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Customer Services Department - Q3, 2022 Results Information Report to Council

Report Number: INFO-2022-28

Department(s): Customer Services

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

This report provides Members of Council with the highlights, overall results, and trends for the third quarter of 2022 for the Customer Service Department

Background

The Customer Service Department provides Members of Council with the quarterly results which includes volumes, trends, key project updates, and highlights related to service delivery.

Discussion

The attached graphics represent service requests as captured in our CRM system by either Customer Service staff or by staff in the Mayor and Councillors' offices.

Some of the highlights in the Customer Service department are as follows:

Overall Volumes and Trends

- Service requests to departments outside customer service increased 24.3% in the 3rd Quarter from the previous year. 2,647 service requests in Q3 2021, vs. 3,497 in Q3 2022.
- The overall volume of emails in the 3rd Quarter (1,442) has decreased from the 3rd Quarter of the previous year (2,290). With facilities re-opened, and less restrictions to service provisions than in 2021, less emails were received in Q3 2022, but still higher than prior to the pandemic.
- The handling time of each call continues to be higher than the previous year (4:15 minutes per call in Q3 2022 vs. 3:52 minutes per call in Q3 2021 and 3:06 minutes in 2020). Increased one-on-one time with each contact is attributed to more detailed information requirements and higher than average volumes of service requests.

- Across the entire Town, there has been a continual increase in service requests year over year. By the end of 2022, it is forecasted that a total of 10,356 services requests will be received by staff to action, eclipsing 2021's record high of 9,341 service request tickets and the highest service request total we've ever recorded. There has been a steady increase of requests each year from residents.
- Despite the increase in service requests reaching high levels, the CSC continues to maintain a 1st *Point of Contact Resolution* percentage between 88%-94% since 2011. Year to date, 90% of all contacts made to the Customer Service department are resolved by the initial Associate, and do not require outside department assistance. Less than 10% of all contacts are assigned to Newmarket staff for service action. This allows departments to focus time and resources on their regular daily responsibilities.
- Increased volumes of calls, length of calls, and complexity of service requests continue to impact the service levels (goal = 80% of calls answered with 20 seconds) that the Customer Service Centre provides. Service levels, which were always at or above 80% pre-pandemic, have dropped and are currently at 61.5% at the end of Q3, 2022.

Conclusion

The Customer Service Department remains committed to providing Council with the most recent trends and statistics by ward and the Town of Newmarket as a whole.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

Tracking and reporting on trends and customer feedback supports the Town's strategic directions of being Well-Equipped and Managed by demonstrating Service Excellence.

Consultation

Not applicable to this report.

Human Resource Considerations

Not applicable to this report.

Budget Impact

None.

Attachments

Q3 Volumes and Trends Graphics (4 Pages)

Contact

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Approval

Hayley Fryer, Supervisor, Customer Service Centre
Jamie Boyle, Supervisor, Customer Service Satellite/Kiosks
Bonnie Munslow, Manager, Corporate Customer Service
Jeff Payne, Commissioner, Community Services

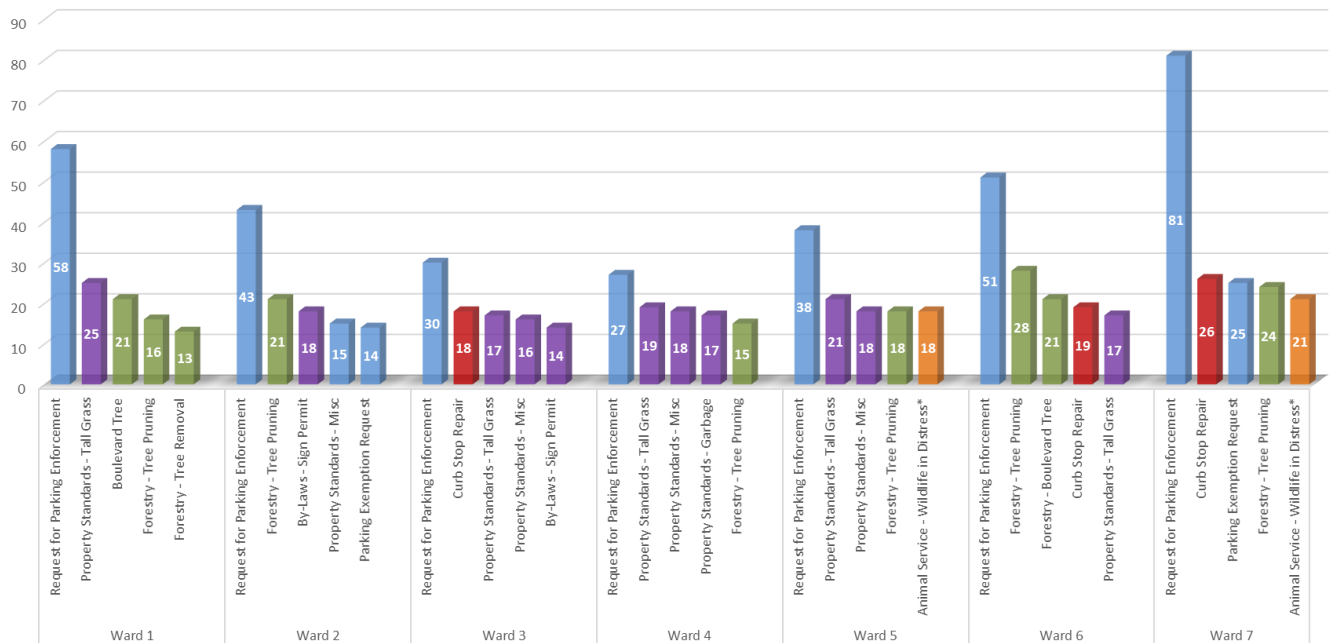
Overall Volumes and Trends

Top 5 Service Requests for Q3 2022 by Ward



Top 5 Service Issues By Ward
July 1 - September 30, 2022

*Animal Services is a new category and service brought in house



Parking Enforcement service requests are prevalent across all wards in the 3rd Quarter of 2022, and top in each ward. Specifically in wards 1 & 7 where it doubles the second highest request. All other service requests are consistent with previous year's quarterly data.

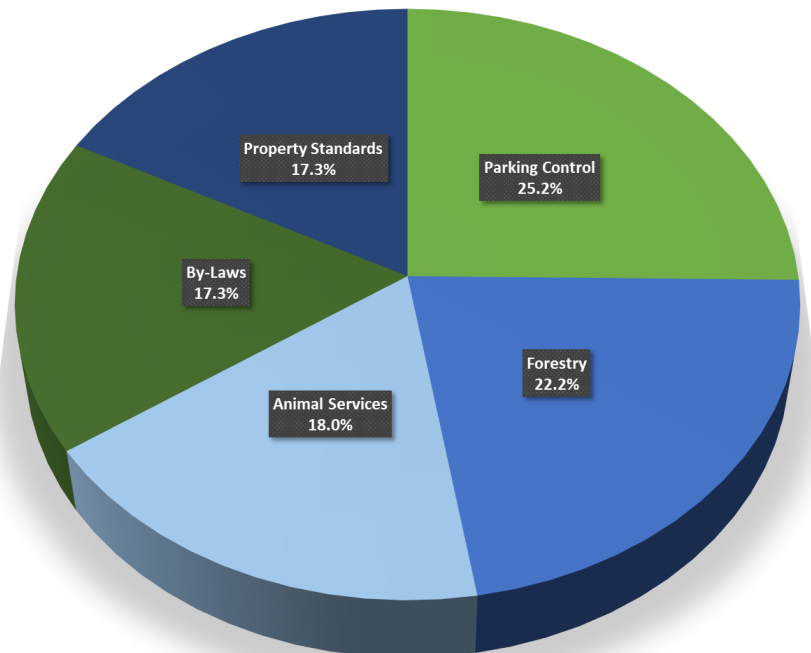
Town Wide

Top 5 Service Requests for Q3 2022

Town wide, the top service requests in Q3 2023 were Parking Control, Forestry requests, followed by Animal Services requests, Property Standards and Bylaw related requests.

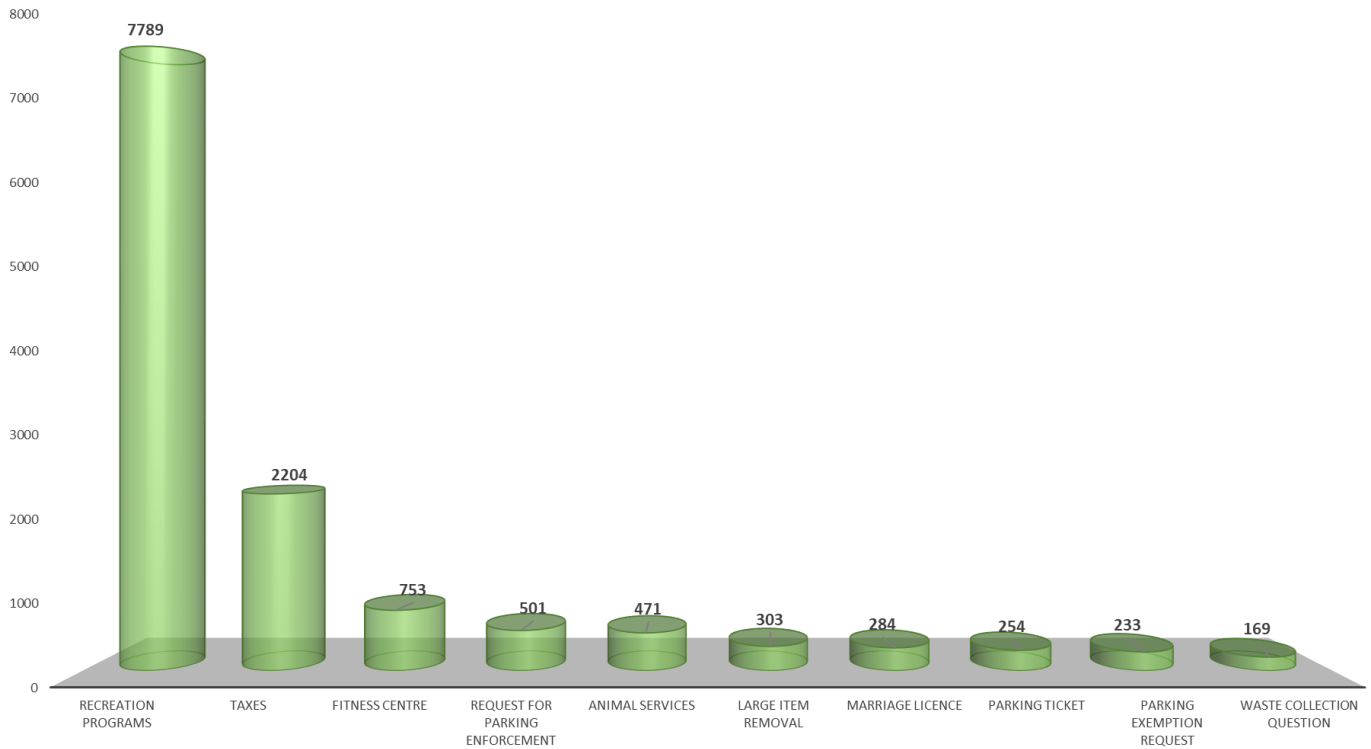
While Request for Parking Control requests consistently remain the highest service request type, Our newest service, Animal Services had 362 service requests in Q3. Most of which were 'wildlife animals in distress' (120), Lost Pet (66) and Stray Animal (70) contacts,

Property Standards—Tall Grass (135) was the highest individual service request other than 'Request for Parking Enforcement' (405).



Overall Volumes and Trends

Top 10 Inquiries, July- Sept 2022

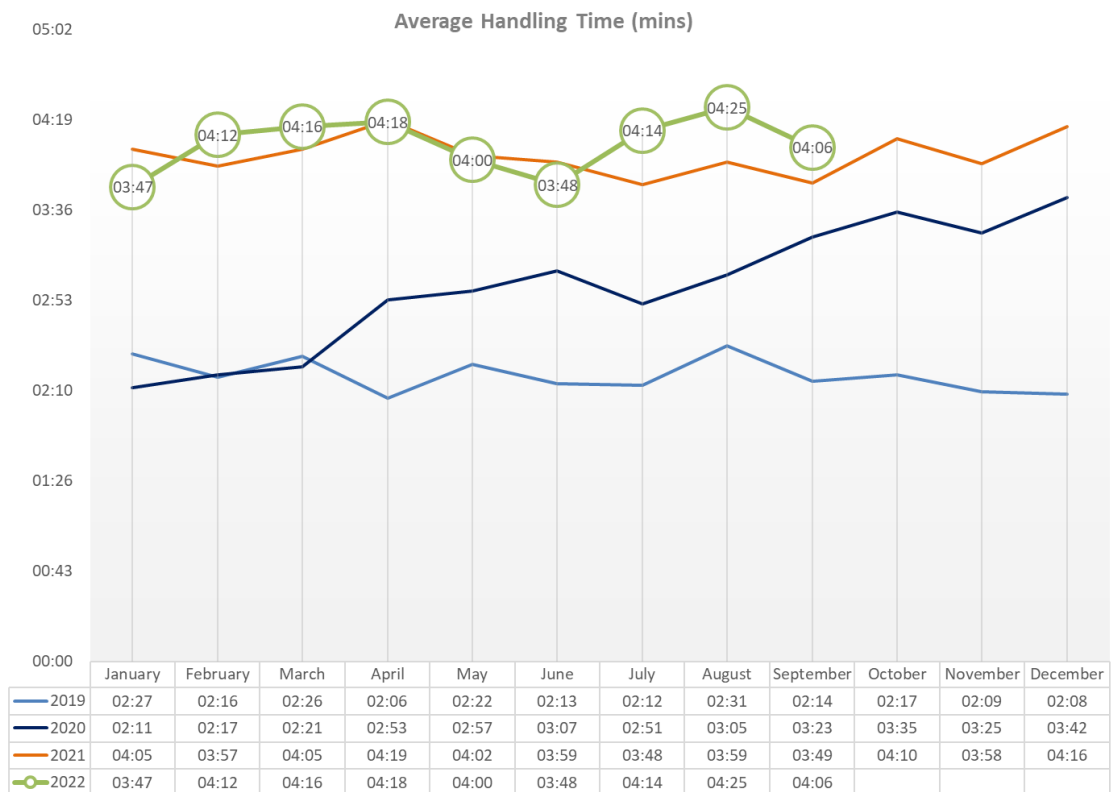


From July 1st to September 30th of 2022, over 26,600 calls, walk-ins, emails, and social media inquiries came to Customer Services (Satellite/Kiosks and Customer Service Centre). The highest volume of contacts was related to Recreation drop-in & registered programming (7,789), Tax inquiries (2,204), Fitness Centre inquiries (753), Request for Parking Enforcement (501), & Animal Services inquiries (471). These Recreation Programs totals are in the normal range for a Q3, and comparable to previous years prior to the pandemic. Residents are utilizing Newmarkets numerous drop-ins, camps, activities, programs and classes.

Average Handling Time of Customer Calls

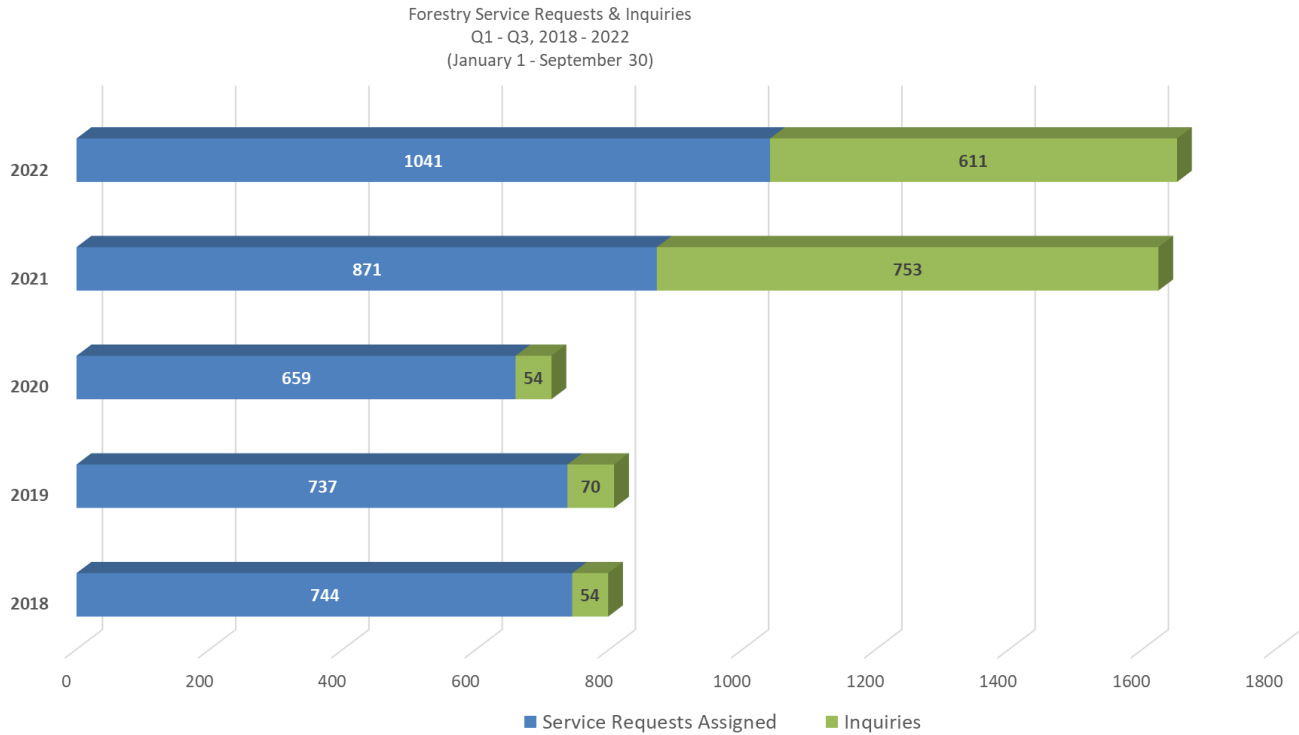
The average time spent on each phone call to the Customer Service Centre remains very high.

With the increase in service requests each year, customers requests are becoming more detailed and require longer one-on-one time to actively listen, document and resolve issues. Customer Service Associates are spending more time on each contact in order to educate the caller and resolve the issue.

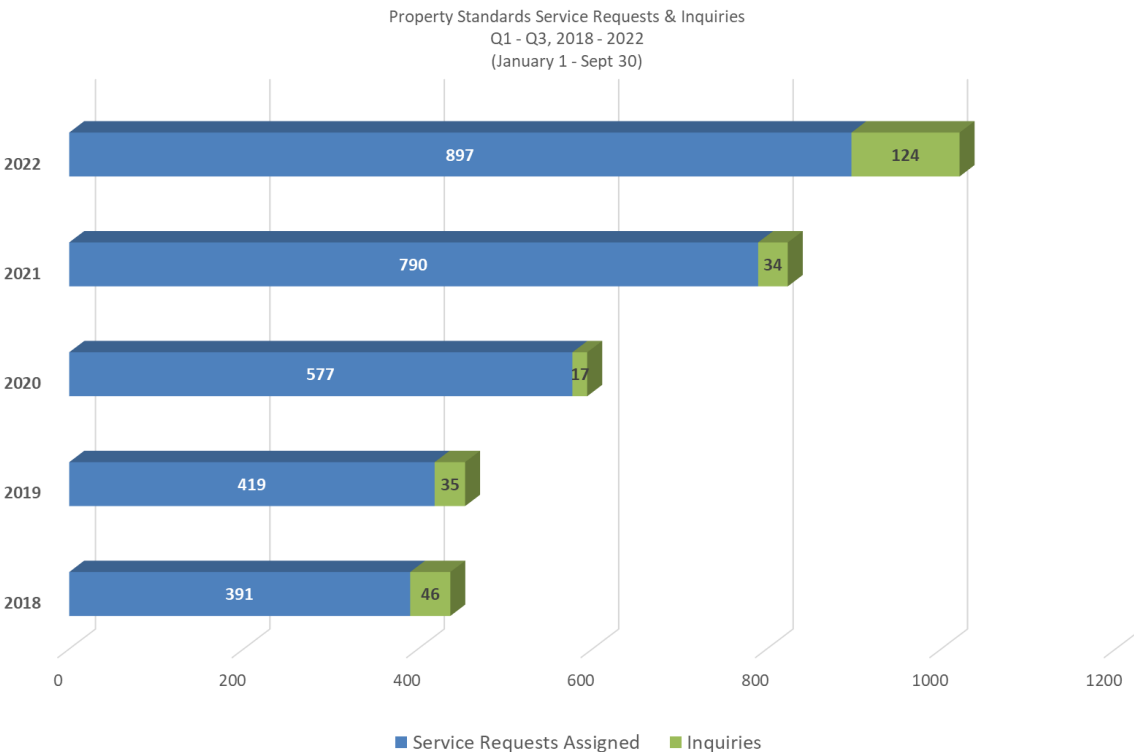


Overall Volumes and Trends

Service Requests & Inquiries



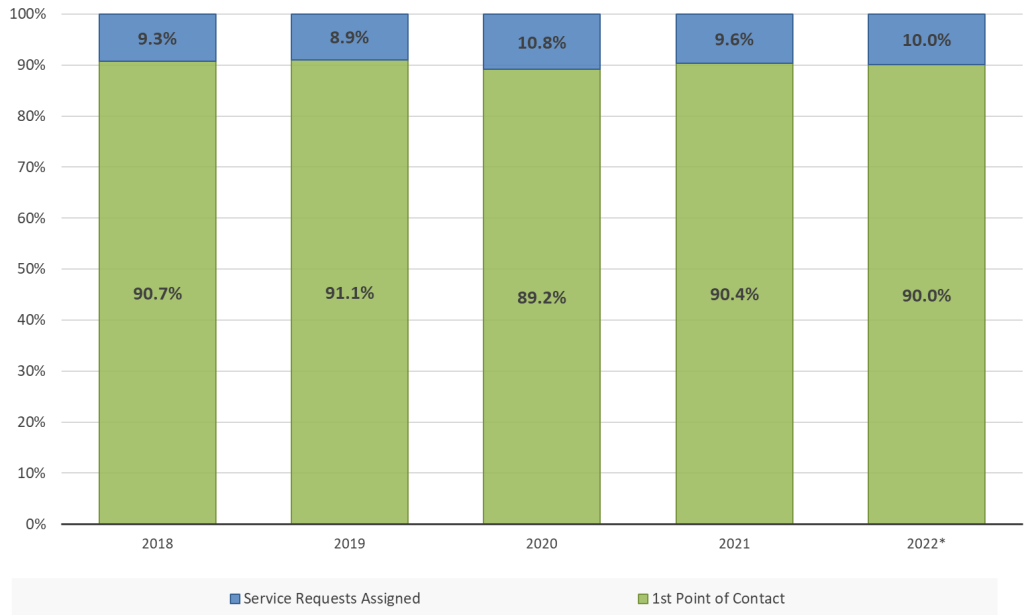
The Forestry department has been experiencing an increase in both inquiries and service requests over the past two years. These increases are primarily driven by the introduction of LDD moth, as well as the new Private Tree By-law and resulting tree removal applications. The Forestry department saw an annual increase of almost 200 service requests throughout 2020 and 2021, and almost the same between 2021 and to where we currently are in 2022. The Property Standards division is another area which has received an increasing volume of service requests over the last several years. Property Standards service requests are 43.6% higher so far in 2022 when compared with 2018 during the same time. Tall grass is the most prevalent property standards complaint.



Overall Volumes and Trends

Customer Service—1st Point of Contact Resolution vs. Service Requests Assigned

1st point of contact resolution measures how many customers the Customer Service Centre provides services for versus customer requests that require action outside of the Customer Services department via a CRM service request or “ticket”. Since 2018, the Customer Service Centre has averaged between 89% – 91% 1st point of resolution. This means 90% of all contacts that come to the CSC via phone, walk-in, email and social media are resolved on the spot, by the initial associate.



Customer Service— Total Contacts, Service Requests and Service Levels

Total Contacts is calculated by the sum of all calls answered, counter (walk-ins & payments), emails & social media contacts. Service Requests are all contacts that are assigned to outside departments for resolution via the CRM ticketing system. Service levels are a measurement of the percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds. The Town of Newmarket’s goal is 80% of all calls answered in 20 seconds.

Service Requests requiring outside resolution, result in a longer call duration. Contacts that are assigned past a 1st level of resolution, require CS Associates to spend longer on each assignment. Investigation, monitoring, action and resolution can take hours, days and sometimes months from 1st point of contact to resolution, and the customer updated, depending on the issue.

Increased demand and complexity of requests from residents has led to longer one-on-one handling time with each contact, thereby impacting service levels.

