

## NEWS FROM NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF OPERATIONS

### **NYC Customer Service Newsletter** Volume 6 Issue 1 - December 2013

#### Special Edition - Customer Service Highlights of the Bloomberg Administration - 2002-2013

When Mayor Bloomberg took office in 2002, one of his first major initiatives was customer service focused: the creation of the NYC311 customer service center. Today NYC311 handles millions of phone calls annually. The single point of contact takes the mystery out of calling the right agency. NYC311 is emblematic of the Administration's commitment to providing the best customer service to NYC customers, whether they live here, work here, do business or are visiting.

In 2008, Mayor Bloomberg signed Executive Order 115 (EO 115) which promised to provide the best customer service to NYC customers regardless of how they interacted with the City - at a walk-in center, over the phone, via email or regular mail, or over the internet. Since 2008, the City has advanced on various fronts to meet the promises and expectations of EO 115. There have been both centralized initiatives, led by the Mayor's Office of Operations and its Customer Service Group, as well as individual efforts by City agencies. This special edition of the NYC Customer Service Newsletter highlights some of the major customer service accomplishments of the Bloomberg Administration.

#### NYC311

##### **311 Customer Service**

Announced by Mayor Bloomberg in January, 2002 and launched as a call center in March, 2003, NYC311 is the largest and most comprehensive municipal government customer service platform in the world. With over 185 million customer contacts since its inception, NYC311 has become the City's source for non-emergency government information, services, and assistance. NYC311 is accessible 24x7 via phone, online, text, mobile app, social media, TTY, and chat; provides access to 180 languages; and offers online maps, performance reports, and APIs to make City data open and available to all.

The 311 call center is the most popular customer channel the City offers, averaging over 50,000 calls per day, with peaks of 276,000 calls in a single day and 4 million calls in a single month. Delivering on its mission to "provide quick and easy access to information...with the best possible customer service", NYC311 service exceeds the industry standard, with 84% of calls answered within 30 seconds, compared to an objective of 80%.

# 2003 **NYC 311** 2013

## NYC311 CELEBRATES 10 YEARS



### **Customer Satisfaction**

NYC311 achieved customer satisfaction rankings among the top-tier in the private sector from 2011-2013, and in 2012 was rated better than the best in the private sector in a survey conducted by CFI Group, Inc. According to CFI, “customer satisfaction with NYC311 far outpaces the best in government customer service and the private sector average”.

NYC 311 customer service representatives consistently exceeded composite scores of 90 in the satisfaction survey, for being highly professional and personable and excellent communicators, and their very high level of performance is directly correlated to overall satisfaction with NYC 311. Other key considerations driving customer satisfaction are a higher-than-ever percentage of issues being resolved to caller satisfaction, a reduction in the need for customers to make follow-up calls, and improvements in accessibility over the past 24 months.

### **Self-Service**

Beginning in 2009 with the launch of 311 Online and most recently the deployment of a Natural Language Integrated Voice Response (IVR) platform, NYC311 created self-service options to “meet customers where they are” and make City information and assistance available through multiple channels. Self-service provides faster and easier access to NYC311 content for the increasing number of customers who prefer it, and also allows the call center to remain accessible for more complex or phone-dependent inquiries. The balance of self-service and rep-assisted channels enables 311 to continue to meet accessibility targets, while maintaining outstanding service delivery quality.

The IVR platform, launched in September, 2013, significantly enhances customer self-service options and reduces the average wait time for all customers. The 311-designed application uses natural language technology to recognize and communicate with customers via an interactive speech application. The new IVR recognizes and captures customer utterances and data, and the 311 team mapped over 800 discrete services to outcomes designed to quickly fulfill customer requests. As a result the IVR provides answers, offers transfers, responds to frequently asked questions, routes calls, and even delivers the status of previously filed requests, all as part of a seamless interaction between customer and technology. New York City is the first city in the country to deploy this new natural language IVR technology for government service delivery.

### **Health and Human Services Support**

In 2010 NYC311 was accredited by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), recognized nationwide as the premier benchmark for information and referral programs, for its management of the 2-1-1 health and human services programs. 2-1-1 is reserved by the Federal government for information and referral of health and human services. In NYC, the 311 call center handles 2-1-1 health and human services inquiries and referrals, in addition to non-emergency government information. New York is the only city in the

US or Canada to support both 2-1-1 and 311 programs through a single operation. In partnership with the Office of the Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services and agencies throughout the city, NYC311 provides the largest and most comprehensive health, human and social services intake and referral program in the nation, with over 25% of calls handled involving health and human services.

The 5-year accreditation by AIRS signifies New York City government and NYC311's ability to adapt to meet specific requirements and standards for social programs. Customers across the five boroughs receive accurate and timely referrals to City agencies and non-profit organizations, and the most current information required to serve the needs of the health and human services community.

## Administration for Children's Services (ACS)

### **Enterprise Correspondence**

In December 2012, ACS collaborated with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) and the Mayor's Office of Operations to implement Enterprise Correspondence (EC), a management system for inbound and outbound customer correspondence. ACS leveraged this transition as an opportunity to streamline business processes throughout the agency to improve responses to inquiries. Since the implementation of EC, ACS has received over 3,600 inquiries and is meeting its timeliness targets. ACS is an example of an agency that has benefited dramatically from the support, consistent data reports and transparency of the Administration in support of customer service.

### **"Be the Reason Campaign"**

ACS launched a citywide advertising campaign in May 2013 to recruit highly committed and loving foster and adoptive parents who represent the diversity of New York City. The Be the Reason campaign is aimed at engaging groups who may not have thought about becoming foster or adoptive parents, including individuals without prior parenting experience, LGBTQ, working professionals, and individuals who value education. Each ad features a compelling message that informs New Yorkers of the impact they can have in a child or teenager's life by providing them with a safe, supportive and loving home.

Since the launch of the campaign, over 4,000 people have inquired about becoming a foster parent. By texting "reason" to 877877, completing an inquiry form on the ACS website, or contacting 311, people who are interested can receive information about how to become a foster or adoptive parent. Referrals are also provided to local foster care provider agencies.

The Parent Support and Recruitment Unit has stepped up its customer service efforts to meet the additional demand. During Recruitment Forum, held at ACS, attendees can learn about the process of becoming a foster or adoptive parent, meet staff from the 32 foster care provider agencies, and hear directly from youth in foster care. Parent Support and Recruitment staff respond to all internet inquiries, text messages and phone calls within 24 hours, and follow up monthly with attendees of the Recruitment Forums to assess their interest, readiness, and appropriate next steps for becoming parents for teens, sibling groups, LGBTQ youth, pregnant/parenting teens, or children with special needs.

For more information regarding ACS Foster Care and Adoption visit [www.acs.gov](http://www.acs.gov) or call 311.

Esteban and Stephanie Villafuerte, pictured below, have become foster parents through our "Be The Reason" campaign.



Esteban and Stephanie Villafuerte

## Department of Parks and Recreation

### Customer Service Surveys

Parks conducts customer service surveys of park, recreation center, outdoor pool, and beach users. A total of 4,720 surveys were collected this year from May through October: 1,975 for parks; 1,450 for recreation centers; 450 for outdoor pools; and 845 for beaches. The results show that the majority of respondents are generally satisfied. More than 89% of park users surveyed rated overall cleanliness as acceptable; 90% of parks users rated overall condition as acceptable. When asked about the overall condition of recreation centers, 77% of respondents rated centers as either good or excellent. Outdoor pool users rated the overall cleanliness as 95% acceptable, while the bathrooms and changing areas were at 86% acceptable. Even though most of the beaches were affected by Hurricane Sandy, 73% of survey respondents rated the condition of beaches as good, very good or excellent. Further, the cleanliness was rated as 87% acceptable and the boardwalk condition was rated as 77% acceptable.

## Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT)

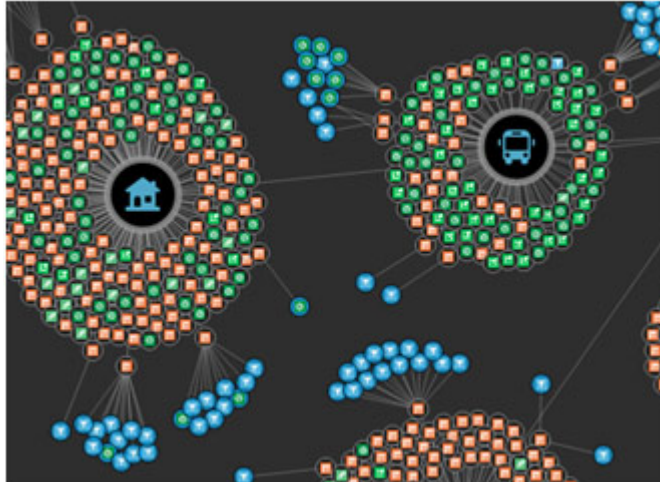
### Reinvent NYC.gov

NYC.gov, the City's official website, receives approximately 35 million visits each year. To ensure the site can provide increasingly important features such as video, business transactions, and other interactive applications, DOITT recently upgraded and modernized the site's infrastructure, design, and user experience. This significantly improves the City's ability to serve the public by providing faster, more relevant information and feedback mechanisms. The Reinvent NYC.gov project included the design and build of key portal pages, as well as the introduction of new information architecture, content taxonomy, user functionality, interface and interaction design, and visual branding.

### The NYC Open Data Portal

Over 1,100 datasets are available for free, at any time via [NYC Open Data](#) on NYC.gov. Today NYC Open Data represents data sets from dozens of City agencies, including public safety data, buildings complaints, restaurant inspections and real-time traffic numbers. This repository is a core component of the City's open government efforts, representing a revolutionary approach to storing and publishing City data in a searchable, sortable and customer-friendly manner.





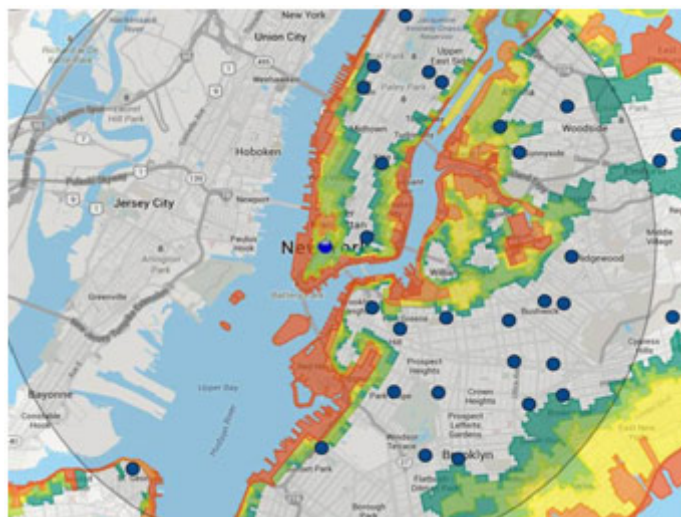
Visualization of the 1,100+ public datasets by topic category available via the NYC Open Data website at [nyc.gov/data](http://nyc.gov/data).

### NYCityMap

NYCityMap provides the City's wealth of GIS information to the public, and also allows City agencies to leverage its open source platform to support City operations, analysis, policy making, and public safety. This tool is also a single access point to many of the location-based applications on NYC.gov such as online property, building, census, statistics and safety information for New York City.

Recently launched interactive maps on NYCityMap include:

- **PlowNYC:** Leveraging both NYCityMap and NYCWiN (the City's broadband wireless infrastructure created to support public safety and other essential City operations) and in partnership with the Office of Emergency Management and the Department of Sanitation, in 2011 DoITT delivered a new, public-facing view into the City's snow clearing operations through PlowNYC. When activated during a snow event, PlowNYC features a map to view snow removal activities, including color-coded street segments by time interval of when a street was last plowed.
- **Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder:** The revamped zone finder site can handle huge spikes in traffic that occur during emergencies, and helps people quickly tell, via the familiar Google Maps interface, if they need to evacuate. Visitors can use the Zone Finder on multiple devices and get directions - driving, walking, or transit - to the closest evacuation center.



Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder

## Department of Probation (DOP)

### Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON)

DOP's Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) is bringing probation officers and a rich array of services to the communities where large numbers of probation clients live. The NeON initiative began in December 2011, when Mayor Michael Bloomberg opened the first NeON in Brownsville, Brooklyn. Since then, DOP has opened six additional NeON offices and seven NeON Satellites. By the end of 2013, DOP will be serving 60% of medium and high-risk adult clients at a NeON or NeON Satellite.



Mayor Bloomberg speaks with a young NeON client and his parents

Moving probation officers into the communities where clients live is just a start. As Jacqueline Simmons, Branch Chief of the Brownsville NeON, puts it, "We need to take the time to do something other than cookie-cutter probation." NeON leadership and staff engage local educators, businesses, healthcare and service providers, arts organizations, and tenants associations. Through these connections, staff members become more familiar with community assets, needs, and activities, and are better able to link clients to education, work and community opportunities.

DOP organized NeON Stakeholder Groups (NSGs), which consist of local leaders and residents, non-profit organizations, probation staff, and former clients and their family members. One of the most remarkable aspects of the NeON story has been the collaboration between DOP and various arts organizations. Through Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, NeON clients participate in music writing workshops and perform their compositions with professional musicians. The South Bronx NeON has a poet-in-residence, Dave Johnson, who conducts a workshop that includes clients and staff. Additional initiatives include Artistic Noise, which helped young people in the Bronx interpret the Family Court Law through art; the Animation Project, which uses behavior modification techniques to teach animation; and the Groundswell Mural Project, which has connected Brownsville NeON clients with professional artists to research, plan, and paint several large-scale outdoor murals.

### Resource Hubs

When Commissioner Schiraldi began his tenure at DOP, one of his first priorities was making the agency's waiting rooms more welcoming and useful. Through a team of DOP staff members, staff from the Mayor's Office of Operations, and architects, DOP transformed their waiting rooms into resource hubs. All of the Resource Hubs include PCs for client use; video monitors that stream news, local events, and special programming; and books, magazines, and other literature.



**Manhattan Juvenile Operations Resource Hub**

In addition to providing physical resources, the Resource Hubs connect clients to community service providers. As an example, Rodney Robinson works for HELP/PSI, a non-profit organization that provides health and substance abuse treatment services. Mr. Robinson regularly sets up shop at the Resource Hub in the South Jamaica NeON and talks to probation clients about the services offered by his organization. To cite just one success story, he was able to help a client named Leshawn access much-needed dental and medical services.

As Rodney Levy, Branch Chief of the South Jamaica NeON puts it, in the Resource Hub “You don’t feel like you’re sitting in a government office waiting for someone who doesn’t care.” As a result, the clients are more receptive and motivated, which DOP expects will ultimately result in improved public safety. It all adds up.

## Department of Buildings (DOB)

### **Great Service, Great City**

DOB partnered with the Mayor’s Office of Operations and other inspectorial such as the Department of Health and the Department of Consumer Affairs, to design the first citywide standardized customer service training program. This program instills the customer service qualities of timeliness, quality and respect within the skill set of customer service professionals throughout the agency. The goal of Great Service, Great City, as implied in the program name, is that any NYC customer deserves the best customer service from the City, which is part of what contributes to making New York a great city.

### **NYC Development Hub - NYC Development Self-Service**

Licensed design professionals can now submit professionally certified plans, pay necessary fees and obtain permits online without leaving their offices. More than 50,000 applications for small projects are submitted each year, and this modernized process is expected to save the building industry up to \$50 million annually in labor costs.

### **NYC Development Hub - Hub Full Service**

DOB expanded the NYC Development Hub to facilitate online acceptance and permitting of most standard plan exam Alteration Type-2 (A2) and Alteration Type-3 applications. The Hub’s paperless construction process allows customers to electronically file their job applications, meet with plan examiners in a virtual environment and expedite their permitting activities. The benefits of the program include fewer office visits and reduced paper submissions.

## NYC Development Hub—Inspection Services

In his 2011 State of the City address, the Mayor announced that the Department would reduce inspection wait times to jumpstart development across the City. He set an ambitious goal for DOB inspectors—every electrical, plumbing and construction inspection would be performed within 10 days of an appointment request. DOB met that goal—and exceeded it. The Department reduced the inspection appointment wait time to 10 days to accelerate development within the city. The Hub Inspection Services centralized construction, electrical and plumbing inspections enable meeting this service level agreement.

## Construction Information Panel

To improve the quality of life in New York’s neighborhoods, DOB created the Construction Information Panel Pilot Program. This new signage improves the pedestrian experience by combining permit postings, contractor information and a project rendering into one simplified, easy-to-read, large panel. Participating sites must also keep their construction fences clean and freshly painted, easing the effects of construction on our communities. This new signage improves the pedestrian experience by relaying pertinent information regarding on-going construction projects.



## New Smartphone Application Developed

DOB developed a new smartphone app that gives New Yorkers easy access to the construction history—and current project information— of nearly 1 million properties throughout the City. Plus, users can receive alerts about DOB’s new services and active construction site managers can receive inclement weather warnings. The app is free and available for iPhone and Android phones—and more than 5,300 people have downloaded it so far.

## Department of Homeless Services (DHS)

### Flow Management

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) implemented a flow management system at the newly built Family Intake Center located in the Bronx. To enhance the customer experience, the waiting areas were outfitted with monitors and LED’s and clients are called to a service through audio and visual announcements in both English and Spanish. In consultation with the queuing system vendor, DHS was the first agency to incorporate a second language into its flow management system.



## **Enterprise Correspondence**

DHS took advantage of this correspondence efficiency initiative led by the Mayor's Office Operations and DOITT, and was the second agency to have it in place. The Enterprise Correspondence system, which provides a number of built in efficiencies to streamline the overall process, was officially implemented on April 11, 2012. To date, the system has processed close to 5,500 pieces of correspondence, 84% of which met the standard of responding within 14 business days.

## **Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre & Broadcasting (MOFTB)**

The Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre & Broadcasting (MOFTB) is the one-stop shop for all production needs in New York City. MOFTB issues permits, facilitates production and provides premiere customer service to production companies throughout the five boroughs. New York City's entertainment industry employs over 130,000 New Yorkers, contributes approximately \$7.1 billion to the local economy annually and benefits 4,000 ancillary businesses that support production. For the current 2013-2014 television season, 28 episodic series are filming or have filmed in NYC; in 2012 there were 267 feature films. The following customer service enhancements in recent years have allowed MOFTB to easily respond to these record levels of production.

### **On Location**

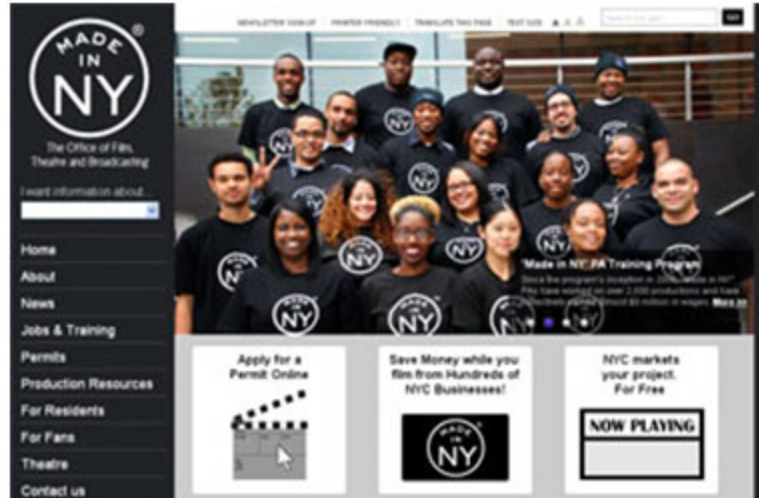
To further balance the needs of film and television production with the interests of the neighborhoods in which they work, in 2011 MOFTB met with industry representatives to refine best practices used on set. To heighten communication between productions and the neighborhoods, and to expedite the resolution of any concerns brought by local businesses or residents, all productions requesting parking privileges and using the required 'No Parking' signs must list on the sign a location manager's name and a production cell phone number assigned to a location manager or an assistant location manager. MOFTB encourages communities to contact the agency with feedback, but in most cases inquiries can be addressed quickly by an on-site production representative.

### **Rollout of Online Permit System**

In November of 2011, MOFTB launched an online permit application system. Customers can now submit their permits 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and no longer need to appear in person at MOFTB offices. This has saved production companies valuable time and staff resources. Approximately 200 feature films annually are issued permits by the Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting, as well as hundreds of other TV series, commercials and music videos.

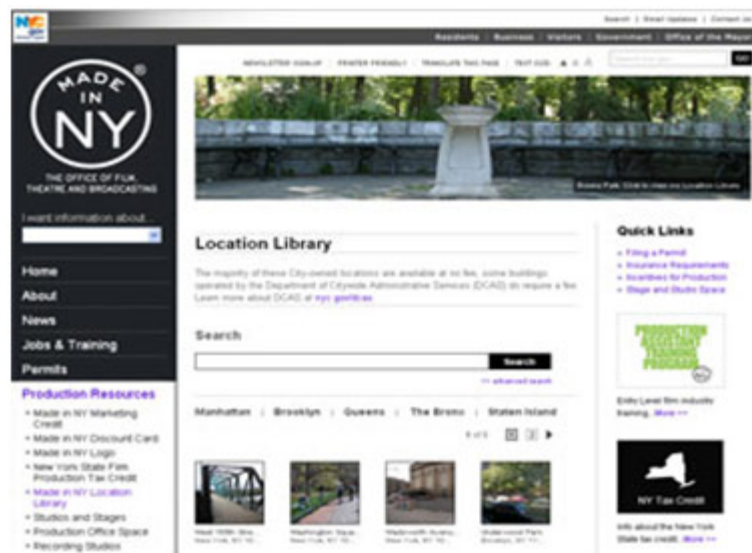
### **Re-launch of Website**

Featuring a new design and easy-to-use navigation, MOFTB launched [a new website](#) in March 2013 (see screen shot below). From step-by-step instructions for applying for permits, to details about jobs and training programs in the industry, the newly designed website offers quick links and drop-down menus. The "Made in NY" Discount Card page now features a new Facebook app, which allows users to find "Made in NY" vendors on a map and access their contact information and website. There are also sections for residents, with Frequently Asked Questions, and a section for fans, with links to learn more about the "Made in NY" Awards and more.



### Locations Library

The MOFTB website now boasts a newly designed “Made in NY” [Locations Library](#). Users have access to thousands of photos of different locations – ranging from City parks, buildings, bridges, beaches, intersections and City-operated buildings – to find the perfect spot in the five boroughs for their next project. The photo library features advanced search functions, allowing users to look for specific locations by category and borough. The majority of the locations featured in the location library are available at no fee. Additionally, pages throughout nyc.gov/film now include banner images from locations featured in the library. By clicking the banner, users are taken directly to the photo library. New City-operated locations continue to be added to the library.



## Human Resources Administration (HRA)

### Customer Service Indicators

HRA is committed to providing excellent customer service to clients. Over the past five years, the agency’s customer service statistics, as outlined in the annual Mayor’s Management Report, have showed an upward trend. In 2013, HRA responded to 96% of emails received within 14 days. The agency also completed more than 1 million requests for interpretation services. Finally, 88% of customers surveyed at the agency’s Medical Assistance Program offices rated the customer service they received as ‘good’ or better. Over the next year,

HRA plans to continue to enhance its customer service efforts throughout its programs.

### **The HRA Commissioner's Excellence Initiative**

The HRA Commissioner's Excellence Initiative was established as an employee engagement strategy. The goal of the initiative is to encourage HRA employees to thank their colleagues frequently and in the moment for a job well done. Often, the initiative recognizes outstanding customer service. Components of the program include: HRA thank you e-cards that staff send to each other; Commissioner Commendations for staff who go "above and beyond" their usual work performance; quarterly highlighting of attributes of Commissioner's Excellence, and quarterly events with the Commissioner where he personally acknowledges the achievements of particular groups of staff. This year, 14,701 Commissioner's E-cards were received by staff that performed great work, and 781 Commissioner's Commendations were awarded to staff that went above and beyond their usual work responsibilities.

### **I Speak Cards**

In 2012, HRA introduced "I Speak" cards to make interacting with HRA easier for clients with limited English proficiency (LEP). With 'I Speak Cards', LEP clients can conveniently request the services of an interpreter. They are the size of a normal business card, are printed with the phrase "I Speak..." and a request for interpretation services on one side, and a list of the six languages most often spoken in New York City on the other. If clients speak a language other than these six, there is also designated space to write their language in. HRA has distributed thousands of "I Speak" cards to organizations around the city.

## **Department of Records**

### **E-payments for Online Vital Records**

One of the major customer service accomplishments of the Department of Records during Mayor Bloomberg's first term was the implementation of e-payments for online vital records in December of 2003. In the 1st quarter of 2004, this service was expanded to include photograph orders.

### **Online Library Catalogue**

In 2007, the City Hall Library card catalogue was automated, enabling the librarians to provide more efficient and expeditious service to its patrons. In 2009, the library catalogue was made available online. By placing the catalogue on the web, research materials and reports became available to a much broader audience. The catalogue can be found at [www.nyc.gov/records](http://www.nyc.gov/records).

Computer terminals were installed in both the City Hall Library and the Archives Reference Room for patrons in 2011. Patrons can now search the on-line Library catalogue, databases and all digital collections, making search efforts easier and more efficient for patrons.



Archives Reference Room

### **Historical Photographs Online**

In April of 2012, Records launched the largest online collection of historical photographs of New York City, with 870,000 archival photos available. The launch generated tremendous interest from media around the world. The collection is used by researchers, students, writers and the general public and has increased the demand for other research materials. The photo gallery is at [www.nyc.gov/records](http://www.nyc.gov/records).

### **Opening of Visitor Center and Media Room**

The Department of Records Visitor Center and Media Room opened in May of 2012. The Visitor Center is a venue for exhibiting historical treasures of the Archives and City Hall Library as well as for public programming such as lectures, film screenings, book signings, workshops, tours and special events. Equipped with screens and computer terminals, as well as exhibit items, the Media Room allows visitors to explore the audio and video resources of the Archives.



Visitor Center

### **Social Media**

In 2012 Records launched its Social Media initiatives to make its collections accessible to an on-line audience via Facebook, Tumblr and Twitter. The social media sites feature documents and images from the many collections of the Department of Records.



## Department of Sanitation (DSNY)

### **Transition to 311**

Throughout 2002, the Department of Sanitation's (DSNY) Office of Community Affairs worked closely with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) and the Mayor's Office on the transition to the City's new 311 system. In December 2002, the DSNY became one of the initial city agencies to be integrated into the 311 system. This transition has made access to DSNY's wide variety of services more easily accessible to the public.

### **On-line Service Forms for Refrigerant Cooling Removal**

Working with DOITT, in 2003 DSNY launched an online service form that residents can use to schedule appointments for Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) gas recovery from appliances being discarded. The form helps appliance owners comply with the regulations and requirements for properly discarding these items without harming the environment.

### **Graffiti-Free NYC**

During 2008 and 2009, DSNY participated in an inter-agency task force to re-design the City's graffiti cleaning process. The task force reviewed operational, legal, technology and communication issues, and revised procedures related to the Graffiti-Free NYC program. These changes streamline the process and make it easier for the public to use. This initiative addresses the quality-of-life concerns that are created by graffiti vandalism.

### **Summary of Rules and Regulations**

In 2009, DSNY completely revised, updated and reorganized its Digest of Sanitation Codes. The booklet, a compilation of Sanitation regulations, helps merchants and residents comply with the laws to avoid a fine. The booklet, renamed Summary of Sanitation Rules and Regulations, is now more user-friendly.

### **Customer Service Follow-up Form (DS445)**

In April 2012, the DSNY established a new Customer Service Follow-up Form for use by field personnel. The form is completed and left at a location when a DSNY personnel visit is made in response to a customer service request and the customer is not at the residence or available. The form lets customers know that DSNY responded to their concern and provide the customer a way to follow up with the agency.

## Mayor's Office of Operations (OPS)

### **Customers Observing and Reporting Experience (CORE)**

Once a year, CORE inspectors visit approximately 300 City walk-in service centers and rate the physical conditions, customer wait time, interactions between customers and security and front-line staff, and compliance with language access signage requirements. 2013 is CORE's sixth year of operations.

Inspectors observe and rate the condition of walls, floors, ceilings, bathrooms, windows, etc., as well as the availability of seating, the length of wait time, interactions between customers and staff, and the availability and prominence of translated signage and documents.

CORE results continue to be encouraging: in 2013, 55 service centers received perfect scores of 100 (see DOHMH highlight below), compared to 38 sites in 2012 and only seven sites in 2010. Service centers with perfect scores receive a certificate from Mayor Bloomberg acknowledging the accomplishment of service center staff and management.

In 2012, 16 sites required re-inspections because of poor physical conditions; in 2013, only six sites required re-inspection. Sites requiring re-inspections are re-inspected to ensure that conditions identified have been corrected. The photos below show graffiti found in a bathroom by a CORE inspector and the resulting clean up.



Before



After

### CORE Agency Highlights

#### DOHMH Sites Achieve Perfect Facility Inspection Scores

In 2013, eight DOHMH sites received perfect scores, (compared to only one in 2012)

1. Fort Greene Immunization Clinic – 295 Flatbush Avenue Ext.
2. Birth/ Death Certificates-Vital Records- 125 Worth Street
3. Central Harlem District Health Center – 2238 Fifth Avenue
4. Early Intervention – 42 Broadway
5. Corona Immunization Clinic – 34-33 Junction Boulevard
6. Corona TB Clinic
7. Corona STD HIV Testing
8. Corona STD Services

#### Department of Parks and Recreation CORE Scores

Parks continues to improve its scores on the Mayor's Office of Operation's Customers Observing and Reporting Experience (CORE) inspection program. In the "Cleaning & Maintenance" category, the agency scored equal to the citywide average of 89. In the "Facility Operations" category, the agency scored two points above the citywide average for a score of 89. Parks received an overall score of 89, compared to the citywide average of 88. Out of the 39 sites inspected, seven received "Perfect" scores this year (compared to four last year). Further, several parks facilities increased their scores by 10% or more compared to their ratings last year.

#### Department of Homeless Services CORE Scores

In 2013, DHS facilities received an overall score of 91, three points above the citywide average. This outcome is particularly important as DHS facilities serve those who have lost their homes. These customers especially deserve a facility that is in good condition and staff who are attentive to their needs.

#### Language Access Secret Shopper Program (LASS)

New York is one of the world's most diverse cities and is home to over 300 different languages. To provide access to City services to New Yorkers who are not proficient in English, in 2008 Mayor Bloomberg issued

Executive Order 120 (EO 120). EO 120 requires agencies to provide notices of free interpretation, translation services, and translated documents and signage. The LASS program was created to improve the customer experience by ensuring that agencies comply with the City's language access policy.

Each summer the Mayor's Office of Operations recruits bilingual interns who "secret shop" about 200 City walk-in service centers. The secret shoppers pretend not to know English or that they are trying to help a non-English speaking friend or relative. During their shops the interns evaluate their interactions with security and frontline staff, the length of time it takes to have service provided in a non-English language, and the availability and language diversity of required signage and documents.



From left to right, 2013 LASS Secret Shoppers Sophie Qian (Columbia University School of Engineering), Natasha Gabbay (University of Pennsylvania), Atef Rafiuddin (SUNY-Stony Brook), and Anqi Wei (Wesleyan University).

In 2013, LASS interns conducted their secret shops in Spanish, Urdu and Chinese. LASS was assisted with 13 of the 216 shops by staff from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs whose shoppers used Spanish, Russian and Dutch.

LASS findings from 2013 were largely positive: 84% of interactions with frontline staff were either excellent or good. From 2011 to 2013, the percentage of sites with an excellent rating for notice of free interpretation signs increased from 78% to 92%, and the percentage of sites that provided translation services to secret shoppers increased from 55% to 85%. From 2012 to 2013, the percentage of sites with an excellent rating in translated signage increased from 17% to 46%.

### **Excellence in Customer Service Awards**

The Excellence in Customer Service Award was established in 2008 to recognize City staff that provides excellent customer service to New York City's customers. Since 2008, almost 300 City staff have been recognized for their courtesy, timeliness and professionalism in providing customer service to the people who live in, work in and visit New York City. Agencies select one individual winner from their ranks to be recognized at the annual ceremony, which occurs in October during or shortly after National Customer Service Week. Mayor Bloomberg has spoken at four of the past six ceremonies and has taken individual photos with honorees. The Excellence in Customer Service Award has become a prestigious event. To view honorees from 2013 and prior years [visit the OPS website](#).



**Mayor Bloomberg with 2013 Department of Finance honoree Howard Radin at the Excellence in Customer Service Awards ceremony.**

The City also recognizes accomplishments in specialized areas, such as fleet management and enterprise correspondence. For example, this past year two of New York City's boldest from the Department of Correction, Captain Lakisha Irvin and Officer David Saladellacuna received recognition. Captain Irvin, who works in the Constituent Services Division, was recognized for her leadership and courtesy in fielding inquiries from the public regarding the Department of Correction. Officer Saladellacuna, part of the Transportation Division, was singled out for his positive attitude and reliability in helping to manage and operate the department's fleet of vehicles.



**Commissioner Schriro with awardees David Saladellacuna and Lakisha Irvin**



### **Booting**

At the beginning of 2012, many months of hard work culminated in the launch of a pilot booting program. Before booting began, vehicles with more than \$350 in parking ticket debt in judgment were towed. Tracking down a towed vehicle could take many hours and required people to visit a number of locations to find the car, pay, and then retrieve their vehicles. Booting is much more convenient as the car remains in the same location. To remove the boot, the owner calls the number on the booting notice left on their car, pay what they owe over the phone, receive a code to remove the boot, and take it off themselves. They then have 24 hours to return the boot to a number of drop-off locations throughout the city.



The booting pilot was such a success that booting has now replaced towing in all five boroughs for parking debt in judgment. The program - which involved months of behind the scenes work, including drafting and distributing requests for information and requests for proposals and meeting with elected officials is a great example of how initiative, persistence and out of the box thinking can make life more convenient for New York City taxpayers, while allowing Finance to undertake more effective collection efforts.

### **Citywide Payments and Receivables**

New York City processes 29 million payment transactions a year. To provide a better payment experience for all New Yorkers, including the City agencies that take payments, Finance has consolidated citywide payments and receivables. New Yorkers can now pay how, when and where they want, and all agencies now have the same payment channels; they can pay all City charges on the City's new online payment site - [nyc.gov/citypay](http://nyc.gov/citypay). The new system uses state of the art technology to feed payments directly into the City's Financial Management System. This program is such a huge accomplishment that Finance received the Pinnacle Grand Prize Award from the Association for Financial Professionals at the annual award ceremony on October 27, 2013.

### **New Communications Materials**

DOF also improved service to its customers by streamlining and updating various communications media and materials by:

- Introducing a a totally redesigned website at the beginning of 2013. Finance has approximately 450 web pages and each was rewritten to make the site more accessible, accurate, and clear.
- Creating the first ever property tax guides for all residential property owners. These visually appealing

guides explain New York City's complicated property tax system in clear and succinct language. They are available in English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish and Korean. The guides have been extremely well received by elected officials, community groups and members of the public: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/property/assessment.shtml#guides>

- Publishing a new parking ticket brochure that explains clearly and simply what to do if you get a parking ticket or camera violation. These brochures will soon be translated into Chinese, Russian and Spanish: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/parking/drivers.shtml>
- Producing a new, comprehensive guide to the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) and Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) Programs that is available in English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish and Korean.

## Fire Department (FDNY)

### **FDNY Provides Smoke Detectors for Senior Citizens**

In early October 2013, almost one year after Hurricane Sandy hit New York City, the Fire Department (FDNY) launched a new fire safety initiative for senior citizens, to aid that population most vulnerable to fire-related injuries. After Sandy struck our shores, the FDNY spread out through the storm-struck areas to check on buildings that had been affected and the many victims whose homes were left ravaged. Based on this experience, it became apparent that the FDNY needed to expand its fire safety mission.

The FDNY has always educated the public about keeping their homes fire safe and about the importance of having working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. But following Sandy, the FDNY wanted to go directly to the people in their homes, especially the elderly, and help them as they never had before. The FDNY wanted to install the detectors for them and provide another level of education about maintaining those devices.

The FDNY applied to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for funding to support the unprecedented program. Called the Hurricane Sandy Fire Safe Program, it promotes fire safety awareness and institutes safety measures in the areas most impacted by Sandy. The program also addresses an unsettling fact in New York City today: most fatal fires happen in homes with no smoke detector. In 2012, no smoke alarm was installed in 74% of the homes that experienced a fatal fire. Notably, seniors are more threatened by home fires resulting in fatalities than any other group.

With \$570,000 in DHS support, FDNY Fire Safety Education teams will now go to the homes of senior citizens to install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and, where necessary, hard-of-hearing alarms. A major feature of the program is FDNY educators visiting senior centers and other community groups serving seniors to let them know about the program and to encourage them to sign up to have the educators visit their homes and install detectors and alarms and provide safety reviews.

To qualify, City residents must be senior citizens and live in one of the seven most affected communities: Brooklyn Community Boards 13, 15 and 18; Queens Community Boards 10 or 14; or Staten Island Community Boards 1 or 2. So far, response to the Hurricane Sandy Fire Safe Program has been robust in these areas.

Fire Commissioner Salvatore J. Cassano summarized the goals of the initiative, stating that "through our extensive Fire Safety Education efforts, and this important program, we hope to further reduce the number of fire-related deaths throughout the City and continue the Department's unwavering support to the communities ravaged by the storm."

**Mayor's Office of Operations (OPS)**

Elizabeth Weinstein, Director

**Editor**

Francisco Navarro, OPS

**Contributors**

Liz Lauros, ACS

Alane Ruchman, ACS

Pat Martinez, DHS

Lisa Lewis, DOB

Shirvana Gobin, DOC

Samara Karasyk, DOF

Eric Munson, DOF

Jessica Laboy, DOHMH

Galia Galansky, DOITT

Lara Torvi, DOITT

Michael Ognibene, DOP

Marcia Kirk, DOR

Adrienne Meryl, DPR

Henry Ehrhardt, DSNY

Alyssa Freeman, FDNY

Caroline Kretz, FDNY

Rebecca Wax, FDNY

Nicole Halsey, HRA

Jennifer Lenihan, MOFTB

Joe Morrisroe, NYC311

Linda Ng, NYC311

Francisco Navarro, OPS

If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please send an email to [customerservice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:customerservice@cityhall.nyc.gov).  
Enter "Subscribe" in the subject field.