



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

SACHI A. HAMAI
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
HILDA L. SOLIS
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

September 4, 2015

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Sachi A. Hamai
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Rodney Gibson, Chair
Quality and Productivity Commission

SERVICES PROVIDED BY ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

At its meeting on June 22, 2015, during Public Comment, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor, requested that the Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC), in collaboration with the Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Public Social Services (DPSS), review the administration of services provided by Eligibility Workers (EWs) and DPSS. The directive specifically requested opportunities to streamline the process to better serve the public.

The Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC) provides advice, assistance and support to County elected officials and Departments to improve the quality and efficiency of County public services. In response to the Board's directive, Commissioner Rod Gibson, Chair of the QPC, collaborated with DPSS to examine options readily available to improve employee productivity, while enhancing the efficiency, delivery and quality of services to the public.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Implementation of the Affordable Care Act in the County was a successful endeavor although CalHEERS (California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System) was not fully functional. DPSS management developed manual workarounds. The alternative processes minimized delays in processing ACA forms, and allowed DPSS staff to provide customers with status information on their cases.

In addition, to curtail other problems associated with CalHEERS, DPSS quickly implemented efficiencies to the work process for the benefit of EWs. Major changes to the work process are highlighted below.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

- EWs currently receive up-to-date information through the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS), eliminating the need for customers to submit duplicate documents and workers to review paper files. As key documents are scanned and sent to EWs in realtime, it reduces the end-to-end application processing time.
- Customer Service Center (CSC) enhancements which have resulted in: 1) a decrease in the abandonment rate by 67% (from 21.5% to 7.15%), and 2) a greater use of the Interactive Voice Response self-service system (available 24 hours a day/7 days a week) from 36% to 61%, and an overall increase in CSC staff productivity.
- Implementation of a new Model Office concept to improve the Department's service delivery model, which speeds up services to customers who have simple transactions. This work efficiency provides EWs with more time to review and process complex cases. DPSS successfully piloted, and is now implementing, an expedited Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) issuance process, that reduces the wait time for customers to obtain a replacement EBT card from 45 minutes to less than 15 minutes.
- DPSS management worked to bring equity and balance to the caseload distribution by assigning Medi-Cal experts to each district office, where their technical support, training, and general information expedite the application process.

DPSS' administrative process was nimble enough to empower EWs to effectively and expeditiously address the influx of new Medi-Cal applications. As of July 26, 2015, the Department has received over 1.2 million Medi-Cal applications. Of this number, approximately 62,000 applications are currently pending. However, DPSS management is confident that this is a manageable workload. Currently, the Department receives an average of 40,000 applications on a monthly basis.

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

The Quality and Productivity Commission conducts biennial Department Visits, which are comprehensive reviews with the Director and Executive Leadership Team. During these meetings, the Department Director provides an overview of accomplishments and challenges to increase productivity and improve the quality of County public services.

On Wednesday, June 17, 2015, Commissioners visited DPSS and were impressed with the Department's holistic and caring culture and commitment to provide effective and quality services to the diverse Los Angeles community. DPSS management expressed its commitment to adopting best practices when considering new programs and initiatives, and identifying opportunities to incorporate new technology that meet the customer's need for flexibility and self-service options.

In the after visit report, the Commission cited such quality improvement efforts as enhancing the Mobile App (Your Benefits Now) to include imaging software that allows clients to upload documents; extensive use of an Interactive Voice Response system to communicate with In-Home Support Services clients in English and Spanish; and an increased use of social media to promote DPSS programs across a multitude of digital platforms.

ACA UPDATE

DPSS continues to review its administrative process with an eye towards efficiency. Management has been directed to reinforce among frontline staff the importance of an ongoing assessment of its work process. Any identified improvements will be brought quickly to management to ensure maximum efficiency in its operations and service delivery to customers.

DPSS will update your Board on the status of ACA applicants and any changes to the ACA process at the end of the current fiscal year. The Department also will continue to work with the State on improvements to the CalHEERS software.

SAH:RCG:RM:
VPL:lp

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Interim County Counsel
Sheryl L. Spiller, Director, Department of Public Social Services
Quality and Productivity Commissioners