



Case Study: Maryland Department of Human Resources

Maryland Department of Human Resources Improves Performance Measurement and Service Quality Through Active Network, Government's Managed Services

Background

The Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) manages the Child Support Enforcement Program and fields thousands of calls per month related to child support services. Independent call center operations across counties led to inconsistent policy and practices as well as difficulty tracking staff performance. Active Network, Government now handles all calls related to child support enforcement issues for 22 counties.

Challenge

With each of the State's counties operating their own Child Support Call Center, there were inconsistent policies and practices throughout the State, resulting in a lack of quality standards for measuring the performance of the DHR staff. Also, each county managed the Call Center process using a DOS-based legacy Child Support Enforcement System (CSES) that was more than 30 years old. With this system, the State was unable to track the number of work order requests received, number of calls handled, or the management and outcome of cases being handled by each county.

Solution

In 2001, Maryland's Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issued a Request for Proposal seeking a Maryland-based contractor to provide comprehensive Contact Center and Call Center services to State Agencies. Requirements included having the location, facilities, contact center infrastructure, and technical expertise to sustain and grow these services. Any agency would be able to use the Call/Contact Center Services Master Contract Vehicle to quickly find a solution to their customer service problem. The DHR issued a task order for call/contact center services related to receiving and managing constituents' calls for information and assistance on Child Support Enforcement. InfoSpherix, now part of Active Network, was awarded the contract.

Customer at a Glance

Customer: Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR)

Solution: Managed Services

URL: www.dhr.state.md.us

Highlights

- ▶ Providing Managed Services to DHR since 2001
- ▶ Serving 22 counties
- ▶ Fielding more than 5.5 million calls
- ▶ Initial training time reduced from 3 weeks to 1

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Commendation from Call Center Customer:

“I am writing this letter to commend your unit, the “Call Center,” specifically Rashida, for outstanding performance. Rashida, in the Call Center, is one of the most **courteous, capable, and efficient** staff members that I can recall ever communicating with from your office. Although our encounter was only a brief telephone conversation, Rashida proficiently addressed all of my concerns... Please thank Rashida for me and encourage her to continue doing an excellent job.”

– Karen R., D.D.S.

Call center services first went operational for Baltimore County and Montgomery County in February 2001, and have now expanded to 22 counties. The call center is serviced by dedicated CSRs who can access callers’ information, such as case history, court dates, and payment summaries through the DHR’s CSES database.

Additional services and technology development that Active Network provides include:

- ▶ Hard copy reports of payment summaries to either the custodial or non-custodial parent, in an effort to reduce unnecessary calls regarding payments made.
- ▶ Call center training in three phases: initial training, on-the-job training, and ongoing training. Active has been able to reduce the time spent on initial training from three weeks to one.
- ▶ An IVR front-end that triages callers to either the Child Support or Constituent Services program.
- ▶ A work-order system that automatically generates and sends work orders to the appropriate enforcement jurisdiction office.

Results

Since 2001, Active Network has fielded more than 5.5 million calls. By leveraging Active’s expertise and “best practices” knowledge, the DHR has benefited from improved constituent service levels, as well as greater access to call center data. The DHR now has access to such information as

- ▶ Call volume (overall and by jurisdiction)
- ▶ Time calls were received (on an hourly and daily basis)
- ▶ Where calls came from (e.g., by jurisdiction)
- ▶ Quality control of case handling (e.g., audits of the case action log)
- ▶ Adherence to performance standards (co-developed with DHR)