
Customer Service Philosophy and Standards

- I. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to establish a customer service philosophy and define standards for all City of Pinole employees, ensuring high-quality, professional, and courteous interactions with residents, businesses, and visitors.
- II. **Scope.** This policy applies to all City employees, contractors, and volunteers who interact with the public in any capacity.
- III. **Policy Statements and Procedures.**
 - a. **Customer Service Philosophy** – The City of Pinole is committed to providing exceptional customer service that fosters trust, engagement, and satisfaction. Our customer service philosophy is built on the following core principles:
 - i. Respect: Treat every individual with dignity, fairness, and professionalism.
 - ii. Responsiveness: Provide timely and accurate information and assistance.
 - iii. Transparency: Ensure clear, open, and honest communication.
 - iv. Accountability: Take ownership of inquiries, requests, and concerns.
 - v. Innovation: Continuously improve processes to enhance customer experiences.
 - b. **Customer Service Standards** – To uphold our philosophy, the following standards must be met by all employees:
 - i. General Conduct
 - 1. Demonstrate professionalism and courtesy in all interactions.
 - 2. Listen actively and provide thoughtful responses.
 - 3. Maintain a positive and solution-oriented approach.
 - 4. Protect customer confidentiality and privacy.
 - ii. Communication Standards
 - 1. Use clear, concise, and respectful language.
 - 2. Provide accurate and up-to-date information.
 - 3. Respond to phone calls and voicemails in a timely manner, generally within one business day, unless absent due to unforeseen circumstances.
 - 4. Acknowledge and reply to emails in a timely manner, generally within two business days, unless absent due to unforeseen circumstances.

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5. Update voicemail greeting and activate email out-of-office automatic reply when absent from work. The greeting/out-of-office reply should include:
 - a. Your name and department
 - b. Your expected return date
 - c. Alternative contact information (if applicable)
 - d. A clear distinction between internal and external recipients, if necessary.
- iii. In-Person Service
 1. Greet visitors promptly and warmly.
 2. Offer comprehensive assistance.
 3. Maintain a clean and welcoming office environment.
 - iv. Internal Customer Service Standards
 1. Treat colleagues with the same level of respect and professionalism as external customers.
 2. Foster a cooperative and supportive work environment.
 3. Respond to internal requests in a timely manner.
 4. Share knowledge and resources to enhance team effectiveness.
 5. Provide constructive feedback and recognize team contributions.
 - v. Complaint Resolution
 1. Address concerns promptly and professionally.
 2. Escalate unresolved issues to the appropriate department or supervisor utilizing the Citizen Request/Concern/Compliment Procedure policy and form or other City-approved departmental form or process.
 3. Follow up as necessary to ensure resolution.

c. Training and Continuous Improvement

- i. All employees shall receive customer service training during onboarding and periodically thereafter.
- ii. Departments shall seek feedback from residents and staff to enhance service delivery.
- iii. Employees are encouraged to propose ideas for improving customer interactions.

d. Compliance and Accountability

- i. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy.
- ii. Non-compliance may result in corrective action as outlined in the City's personnel rules and employee policies.

- iii. Exceptional service may be recognized through commendations and awards.
- e. **Policy Review and Updates** – This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect best practices and community needs.
- f. **Contact Information** – For questions regarding this policy, please contact the Human Resources Department.