



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Employment Appeals Board
Employment Department
875 Union Street NE
Salem, OR 97311
Telephone (503) 378-2077
Fax (503) 378-2129
www.oregon.gov/EMPLOY/EAB

Oregon Employment Appeals Board Customer Service Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Customer Service at the Employment Appeals Board. This policy supports the Oregon Employment Appeals Board (EAB) in promoting a culture of excellent customer service by planning for and providing accessible, responsive, and thorough service, including unbiased and timely decisions that are understandable and legally accurate. EAB will promote customer satisfaction by providing services in the following manner:

- Ensure universally accessible, culturally responsive, and equitable service for customers, including working with partners to develop solutions to improve access for customers experiencing barriers to obtaining services
- Ensure timely customer service that is equally responsive for all customers
- Maintain and develop sources to measure customer service quality and feedback
- Use customer service measures and guidance from state leadership to continuously improve customer service

Obtaining EAB's Customer Service Policy. Anyone may obtain a copy of EAB's customer service policy on the EAB website at Oregon.gov/employ/eab, or by requesting it from EAB. Requests can be made by telephone at 503-378-2077, email at appealsboard@employ.oregon.gov, or fax at 503-378-2129. EAB responds to telephone calls and monitors the EAB general email box and fax every weekday except for holidays, and provides a copy of the customer service policy within one business day. You may also mail a request to Employment Appeals Board, 875 Union St NE, Salem OR 97311, or hand deliver a request to the Employment Department located at 875 Union St NE, Salem, Oregon. Drop boxes are located at the north and south entrances of the Employment Department Central Office building in Salem. Customers may also use any WorkSource Oregon location for assistance with emailing or faxing a request to EAB.

Policy-Related Matter Contact. Please contact appealsboard@employ.oregon.gov for matters related to EAB's customer service policy.

EAB administrative staff respond to most general customer service questions the same day, but no later than the end of the next business day. Other customer service matters are forwarded to an EAB Board member generally the day the communication is received, and EAB responds to the customer within two days. EAB has also provided a copy of its customer service policy to the Oregon Department of Administrative Services. In addition, any party to an EAB decision may provide a customer service survey response via the link at the end of their EAB decision.

CORE CUSTOMERS

EAB's core customers are unemployed workers or employers who disagree with some aspect of an order from the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) about a decision issued by the Oregon Employment Department (OED). OAH issues an order after a hearing about the issue on appeal, or after dismissing a party's request for hearing.

DEFINITIONS

Accessible Customer Service: Customer service that ensures that all customers can effectively access the information, services and support they need. This includes providing accommodations such as alternative formats, assistive technologies, language support, as well as designing processes that are inclusive and user-friendly.

Clear Writing Guidelines: Instructions to help staff write decisions, letters, and notices in a style that claimants and employers can easily understand. Guidelines include, for example, using short sentences and paragraphs, omitting needless words, and using simple words when possible.

Continuous Improvement: Ongoing effort to improve services, processes, and work product over time by identifying and addressing areas for growth.

Customer: Any individual, business, or organization that interacts with EAB.

Customer Service: Providing support and information to individuals, businesses, or partners interacting with EAB. Addressing customer needs through accessible, responsive and thorough service, including providing fair, unbiased and timely decisions to parties.

Customer Service Success Measures: Metrics capturing customer service performance.

Key Performance Measure (KPM): A performance measure designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of a state program and its services.

Plain Language: Plain language is a clear, consistent communication style that customers with different reading levels can easily understand. It uses simple words, concise sentences, and a readable layout, spacing, and font size.

Professional: Consistently showing respectful, courteous, and knowledgeable behavior in all interactions with customers and colleagues. This includes following ethical standards, maintaining a positive attitude, delivering accurate and reliable information, and creating an environment that fosters trust.

SECTION 1. COMMUNICATING WITH EAB

- 1. Minimum Operating Hours:** EAB's minimum operating hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. These hours are posted on the EAB website and are stated in a recording if a customer calls EAB outside of the posted operating hours.
- 2. Telephone Hours:** Staff answer the telephone at EAB from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Customers may leave a telephone message at any time. EAB staff return telephone messages within one business day. The automated telephone reply at EAB also provides information about alternate means of communicating with EAB.

- 3. Unplanned Closures:** In case of an unplanned closure, EAB follows the DAS policy on Temporary Interruption of Employment, 60.015.01.
- 4. Unplanned Staff Outages:** EAB board members and legal staff are cross trained to serve decisions, respond to customer telephone messages, faxes and emails, and complete mail duties if both administrative staff are unavailable.
- 5. Mailing Information:** EAB staff deliver and retrieve mail daily, Monday through Friday. All EAB mail is opened, reviewed, and routed to the correct individual or entity (sometimes OED or OAH) within one business day of receipt.
- 6. Agency Contact Information:** EAB ensures that contact information is readily available on the EAB website, including the EAB telephone number, mailing address, operating and telephone hours, and instructions on how to file an appeal or a written argument.
- 7. Maintaining Updates:** EAB ensures that EAB contact information on EAB's website and agency partner websites such as OED and OAH stays accurate by reviewing EAB, OAH and OED websites monthly to verify the accuracy of contact information and testing web links and telephone numbers to ensure functionality. EAB also reviews OED and OAH websites and documents for EAB contact information. Once new contact points are established, EAB adds them to its list for monthly testing.

SECTION 2. PROFESSIONAL WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

Professional workplace communication at EAB is a commitment to a workplace where customers can access EAB services readily and equally, and communication responds to the customers' unique needs and occurs in a respectful, clear, and courteous manner. EAB expectations for professional workplace communication include providing the following:

- 1. Understandable Legal Documents.** EAB issues 1,500 legal decisions per year that must meet requirements set out by federal and state law. EAB strives to follow clear writing guidelines when writing those decisions, legal notices, and letters so that they are as clear and understandable as possible, while still meeting statutory and other legal requirements.
 - Provide written communication that is clear, using consistent, uncomplicated language and writing style.
 - Provide written documents free of errors and contradictory information that confuses customers or requires additional communication to clarify the documents.
 - Provide written communication that is personalized for the customer that does not have auto-generated citations and verbiage that is irrelevant to the customer's case.
 - Provide letters and notices in plain language when possible.
 - Use simple formatting and organization, and readable font and font size.

2. Respectful, Thorough, Clear Communication.

- Listen to customers with patience and empathy to understand the customer's needs.
- Engage in two-way communication when necessary to ensure a thorough understanding of the customer's circumstances and needs.
- Communicate respectfully and courteously.
- Use plain language in emails and telephone calls.

3. Prompt and Responsive Communication.

- Acknowledge receipt of voicemail, email, and web messages within one business day.
- Provide a thorough, substantive response (not just an acknowledgment of receipt) to customer letters, faxes, and emails within five working days.
- Provide telephone help without wait times or delay. Answer calls immediately during operating hours. If a customer must leave a telephone message, call the customer back the same day or, if necessary, the next business day. Make repeated attempts to contact the customer, by alternate means if necessary, if unable to reach the customer by their initial contact method.
- Provide prompt, thorough communications to enable the customer to make informed decisions throughout the higher authority appeal process.
- Provide prompt, thorough communications to help customers access services at OED, OAH and Oregon Paid Leave, if needed. EAB receives many contacts from customers who are not EAB customers or who have customer service needs at OAH, OED, and/or Oregon Paid Leave. EAB provides prompt, thorough customer service to these customers to help them access services at partners such as OED, OAH and Oregon Paid Leave.
- If a staff member is out of the office for more than one day, they set an email autoreply with their return date and an alternate contact's name and email.

4. Accessible Support for all Customers. Provide accessible customer service by offering materials, forms, and online resources in English and Spanish, and offering interpretation services for all languages in telephone interactions. EAB also provides reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Enterprise Information Systems (EIS) e-Government guidance.

5. Equity and Inclusion: Completion of all the equity and inclusion and other trainings required for employees of the Oregon Employment Department.

SECTION 3. EAB CUSTOMER SERVICE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

EAB establishes customer service goals and measures and works to continuously improve customer service.

1. Appeal Resolution: 100% of EAB decisions issued within 45 days from the date the party filed an application for review of an Order from OAH. This measure is established by the United

States Department of Labor. EAB expedites decisions in appeals to decide if a customer will receive a hearing at OAH. EAB issues expedite decisions within 25 days.

2. **Customer Telephone Support:** 100% of telephone calls answered immediately during telephone hours. 90% of telephone messages returned the same day of call. 100% of telephone messages returned within one business day.
3. **Email, Webmail, Fax Customer Support:** Acknowledge receipt of email, web messages, and faxes within one business day. Provide a substantive response (not just an acknowledgment of receipt) to customer letters, web messages, faxes, and emails within five business days.
4. **Accuracy of Decisions:** Achieve a rate of less than five percent of combined reversals, and reverse and remands, of EAB decisions appealed to an appellate court.
5. **High Customer Rating of Overall Service Quality**
6. **High Customer Rating of Timeliness:** EAB completes cases with the oldest applications for review first.

SECTION 4. EAB CUSTOMER SERVICE SUCCESS MEASURES

USDOL Key Performance Measure. The USDOL collects EAB data every month and uses it to measure and compare EAB performance with other higher authority appeal entities nationwide regarding the number of days it takes EAB to issue a decision after a customer files an application to review an order from OAH. The KPM expectation is that EAB issue a decision within 45 days of a customer's application for review. EAB has historically had a self-imposed measure of 39 days to issue a decision. Customers can access EAB's KPM information for each completed quarter via a link on the EAB website. EAB has historically met, and usually surpasses, its KPM expectation.

Weekly and Monthly EAB Decision Productivity Reports: EAB administrative staff produce weekly and monthly reports to provide information to OED and USDOL about the number of decisions served and the age of those cases when decisions are served.

Productivity Reports for Legal Staff: EAB maintains records of the number of decisions written by each legal staff every week. Legal staff have a minimum number of decisions they must write in a 40-hour work week. The Board Chair and legal staff review the records quarterly in legal staffs' Quarterly Performance Accountability and Feedback meetings.

Incorporation of Appellate Court Results. Approximately 28 EAB decisions are appealed to an Oregon Appellate Court each year. EAB continually monitors these decisions while they are pending in Court. Most appeals from EAB decisions to the Oregon Court of Appeals and Oregon Supreme Court are dismissed or affirmed by the Court. If a decision is reversed or remanded to EAB for further proceedings, EAB incorporates the relevant developments in the law into future EAB decisions.

Pending Appellate Court Matters: EAB administrative staff keep a report, updated weekly, showing the status of all EAB decisions that have been appealed and are pending at the Oregon Appellate Courts.

Customer Service Survey. Any party to an EAB decision may provide a customer service survey response to EAB. EAB offers the customer service survey at the end of every decision EAB serves via a link at the end of the decision.

Unresolved Contacts: EAB administrative staff keep a report, updated weekly, showing the number of mail items, web forms, faxes, emails that are pending to be processed. In general, documents are processed on a first received, first processed basis, with priority given to applications for review.

Application for Review Handling Time: A case for an application for review is opened within five business days of receiving an application for review. Oldest cases are opened first.

Transcript Ordering Time: When a case is opened, administrative staff determine within two business days if a transcript is needed and order a transcript. The Board establishes the transcript ordering criteria.

Immediate Case Triage: Once opened, a case is determined as an expedite or regular case and assigned to Board members for voting within two business days. Most expedite cases decide whether a party receives a hearing and are issued faster than decisions in other cases.

Review and Service of Case Decisions Prioritized: Once a case decision is written, it is peer reviewed by a legal staff and revisions are usually completed within one business day. Once peer reviewed, the decision is reviewed by a Board member and served to the parties within one business day.