



HECC Agency Policy

Policy Title: HECC Customer Service Policy

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References	Resources and Statewide Policy References: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Policy 107-001-040 Enterprise Customer Service StandardsPolicy 107-001-040 Agency Customer Service Policy Criteria Checklist
Applicability	All employees, including temps, commissioners, volunteers, and others working in the agency, except where in conflict with a collective bargaining agreement.

Policy Approval:

Ben Cannon, Executive Director

PURPOSE

This policy guides HECC staff in promoting trust in Oregon state government and elevating quality customer service in daily operations by planning for and delivering accessible, timely and responsive customer service.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure universally accessible and responsive communication between Oregonians and HECC
- Reinforce an equitable customer service culture across the agency
- Continuously monitor and improve customer service feedback
- Continuously improve HECC processes and technology to meet the needs of those HECC serves

SCOPE

This policy applies to all HECC employees, including temporary employees, commissioners, volunteers, and others working in the agency, except when in conflict with a collective bargaining agreement.

DEFINITIONS

- **Contact Center:** A system that coordinates telephone and electronic contacts between the agency and the public.
- **Customer:** Any individual internal or external to state government who interacts with a state agency.
- **Customer Facing:** State occupied location open to the public.
- **Customer Service:** Timely, accessible, equitable, and responsive support-based interactions between HECC and its customers.
- **HECC:** Higher Education Coordinating Commission
- **Key Performance Measures (KPM):** Performance measures designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state programs and services.
- **Phishing:** A social engineering attack using email or a messaging service to send messages intended to trick individuals into taking an action such as clicking on a link, opening an attachment, or providing information.
- **Spam:** The abuse of electronic messaging systems to indiscriminately send unsolicited bulk messages.

POLICY

HECC is committed to providing quality customer service. Customer service is defined as timely, accessible, equitable, and responsive support-based interactions between HECC and its customers. HECC customers encompass all Oregonians and anyone who benefits from the economic, civic, and cultural impact of high-quality postsecondary education, training, and workforce development. HECC is dedicated to delivering superior customer service, adaptive to the needs of the customer with a commitment to continuous improvement, by seeking feedback, and implementing processes and technology to better meet the needs of our customers.

HECC Core Customers

- Students or learners seeking or attending postsecondary education or training programs in Oregon
- Parents, teachers, counselors or other supporters of those students or learners
- Members of the public seeking information about Oregon's postsecondary education and training system
- Oregon's Community Colleges and Public Universities
- Faculty and Staff of Oregon Postsecondary Education and Workforce Training Organizations
- Oregon's Independent Postsecondary Institutions
- Private Degree-Granting Institutions Authorized by HECC
- Private Career Schools in the State of Oregon
- Oregon's Nine Federally Recognized Tribes

- Oregon's Local Workforce Boards
- Workforce Training Providers
- Dislocated Workers seeking training
- Oregon Employers and Industry Representatives
- Oregon community-based organizations involved in postsecondary education and training, or support for learners seeking education and training

Professional Workplace

HECC shall ensure all communications are inclusive, respectful and professional and supportive of the [HECC mission vision and values](#), [HECC equity lens](#), and the [values of Oregon state government](#).

Hours of Operation

HECC standard hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m., except for recognized State holidays or temporary interruption of service as noted on the [DAS Building Closure page](#).

The HECC lobby will have at minimum, coverage between 9:00 a.m. – 4 p.m. to assist walk-in customers. It is recommended that HECC staff who typically work an alternative schedule, include their availability in their signature block or otherwise post the information to manage customer expectations.

Inclusive Access

HECC shall provide inclusive customer access by complying with:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Enterprise Information Services (EIS) [Guidance on Accessibility](#)

HECC recognizes the importance of providing information in a format that is inclusive and whenever possible in the native language of the requester. HECC will utilize a combination of technical assistance, contracted translation services, certified native speakers or specially trained staff to interact and communicate with customers when needed.

HECC shall make diverse communication methods accessible to customers by offering a choice of communicating by phone, video calls, email or electronic submissions by webforms when possible.

All HECC sponsored public meeting notices will include information for requesting ADA accommodations and translation services.

Responsiveness

Electronic Correspondence

HECC employees shall, at a minimum, acknowledge receipt of voicemail, text message, and email (including web messages, if applicable) within one business day. Employees unable to reply within this timeframe due to absence shall update their voicemail greeting and email autoreply with details about their return and an alternate contact name, phone and email of who can provide responsive assistance while the employee is not available.

HECC offices that provide services directly to the public via phone shall adopt and maintain phone systems with automated distribution, that monitored by more than one staff person, to increase the likelihood of the public being able to reach a live person. Voicemails shall be routed to a shared mailbox and will be returned within one business day. Automated phone systems with shared voicemail access will assist those offices in responding timely to unplanned high-volume events and staffing absences.

HECC offices that provide services directly to the public via emails shall have a general, shared email address monitored by multiple staff to ensure timely responses. Shared mailboxes will assist those offices in responding timely to unplanned high-volume events and staffing absences.

HECC offices that provide services directly to the public in person via walk-in traffic will ensure that there are staff available and processes in place to respond to customers.

Responding to phishing, spam, junk mail, advertisements, or informational interactions is not included in the expectation of responding in one business day.

Public Records Requests are responded to by the Public Records Officer as required in the [HECC Public Records Request Policy](#) and in accordance with public records [OAR 192 Public Records Policy](#).

Paper Correspondence

Physical mail will be opened, stamped, and routed to the appropriate office daily. Each office is responsible to ensure the inquiries are responded to within 2-3 days of receipt. Invoices and payments are processed timely, in alignment with standard fiscal practices. HECC shall routinely review mail procedures to ensure customers receive a timely response, and invoices or payments are processed timely.

In-Person Interactions

HECC staff may interreact with customers directly in a variety of settings including public meetings, campus events, outreach events, and at the HECC office building. When representing HECC, staff are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, inclusive, professional manner.

Self-Serve Options

As part of continuous service improvements, HECC will identify and incorporate self-service options that increase access, add communication channels, and use evolving technology so customers can more readily access information and answer questions on their own, when appropriate, while not eliminating live assistance or personal contact if requested.

HECC Website

HECC will maintain an external focused website that is updated regularly and provides current information on HECC programs, services and contacts. The HECC Website development and content is guided by the Communications Director with input from subject matter experts within HECC.

Website Accessibility

HECC is committed to providing all customers, including individuals with disabilities, equal access to web-based information and services. We are continually engaged in the process of improving the web experience for all users.

HECC websites are designed with the following accessibility standards and guidelines in mind:

- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 AA](#)
- [Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [Plain Language Act of 2010](#)

Service and Contact Information

The HECC website will contain at minimum the HECC:

- Main phone number
- Mailing address
- Operating hours, including minimum operating hours for customer-facing services
- Walk-in service hours or instructions for scheduling agency services
- Contact information for HECC staff including name, title, phone number and email address
- Resources for the public to access information and answer questions on their own

Building Closure Notices

Scheduled closures deviating from HECC's posted hours of operation will be shared through agency communication channels in advance of the closure, examples include the HECC website, voicemail, door postings and email.

Unplanned closures, agencies shall follow [State HR Policy 60-015-01, Temporary Interruption of Employment](#).

HECC will include information on how to access [Building Closure](#) notices including State Holidays on the website.

Key Performance Measurements

HECC will submit to DAS, a KPM on customer service every other year as a requirement of every executive branch agency. The KPM is based on 6 questions:

1. TIMELINESS. How do you rate the timeliness of the services provided by the HECC?
2. ACCURACY. How do you rate the ability of the HECC to provide services correctly the first time?
3. HELPFULNESS. How do you rate the helpfulness of the HECC employees?
4. EXPERTISE. How do you rate the knowledge and expertise of the HECC employees?
5. AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION. How do you rate the availability of information at the HECC?
6. OVERALL SERVICE. How do you rate the overall quality of service provided by the HECC?

[Results](#) are published on the HECC website.

Service Level Goals and Continuous Improvement

Although HECC does not provide contact center services, the agency recognizes the value in meeting customer expectations and setting standard levels for service, as well as striving for continuous improvement. In support of this, HECC Management will review KPM data, customer feedback, technological advancements and evolving best practices to drive continuous improvements in customer service strategies to ensure that service delivery is keeping pace with customer expectations. HECC will use data analytics and reporting capabilities to support data-driven decisions. Root cause analysis will be used to identify causes and possible solutions for repeat issues impacting HECC's ability to provide quality customer service.

Access to Customer Service Policies and Feedback

This policy shall be available for review by the public on the HECC website. Instructions for the public on how to provide feedback, complaints or concerns related to customer service will be included. These comments may be directed to info.hecc@hecc.oregon.gov and will be reviewed regularly by HECC management.

Customer Service Strategy

This policy documents HECC's current customer service strategy and future goals.

EXPECTATIONS

Insert text here.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Employees** are responsible for providing quality customer service in daily operations by following this policy, associated policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- **Managers** are expected comply with this policy and ensure staff are adequately trained and have access to the tools they need to provide quality customer service, and staff are accessible and responsive to HECC customers.
- **Communications Director** is responsible for maintaining the HECC website in compliance with this policy.
- **Public Records Officer** is responsible for responding to public records requests.
- **Office of Research and Development** is responsible for collecting and preparing KPM data.
- **Office of Operations** is responsible for ensuring mail is processed and timely manner and ensuring the lobby and front desk promote an inclusive and customer focused environment.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Director** assists the HECC Executive leadership in the identification and measurement of diversity, equity and inclusion strategies within the context of the agency's service delivery goals.