



FIRE RESCUE

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Subject: Customer Service

Reference Number: SAP-DEP-006

Effective Date: 1 May 2004

Last Revision Date: N/A

Signature of Approval:

J. Dan Eggleston, Chief

Purpose:

The purpose of this Standard Administrative Procedure is to establish a standard for outstanding internal and external customer service as it relates to day-to-day administrative tasks for all Department of Fire Rescue personnel. This policy will support Albemarle County's Commitment to Customers which states:

"We promise to:

- Communicate honestly and openly;
- Be courteous, respectful, and fair;
- Be responsive to the customer's needs; and
- Provide the customer with the best services."

Policy:

Department of Fire Rescue personnel will ensure that internal and external customers receive the following:

Service in Person

1. Customers will be greeted with a smile and will be acknowledged as quickly as possible.
2. Personnel will make eye contact with customers. Additionally, personnel will project friendly, open, interested body language, and staff will empathize with the customer's issues and/or needs.
3. Customers' questions, inquiries, and requests will be answered immediately if possible. If immediate answers or responses cannot be provided, customers will be directed to another department, person, or source that can afford assistance. If the person/source is intradepartmental, the customer should receive a response from that person/source within **eight (8) working hours**.
4. When concluding service in person, staff will extend customers the option of further assistance.
e.g. "Is there anything else I can help you with today?"

Service by Telephone (Office, Workstation, or Mobile)

1. A staff member will greet telephone customers during normal business hours – not an automated answering system. The automated information system will be active after normal business hours and when staff is unable to answer the telephone (staff meetings, etc.).
2. Personnel will answer the telephone at his/her workstation within four (4) rings.
3. Customers will be greeted with a courteous and helpful tone by identifying the department/station, and the name of the person answering the telephone.
e.g. "Good Morning. Albemarle County Department of Fire Rescue. This is Dorothy."
4. If the person the customer is calling is unavailable, the customer will be given the opportunity to leave a message or be forwarded to voicemail. If the customer indicates that the message is urgent, the message-taker will notify the staff member within **ten (10) minutes** by Nextel® DirectConnect® or text messaging.
5. Staff will return voicemail and telephone messages within **eight (8) working hours**.
6. When concluding service on the telephone, staff will extend customers the option of further assistance.
e.g. "Is there anything else I can help you with today?"

Service by Electronic Mail (E-Mail)

1. All e-mail will be acknowledged unless "No Acknowledgement Needed" is indicated within the correspondence.
2. All e-mail will be acknowledged within **sixteen (16) working hours**.
3. If the receiver cannot personally handle the e-mail, the customer's e-mail will be forwarded to the appropriate person and the sender will be advised to whom the request is being forwarded, so they can follow up if necessary.
4. Junk e-mail (Spam) will not be distributed to internal or external customers.
5. All e-mail correspondence will contain a signature at the conclusion of the e-mail. The signature will minimally include name, title, department, mailing address, voice telephone number, and return e-mail address.

Service by Facsimile (FAX)

1. Personnel will maintain a FAX log to track incoming FAX messages.
2. Incoming FAXs will be immediately forwarded to the appropriate staff member.
3. If the FAX coversheet has requested an acknowledgement, the receiving personnel will acknowledge receipt and distribution of the FAX with the sender.
4. Personnel will respond to FAX correspondence in a timely manner.

Service by Letter

1. Incoming letters will be date stamped.
2. Incoming letters will be immediately forwarded to the appropriate staff member.
3. Personnel will respond to letter correspondence in a timely manner.
4. Standard business letter format will be used when drafting internal or external letter correspondence.

Service by Internet Website

1. Customers visiting the website will be visually stimulated and will view up-to-date information and fresh content.
2. Website customers will have access to user-friendly forms, documents, applications, links, and points-of-contact that ensure effective and efficient customer service.
3. Customer inquiries received from the website will be responded to within **eight (8) working hours**.

Service to Media Customers

1. Media customers will be treated fair and consistent and will be provided accurate information and timely referrals.
2. Personnel will follow established media/public information policy.
3. Personnel will promote the image of the department and of the county in a positive and professional manner.