



Maryland Department of Agriculture Customer Service Overview

The Maryland Department of Agriculture's mission is to provide leadership and support to the agricultural community and the citizens of Maryland by conducting regulatory, service, and educational activities that assure consumer confidence, protect our environment, and promote agriculture.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture will achieve excellence in programs and services that preserve and protect agricultural resources and the environment, promote profitable agriculture and consumer confidence, enhance the quality of life for all Marylanders, and secure a future for Maryland agriculture.

Agriculture is Maryland's number one industry. A recent University of Maryland study shows the total impact of agriculture to Maryland's economy is \$11.3 billion. Agriculture, forestry, and the agricultural support sectors employ over 28,500 workers directly and stimulate another 17,000 jobs, for a total employment of 45,600 workers throughout Maryland (not including the horse industry). Horses generate \$1.6 billion annually in Maryland, half of which is generated through racing.

The majority of the Department of Agriculture's program activities have regulatory functions or are associated with implementation of laws in the Agricultural Article and related regulations pertaining to a variety of subjects, including: agricultural land preservation; regulation of livestock, poultry, and eggs; pesticides and pest control; commercial feed, fertilizer, and liming materials; soil conservation and nutrient management; seeds, turfgrass, potatoes, and noxious weeds; promotion and marketing of agricultural products; and weights and measures. The Department also provides a variety of services to the citizens and regulated industries of Maryland.

The Department of Agriculture's Customer Service Promise describes our approach. Customer Service activities include:

1. Improve the tracking, responsiveness, and time-to-resolution of all electronic, telephone, written, and in-



The State of Maryland pledges to provide constituents, businesses, customers, and stakeholders with services in the following manner:

- **Friendly and Courteous:** We will be helpful and supportive and have a positive attitude and passion for what we do.
- **Timely and Responsive:** We will be proactive, take initiative, and anticipate your needs.
- **Accurate and Consistent:** We will always aim for 100% accuracy, and be consistent in how we interpret and implement state policies and procedures.
- **Accessible and Convenient:** We will continue to simplify and improve access to information and resources.
- **Truthful and Transparent:** We will advance a culture of honesty, clarity and trust.

person correspondence. For example, we will acknowledge all email inquiries within 24 hours of receipt.

2. Ensure state employees and managers continue to improve customer service skills through formal training classes and informal coaching on best practices in customer service.
3. Improve the processing times of agency services to help citizens and businesses accomplish their transactions with the state.
4. Increase the number of services the state provides online so that citizens and businesses can utilize self-service, as appropriate.
5. Update online publications, forms, FAQs, and pertinent information on our website so that citizens and businesses can find relevant information quickly and accurately.
6. Use social media to help get the word out about services, events, and news to provide citizens and businesses with information important to them.
7. A three question Customer Experience Survey is available on our website for citizens and businesses to provide feedback. Results are used to make improvements to services.

In addition to these core customer service-related activities, we will also analyze our business hours in order to better align them to customer needs, ensure literature is up-to-date, and conduct staff meetings to discuss progress on achieving customer service goals. We will also continue to recognize top performers in our agency for professionalism and courtesy, responsiveness in resolving a customer's needs, and for innovations that improve customer service.

We will monitor the execution of the aforementioned activities, measure performance, and analyze the results in order to continuously improve customer service.

We are committed to providing Maryland citizens, businesses, stakeholders, and other customers with the best customer service. For more information, please [visit our website](#).

[Click here](#) for our three question customer experience survey.