Later that year, the Governor's Commerce Subcabinet made customer service one of its top priorities, and created the Customer Service Workgroup.

In the spring of 2016, the Workgroup partnered with the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI) and the Governor's Business Ombudsman to research customer service best practices in the private sector, as there were no valuable benchmarks found at that time in the public sector. The Workgroup recommended the following:

- A renewed focus a strong service culture in state agencies
- Improved customer service training for state employees
- The establishment of new service performance metrics

Specifically, each State agency was tasked with the creation of a customer service improvement plan. The approved plans would be reviewed by the Workgroup each year to monitor their progress. The plans would include appropriate recognition and awards programs to highlight exceptional customer service by state employees. The Workgroup also created the Customer Service Promise, a series of key principles that would serve as a basis for all interactions between state employees and their customers.

The Workgroup recommendations were immediately accepted and implemented as the Governor's Customer Service Initiative, which was launched in June 2016. Later that year, the Workgroup expanded the Initiative to include an online customer satisfaction survey, which launched in January 2017. Customer satisfaction had never been tracked in state government before, therefore the surveys collected in 2017 served as baseline data as agencies developed initiatives for improving service delivery and satisfaction in the years to come.

In October 2017, the Workgroup reviewed each agency improvement plan and drafted its first Customer Service Annual Report. The Workgroup partnered with the Customer Experience Professionals Association and published the report on Customer Experience Day, an annual international celebration of customers and the businesses that care for them. The State of Maryland was the first government entity in the country to join the private sector in celebrating CX Day. Members of the Workgroup later worked with CXPA to create a regional chapter for the Maryland area so that State agency leaders could

continue to learn from and partner with Maryland businesses in sharing and modeling customer experience best practices.

The Workgroup continued to partner with GOPI, the Business Ombudsman, which later became the Office of Small Business Regulatory Assistance, and the Governor's Office of Constituent Services to implement all of the Initiative's goals, and truly keep Maryland Open For Business. The Initiative ultimately changed the culture of Maryland government, and has been a lynchpin in the success of the Hogan-Rutherford Administration.

THE CUSTOMER SERVICE PROMISE

The State of Maryland pledges to provide constituents, businesses, customers, and stakeholders with services in the following manner:

- **Friendly and Courteous:** We will be helpful and supportive and have a positive attitude and passion for what we do.

- **Timely and Responsive:** We will be proactive, take initiative, and anticipate your needs.

- **Accurate and Consistent:** We will always aim for 100% accuracy, and be consistent in how we interpret and implement state policies and procedures.

- **Accessible and Convenient:** We will continue to simplify and improve access to information and resources.

- **Truthful and Transparent:** We will advance a culture of honesty, clarity and trust.

CHANGING
Maryland
for the Better

Larry Hogan, Governor • **Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor**

Customer Service Survey Results

The Governor's Customer Feedback Survey provides Marylanders with an opportunity to give feedback about their interactions with the state government. As of August 31st 2022, the Governor's Office of Performance and Improvement (GOPI) has received 439,850 surveys across all platforms with a 83% of satisfaction rating.

The state collects feedback from multiple sources including data from survey links in Maryland employee email signature blocks and in various places on agency websites with the "Give the Governor Your Feedback" logo; after customers complete an online transaction; Maryland Business Express, where survey links allow businesses to provide feedback; and after various events to improve the customer experience. In addition, the Department of Transportation utilizes a third-party, independent contractor to collect survey feedback throughout the year; this survey shows a similar customer satisfaction rating, helping to confirm the quality of data.
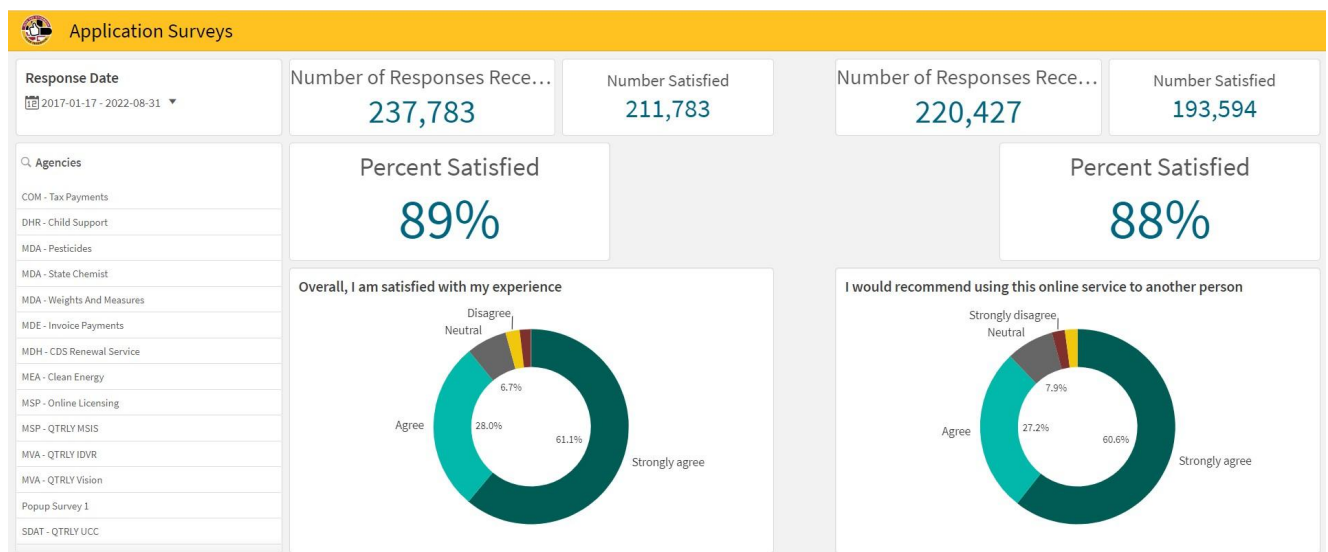
Maryland Business Express

The award winning Maryland Business Express is designed to help guide aspiring and existing business owners through the process of planning, starting, maintaining, and growing their business.

It is an innovative, business-facing website designed to dramatically simplify the process of accessing diverse public resources by intuitively organizing the website within the plan, start, manage, and grow framework of the business lifecycle. The website draws together diverse resources from all of the following Maryland state agencies to facilitate integrated, streamlined service delivery: It has consistently maintain a 95% customer service rating https://businessexpress.maryland.gov/

Business Express Surveys

Survey Date Range
2017-01-17 - 2022-08-31 ▼

Survey Method
Popup Survey 1
Web Link 1

Survey Responses Received
53,641

Excellent, Good, or Satisfac...
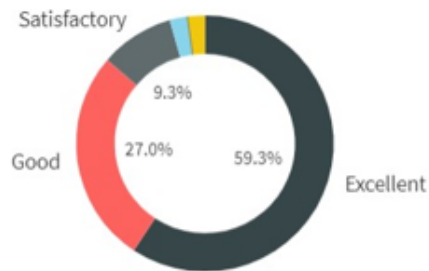**51,392**

Percent of E, G, or S
95.8%

How would you rate the overall quality of Maryland Business Express?

How would you rate the overall quality of Maryland Business Express?

Satisfactory

9.3%

Good 27.0%   59.3%   Excellent

Top Performing Agencies

Satisfied Customers by Agency

Simple Public View | 2017-01-04 - 2022-08-31 ▾ | Week | Internal or External | + Avg. Survey Score

Percentage of Satisfied Customers
Minimum of 50 Responses

Agency	Percent Satisfied
GOSBA	96%
MEA	92%
SOS	92%
MDEM	90%
DNR	89%
MDP	87%
MIEMSS	86%
MDE	86%
MES	85%
MDA	85%
MDVA	84%
MSDE	83%
MLGCA	82%
DJS	81%

The top 5 agencies with the highest ratings are the Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs, Maryland Energy Administration, Secretary of State, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, and the Department of Natural Resources.

Feedback Loop - Take Action & Follow Up

Information provided by Marylanders through the survey is used to improve products and services, and to take action so that state agencies can follow up with customers. There is also a Contact Info, Reason for Contact, and a Comments field on the survey that is not mandatory to complete, but approximately half of all survey respondents complete these fields. Each agency reviews survey responses, in many cases daily and in every case weekly, in order to identify action items, to take action, and to follow up with customers. For example, a survey response from a healthcare provider about the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program improved collaboration between two divisions within the Department of Health making it easier for healthcare providers to comply with state requirements.

Agency Highlights

The 2022 Annual report gives an overview of Governor Hogan's Customer Service Initiative. In this section, we have provided highlights from several agencies. Each of the statewide agencies produce their own report, which goes into detail of their accomplishments of the last 6 years they can be found on the agencies website.

Maryland Department of Commerce

Throughout the Hogan-Rutherford administration, a key to changing Maryland for the better has been the focus on the customer. From leading the Governor's Customer Service Initiative and guiding the development of the statewide Customer Service Promise, training and performance measures, Commerce has played a key role in transforming the way state government interacts with the general public, businesses, elected officials, for and non-profit organizations, academia and local partners and among State Agencies.

Reflecting on the following highlights from the Department of Commerce's FY17-FY22 Customer Service Annual Reports illustrates the transformation of the Department and is reflected in the positive customer satisfaction rating given by our customers

Process Improvement

- Led the governor's statewide Customer Service Initiative rollout across 39 agencies.
- Began and led the Commerce Subcabinet to lead interagency coordination.
- Increased Commerce procurement outreach to small and minority businesses.

COVID-19 Response

The Department of Commerce's priority during the pandemic was to ensure that businesses had the guidance and information needed to reopen and operate safely.The Department set up grant and loan programs to assist businesses during this COVID-19 crisis.

The Department of Commerce provided businesses with $191 million from a variety of sources including $75 million COVID-19 Relief Loan Fund, $50 million COVID-19 Relief Grant Fund, $5 million Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Manufacturing Grant Fund, $45 million Small Business Emergency Grant Fund and several others.

The Department of Commerce set up Maryland's COVID-19 Business Response web page where businesses could easily find information on the following:

- Business Closures, Restrictions, and Enforcement
- Employer and Worker Assistance
- Financial Assistance
- Offers, Donations and Volunteer Resources
- MEMA's Virtual Business Operations Center

The Department of Commerce partnered with a broad range of customers and businesses to organize 13 Advisory Groups to develop guidance and safety best practices for reopening establishments. The Advisory Groups included: Tourism, Attractions, Sports, Small Business/Personal Services, Restaurants, Professional and Financial Services, Manufacturing, Lodging, Tourism Transportation, Destinations, Construction and Development, and Arts. There were also two nonprofit and faith-based task forces coordinated by the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives.

During the pandemic, the secretary and the department maintained constant communication with businesses, elected officials, advocacy groups, and community leaders across Maryland. These included:

- 105 virtual meetings
- 63 in person meetings
- 24 recorded webinars
- 12,000 emails received through Covid-19.Application@maryland.gov
- Over 2,100 emails received through Secretary.Commerce@maryland.gov

Between July 2020 and June 2021, former Secretary Kelly Schulz and the senior leadership team participated in more than 200 webinars, interviews, and town halls to communicate the Governor's plan to reopen the economy safely to the business community.

"FINISH STRONG" became the rallying cry in FY22. Delivering world class customer service, one of the pillars of the Governor's Customer Service Promise, has been accomplished as our customer satisfaction scores climbed above pre-pandemic levels.

Maryland Department of Health

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) continues to strive for 100% customer satisfaction. The Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI) provides weekly survey insights, giving the opportunity to review, analyze, reflect, and respond to constituents' honest and valued feedback regarding their experiences with the various Administration, Offices, and Boards/Commissions. Since FY20, MDH has made it a practice to follow-up with all Neutral to Very Dissatisfied survey responses from constituents. This practice has been beneficial to ensure that constituents' issues have been addressed and that we are able to reflect on the valuable feedback regarding their experience to address operational woes to provide training back to the various programs of MDH.

Since FY19, the Office of Customer Service (OCS) continues to train MDH staff, process internally, and enforce the **"24/7 Rule"** requiring each inquiry/case received be acknowledged within **24 hours of receipt**. After the acknowledgement has been sent, the clock will start on a turnaround of 7 business days for case closure. Once the **7 business days** have elapsed, the inquiry/case will be considered overdue. OCS provides information, feedback, and resources to facilitate and assist constituents to access appropriate services and resources. OCS manages case follow-up by remaining engaged with the Correspondence Managers (IQ license holders) throughout MDH and the participating Boards and

Commissions to ensure that constituents are receiving timely, compassionate, and appropriate conclusions to their inquiry.

In FY22, MDH welcomed three new Directors to the **Office of Customer Experience**. This team brings a wealth of experience from the legislature, state government, and the private sector. With a combined 30+ years of customer service experience, MDH has a dynamic team to deliver Marylanders with equitable, accurate, and real time information, resources and communications.

Since FY18, the **Behavioral Health Administration (BHA)** has partnered with Maryland 211 to offer mental health and substance use disorder services 24 hours a day, seven days a week to Marylanders through five regional call centers. Maryland Crisis Connect offers telephone, text, and chat options as well as a searchable database of behavioral health resources. At the end of FY22, BHA in partnership with the Office of Customer Experience successfully launched the 988 call number, a new national suicide and crisis lifeline that provides direct connection for anyone needing support for mental health or substance use problems, suicidal thoughts, or worried about someone who may need crisis support.

Maryland Medicaid Administration has collaborated across state agencies to offer services. In FY18, Medicaid teamed with the Maryland Health Connection to launch a real time Medicaid site for MCO shopping, improving customer experience, and allowing 51 percent of constituents to completely enroll online.

MD GoVAX Call Center

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MDGOVAX Call Center was first launched in FY21 and continues to support millions of Marylanders with equitable access to COVID-19 information, testing, therapeutic treatment, vaccine, immunization record support and rideshare capabilities to COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

Maryland GOVAX

Call Center Programs & Initiatives

The MDGOVAX Call Center launched on February 1, 2021, dialing targeted regions to notify constituents of upcoming COVID-19 vaccine appointment availability at Maryland's state-run mass vaccination sites. On February 15, 2021 MDGOVAX Cell Center was open for business welcoming Marylanders to call, text or chat online to receive support for COVID-19 questions, resources and to pre-register for appointments at Maryland's state-run mass vaccination sites.

To date, the MDGOVAX Call center has and continues to support millions of Marylanders with equitable access to information, vaccine, testing, immunization record support and ride share capabilities to COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

2,149,897
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED BY CALL CENTER

36,342,286
CALL VOLUME & OUTBOUND CALLS

21,199,818
OUTBOUND TEXTS

SERVICES PROVIDED TO MARYLANDERS

1. **Call, Text and Chat Based Support**
   - General COVID-19 Information
   - COVID-19 Vaccine Information
   - COVID-19 Testing Information
   - COVID-19 Antibody and Therapeutics Information

2. **COVID-19 Vaccine and Testing Concierge**
   - Mass Vaccination Site Pre-registration
   - Mass Vaccination Site Appointment Scheduling/Rescheduling/Modifications
   - Mass Vaccination Site Missed Appointment Follow-Ups
   - Community Testing Site Appointment Scheduling
   - Provider Identification and Scheduling
   - Rideshare Assistance Program
   - Deliver COVID-19 Test Results for State Testing Sites and Partnered Laboratories
   - Support with myIR Immunization Records

3. **Call and Text based Outreach to Marylanders**
   - Mobile Vaccination Community Clinic Appointments
   - Missed 2nd Dose Appointment Follow-Ups
   - Booster Eligibility Notifications and Appointment Scheduling
   - No Arm Left Behind Homebound Vaccination Coordination
   - Maryland Primary Care Physicians (MDPCP) Vaccine Pilot Program
   - Vaccine Hesitancy Survey
   - Booster Survey

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCH) engages over 50,000 customers a month and strives to deliver its information, programs, and services to customers and partners in a professional, responsive, knowledgeable, and compassionate manner. Responses received since launching the Customer Experience Survey indicate the department continues to provide a positive customer experience, even in scenarios where a customer's issue is not something the agency has the authority or capacity to resolve.

Neighborhood Revitalization

Since FY18, the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization has increased its funding portfolio by more than 45%, bringing its total amount of grants, loans, and tax credits to $145 million for regular, ongoing programs that serve the citizens of Maryland. This increase includes additional funding for existing programs and funding for new programs. New and expanded programs include: Operating Assistance Grants, Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative, National Capital Strategic Economic Development, Homelessness Solutions Programs, and Project Restore. For each of these programs, systems were put in place or expanded to outreach information about the new resources to eligible partners, make applications available online, and allow for online access to award management tools. Training and technical assistance was also provided for program users.

During the Hogan administration, the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization has also made improvements each year to its automated grants management systems. Improvements have included system expansion to include almost all programs administered by the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization, automation of new processes such as awardee progress reporting and legal agreement modifications as well as improvements to the system's process flows. As of this writing, these improvements impact approximately 2,000 internal and external users.

Neighborhood Revitalization Award Mapper

DHCD launched its new Geographic Information System (GIS) interactive mapping application, Neighborhood Revitalization Award Mapper, that gives users the ability to identify and look up detailed information on DHCD's Neighborhood Revitalization programs and projects from FY19 to present day. The map and source data contain visual resources in "bird's eye view" to help provide address level information and program descriptions to policy-makers and partners.

This resource provides the essential data needed to provide transparency, and show where state resources are going. The programs and projects represented in this mapping tool demonstrate where DHCD has partnered with local governments, nonprofits, and other stakeholders to support revitalization efforts that enhance the quality of communities and the quality of life for our citizens.

DHCD partners and the public are using this powerful tool to identify where community projects are being completed as well as develop potential strategic partnerships with other organizations. The map is updated monthly and users will be able to evaluate the extensive growth of their ongoing and successful projects and awards for years to come.

Increased Customer Outreach

The Division of Neighborhood Revitalization launched several new programs that broadened the variety of Maryland customers working with the Department. As part of the application process for Neighborhood Revitalization's Project Restore and Community Safety Works Programs, a simple survey was conducted that asked if applicants wanted to be added to the Department's electronic newsletter. As a result, nearly 2,000 contacts were added to DHCD's contact database and now receive the Department's blog posts and press releases.

The Division also conducted six virtual town halls with elected officials and community groups to educate the public on the availability of rental and homeowner assistance funds, how to access the funds, eligibility requirements, answer questions from the public, and accept community input on the program's design and challenges in accessing services. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 people participated in the live events. The events were also recorded and made available, furthering the reach of the information to additional citizens.

The Department of Housing & Community Development Expands Services & Resources for COVID-19 Relief

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization provided expanded services and resources. The Division of Neighborhood Revitalization added nearly $500 million in funding for Covid relief programs to its portfolio, including the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the Maryland Strong Economic Recovery Initiative, Community Development Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant and the Maryland Nonprofit Recovery Initiative, to name a few. In addition to adding funding and programs, the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization sought feedback from customers and partners about their needs related to the pandemic. As a result of the feedback, programs and resources were modified to help address the unique needs created by the pandemic. These included allowing awardees to repurpose already-awarded funds to address the pandemic and coordinating regular meetings among partners to trade best practices.

Community Development Administration

Since FY18, the Community Development Administration (CDA) has enhanced our services and programs for our clients and customers. For example, from the beginning of FY18, the Maryland Mortgage Program (MMP) has increased from 78 approved lenders to now more than 128 approved lenders throughout the state. This helps to provide services to more rural counties as well as our established urban areas. Our Smartbuy program allows for greater student debt relief by raising the cap on the maximum student debt payoff. MMP has ultimately enhanced our outreach through our social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @MarylandMMP.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program Data Dashboard

DHCD has launched data dashboards for several programs including the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

Working cooperatively with county governments and nonprofit agencies across Maryland, DHCD is using the ERAP Program to help renters avoid eviction, maintain safe and stable housing, and move into new housing if they are currently homeless. Among other things, this dashboard shows updates regarding the large number of customers assisted as well as the level of outreach being done for the Program.

Here is an excerpt of outcomes reflected on the dashboard as of May 1, 2022. The dashboard will be updated again August 15, 2022:

- 57 million Online Advertisement Views
- 47 million people reached through TV, Radio and Print
- 150 community events where the program was promoted
- 371,000 canvassing materials distributed
- 44,000 callers assisted by the DHCD call center
- 558,000 visitors to the Rent Relief Website

The Department has had many successes with Governor Hogan's Customer Service Initiative and looks forward to continuing to improve and changing Maryland for the better.

Maryland Department of Transportation

Incident Management Technology

MDOT uses innovative technologies to proactively manage and inform the public when incidents occur on our roadways. The increased use of crowdsourced information, publicly available data feeds, and sensors allow MDOT SHA and the MDTA to accelerate the adoption of both lifesaving and information-sharing tools.

Systems Management Technologies

Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) is a framework used by transportation agencies to maximize the service potential and manage roadways as part of a "system," focusing on operational improvements that do not require traditional capacity improvements (e.g., additional lanes, interchanges, routes, etc.).

Systems management requires deployment of sensors, such as cameras, traffic sensors (e.g., volume, speed, and density), communication infrastructure (e.g., fiber or 5G), to monitor how traffic is moving in real-time. That data is then used to actively manage technologies such as ramp meters, dynamic speed advisories, part-time dynamic shoulder use, reversible lanes, and much more to improve both the flow of traffic and the safety of those on the roadway.

All-Electronic (Cashless) Tolling

Maryland roadways are 100% cashless! All-electronic (cashless) tolling saves Maryland drivers time by eliminating congestion at toll plazas with overhead gantries collecting tolls electronically by *E-ZPass*, Pay-By-Plate, or video tolling. The benefits include less idling, better fuel efficiency, reduced emissions, decreased congestion, and increased driver and employee safety.

Toll Relief for Marylanders

Governor Hogan provided $344 million in toll relief for Marylanders, cutting tolls at every single toll facility, eliminating the $1.50 E-ZPass monthly account fee, making E-ZPass transponders free, and delivering three rounds of toll relief in less than five years. Toll reductions included delivering a $2.50 E-ZPass Maryland toll at the Bay Bridge, which is a less expensive round trip toll price than when the bridge opened in 1952. The initial toll rollback saved Marylanders $270 million, the free transponder initiative saved customers $46 million, and new billing options saved $28 million all putting much-needed dollars back in Marylanders' pockets. All-Electronic (Cashless) Tolling Maryland roadways are 100% cashless! All-electronic (cashless) tolling saves Maryland drivers time by eliminating congestion at toll plazas with overhead gantries collecting tolls electronically by E-ZPass, Pay-By-Plate, or video tolling. The benefits include less idling, better fuel efficiency, reduced emissions, decreased congestion, and increased driver and employee safety.

Customer Connect

MDOT MVA's Customer Connect replaced a mainframe environment with a digital system that gives residents one-stop digital access to a range of transactions, including online renewals of driver's licenses and vehicle registrations, locating auto dealers, and uploading medical records for commercial drivers. Customer Connect has won numerous awards for its innovative technologies and improved customer service.

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation

In April 2020, the department released 15 new online services that make it significantly easier for businesses to obtain and remain in Good Standing status, a requirement necessary for many types of COVID-19-related relief. A real-time processing feature was also launched on June 30, giving customers the ability to see when their document(s) will be reviewed by the department before and after they are submitted. In the coming months, the department is also planning on releasing same-day review and non-expedited filing options online.

When comparing FY20 with FY21, the Charter Services division saw a 39% increase in total filings and a 54% increase in expedited filings--more filings asked to be processed faster. There were also 114,959 new businesses registered, 57% more than in FY20.

From March 2020 to the end of July 2021, SDAT prioritized businesses seeking Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loans and successfully brought over 3,409 businesses back into Good Standing.

The department experienced a huge increase in the number of requests for documents this year. As a result of the increased workload and the COVID-19 pandemic, the team became equipped with home scanners. This allowed for documents to be pulled at work and scanned at home increasing productivity. In FY21, the department increased production of the in-house scanning operation to over 400,000 documents (over 1.2 million pages). The in-house scanning operation works in tandem with Wells Fargo, which SDAT contracted with in FY18 to augment internal scanning operations and improve efficiency and processing abilities. The Homeowners' and Renters' Tax Credit Application deadline was automatically extended for all applicants from October 1 to October 31 in 2020.

In FY21 the Real Property team exemplified leadership in the department by implementing a video appeal hearing process using Google Meet for the 2021 appeal year as an option for taxpayers to safely have their appeal hearings and also managed to finalize almost 25,000 appeals using written and telephone appeal hearings because all in person hearings were suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Despite pandemic logistical constraints, in 2020 the Tax Credit Division processed over 65,000 Homeowners' Tax Credit, over 11,000 Renters' Tax Credit applications, and nearly 50,000 Homestead Tax CreOn the business filings side, **Maryland Business Express (MBE)** continues to improve the quality of service provided to our Charter customers, while decreasing processing times. The multiple new online services offered in FY20 and FY21 have made it even more convenient to conduct business in the State, and the site continues to receive an astounding **95% customer satisfaction rating.** The filing of charter documents online through Maryland Business Express continues to be the most widely used portion of MBE thus far, and today more than 90% of all Maryland Charter transactions occur online.

The increased availability of online services continues to reduce processing times while also enabling us to better allocate other resources. Four years ago, it would take up to 10 weeks for document copy requests and non-expedited hard copy filings to be processed and returned; today the turnaround is down 6 to 8 weeks for non-expedited filings. Expedited mailed filings are processed within 10 business days. These timelines were maintained with few exceptions during the entirety of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognition Given to Employees

State employees are on the front line of making sure our state agencies deliver great customer service. One of the key ways to encourage them is through recognition of their hard work. Many state agencies have developed ways to recognize employees, and we have highlighted what some of the great work out state agencies have accomplished.

Department of Housing and Community Development:

Employees at the Department of Housing and Community Development are also more often recognized for their commitment to serving Maryland residents. Caught Doing Good awards are presented to individuals for their excellence in their work. The number of employees receiving this award has increased over the years from FY18 at 61 to 100 plus employees receiving the award each year through FY22. Additionally, employees received the Secretary's Award from Secretary Kenneth C. Holt in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the department that have increased in the years from eight in FY18 to 124 in FY22. Years of Service awards are presented to employees for their valuable contributions, as well as their loyal and dedicated service, which plays an integral role in DHCD's success. From FY18 through FY22, an average of 58 employees received a service award. Service awards are given for each five year increment of employment, ranging from 5 years to 45 years.

The Department of Juvenile Services:

In January 2020, DJS implemented its first-ever Employee Recognition Awards Program. This program allows for DJS staff to be nominated for various awards on a monthly basis. Since the program's

inception, almost 160 deserving DJS staff have been recognized with awards for their hard work and dedication.

The Maryland Department of Labor:

The Maryland Department of Labor created three phases to recognize great employees, motivate all staff, and boost morale within the agency.

Phase I focused on individual recognition of exemplary employees with a Secretary's Citation. Secretary's

Citations were issued when a staff member was nominated for excellent customer service by a division

leader or when they were retiring from the agency.

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 lunchtime celebration to show appreciation for the staff.

The assistant secretaries, commissioners, and managers volunteered to serve lunch to staff and those small touches gave employees a sense of their value to the organization.

There were also surprise appearances each year by the Oriole Bird and the Ravens Marching Band to name a few. Each Division donated prizes for the event and the name of every employee was placed inside a prize drum and entered into a random drawing.

Phase III included the creation of the weekly employee electronic newsletter. The newsletter was

recognized as a best practice among state agencies in 2017. It highlights employee accomplishments,

staff anniversaries, important updates from the Secretary, and new projects. The newsletter was

designed to inform employees of updates while also promoting awareness of all of the great work

accomplished throughout the agency.

Making Agency Services Available Online

This section will highlight utilizing technology for a better customer service experience. There has been a massive expansion of government services now provided online.

Department of Assessments and Taxation

In April 2020, the department released 15 new online services that make it significantly easier for businesses to obtain and remain in Good Standing status, a requirement necessary for many types of COVID-related relief. A real-time processing feature was also launched on June 30, giving customers the ability to see when their document(s) will be reviewed by the department before and after they are submitted. In the coming months, the department is also planning on releasing same-day review and non-expedited filing options online.

The Real Property team exemplified leadership in the department by implementing a video appeal hearing process using Google Meet for the 2021 appeal year as an option for taxpayers to safely have their appeal hearings and also managed to finalize almost 25,000 appeals using written and telephone appeal hearings because all in person hearings were suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The Division of Neighborhood Revitalization strives to continuously improve its automated grants management systems. In FY 2023, the system that hosts more than 16 of the Division's programs, called Project Portal, will be upgraded. Project Portal grants data from FY 2015 to present will be migrated into a new software platform so that internal and external users will be able to access their old files as well as apply for and manage new grants through the new software platform. The new platform will provide for a more intuitive user experience, making it easier for users to apply for new grants and manage existing grants. Additionally, there are plans to incorporate DocuSign into Project Portal so that hard copies of documents will not be required in all cases. The use of DocuSign will speed up legal agreement and amendment processing, thereby speeding up access to awarded funds. The use of DocuSign will also help support the new virtual/remote work mode of operation many of DHCD partners have adopted.

Department of Natural Resources:

AccessDNR is the department's official, award-winning and free mobile app for outdoor enthusiasts, available on Apple and Android devices allowing DNR's customers expanded access to AccessDNR during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Whether you want to visit a state park, hunt or fish, explore waterways by boat or kayak or simply watch wildlife, the AccessDNR app provides all the information and services users need on the water, at the beach or in a hunting blind. Features include:

Maryland Energy Administration:

Deployment of an IT solution to allow applicants to have an option to submit personally identifiable information (PII) required for award payments through the state's financial system electronically using the state's secure Virtru software tool. Previously, all PII had to be submitted physically on paper.

Maryland Insurance Administration

Foreign Language Website Sections: Created special website sections for documents translated into Spanish and Korean.

Maryland Department of Commerce

Delivering world class customer service, one of the pillars of the Governor's Customer Service Promise, has been accomplished by putting more services online

- Expanded use of electronic application submission
- Enhancement program webpages
- Greater use of virtual meetings for customer convenience
- Began use of exterior promotional posters with QR Codes
- Developed electronic applications for tax credits
- Tax Credit Webinars

Maryland Department of Education

The Division of Early Childhood Held weekly, then monthly, listening sessions during the pandemic to respond to child care providers' health and safety concerns. When the MSDE released child care pandemic relief grants and child care stabilization grants, the Division held technical assistance sessions, created a dedicated website, and responded to thousands of questions submitted to a 24-hour on-line portal. Over 10,000 grants were awarded to child care providers to help mitigate the effects of the pandemic and to build back Maryland's child care system.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

State agencies continue to use and expand social media as an avenue of engagement and promotion. They utilize social media platforms to engage customers by sharing departmental news and important deadlines, useful resources for the business community. They respond to customer inquiries received via social media in a timely manner.

Department of Natural Resources

The department hosts numerous social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram. Messages are posted daily which direct our customers to new content, program activities and a few events that the department hosted around the state. Actual events were severely limited because of the restrictions due to COVID, except there was an increase in outdoor activities and recreation with social distancing.

Department of Housing and Community Development

The department's Facebook page now responds to 100 percent of customer messages. In addition to using social media to respond to questions, the department has met its stated goal of using these resources to inform the public about agency news and events.

Enhanced the agency's usage of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to provide current and important information to facilitate better communication with customers.

DHCH enhanced the agency's usage of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to provide current and important information to facilitate better communication with customers. The response time goal for all customer inquiries received via the phone line, customer service inbox, and social media is within one business day. The average response time to messages received via Facebook is under seven hours, **and employees respond to 100% of messages.**

Department of Human Services

At DHS, it is crucial that employees exhibit transparency with our customers and maintain easy access to our agency's services, resources, important announcements, and customer service assistance. DHS continues to actively engage its constituencies on all public-facing platforms in a way that is reflective of our mission to serve.

The DHS Facebook account has global visibility, with followers spreading to 45 countries, 44 cities, and 45 languages. In FY22, the account had a total of 13,350 followers, accumulating 2,368 followers, which reflects a 21.6% audience increase in comparison to FY21. On Facebook, DHS frequently fields inquiries from customers through direct messaging and assists customers in finding the appropriate solution or resource for their concerns.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, these inquiries on social media and the page's overall engagement spiked drastically causing our agency to re-evaluate the efficiency of our operations and integrate new procedures to accommodate our constituents. This created the opportunity for the Communications Office to establish a greater Social Customer Relationship Management (Social CRM) partnership with our agency's Constituent Services Office (CSO) personnel. Since October 2020, their additional support has allowed the Department of Human Services to swiftly reply to all direct messages, upholding a 100% response rate when connecting with customers. In FY22, the DHS Facebook page reached over 154,000 Marylanders and garnered over 31,300-page visits.

Participating Agencies

- Department of Aging
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Assessments & Taxation
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Budget & Management
- Department of Disabilities
- Department of Education
- Department of the Environment
- Department of General Services
- Department of Housing & Community Development
- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Juvenile Services
- Department of Labor
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Planning
- Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Governor's Office of Small Business Regulatory Assistance
- Governor's Office for Children

- Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention
- Governor's Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- Governor's Office of Community Initiatives
- Governor's Grants Office
- Governor's Office of Performance Improvement
- Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs
- Maryland Higher Education Commission
- Maryland Insurance Administration
- Maryland Lottery & Gaming Control Agency
- Maryland Emergency Management Agency
- Maryland Energy Administration
- Maryland Environmental Service
- Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems
- Maryland Stadium Authority
- Military Department
- Maryland State Police
- Secretary of State

Governor's Customer Service Initiative Leadership & Workgroup

●Gaye Adams, Co-Chair
Director of Executive Services, Governor's Office
● Gregory Derwart, Co-Chair
Deputy Commissioner, Maryland Insurance Administration
● Mike Pantelides, Co-Chair
Executive Director, Maryland Department of Labor

● Nruti Desai, Senior Analyst, Governor's Office of Performance & Improvement
● Faith Champion, Analyst, Governor's Office of Performance & Improvement
● Stacey Harvey-Reid, Small Business State Partner Outreach Director, Maryland Department of Labor

Customer Service Experience Week
Customer Service Liaisons with Governor Hogan 10/3/2022

Conclusion

Since the beginning of his administration, Governor Hogan has made customer service a priority. The Governor's Customer Service Initiative requires all state agencies to produce a customer service annual report, and have a liaison dedicated to improving their agency's customer service. Maryland now has a record number of services and information available online which increases transparency and accessibility for the public. State agencies utilize multiple social media outreach platforms where the numbers of followers, and those who engage, are rapidly increasing. The Hogan-Rutherford administration has strived to improve the overall customer experience through innovation, and by providing meaningful outcomes for all Maryland constituents, businesses, customers, and stakeholders. This great work could not have been done without the full dedication and participation of each state agency.