

# **Report on Customer Service**

Office of the Attorney General

May 2018

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is committed to providing high quality customer service to its state agency clients and Texas taxpayers to ensure they receive the maximum benefit from their interaction with OAG attorneys and staff. Courtesy, respect, responsiveness, efficiency, and effectiveness are values that the Attorney General and Executive Management actively promote throughout the agency.

## **Inventory of External Customers**

For the purposes of the biennial customer satisfaction assessment, the OAG services three major external customer classes for which the agency has customer satisfaction-related performance measures: (1) legal services clients, (2) clients with child support cases, and (3) eligible crime victims who have applied for and been approved to receive crime victim compensation.

For the 2018 assessment, the legal services client group includes state agency executive directors, their general counsels and agency staff, as well as appointed board chairs of state commissions and councils. Client agencies receive a full array of legal services including general counsel support and legal representation in litigation matters. Litigation support covers a wide variety of matters, including administrative appeals, defense of state agencies and state employees in state and federal courts, employment litigation, consumer protection enforcement, environmental protection, licensing actions, collections, and various other matters. Scope of representation may include pre-litigation assistance, trial preparation and discovery, negotiation of settlements, and representation at trial and on appeal.

Child support customers include both custodial and noncustodial parents who have child support cases with the Attorney General's Child Support Division (CSD). Under Title IV, Part D, of the federal Social Security Act, CSD provides services including locating absent parents, establishing paternity for children born out of wedlock, establishing and modifying child support orders, enforcing child support orders, and collecting and disbursing child support payments. CSD's current caseload includes over 1.5 million cases.

Crime Victim Services Division (CVSD) clients are either victims of violent crime or their family members who have applied for benefits under the Crime Victims' Compensation Act (the Act). The OAG reviews and approves applications for financial assistance from eligible victims who are injured, threatened, or killed as a result of a violent crime under the Act. Only those victims who lack another source of financial remuneration, such as health insurance, are eligible for assistance. Within the statutory confines enacted by the Legislature, CVSD informs victims about their rights and benefits, makes eligibility determinations, and reimburses crime victims for allowable expenses resulting from the crimes of others. The number of victim applications approved in FY 2017 was 19,907.

## **Legal Services**

### **Information Gathering Methods**

Legal services clients were identified by 10 separate civil litigation divisions within the OAG: Administrative Law, Bankruptcy & Collections, Consumer Protection, Environmental Protection, Financial Litigation and Charitable Trusts, General Litigation, Law Enforcement Defense, Tax, Tort Litigation, and Transportation. These divisions' clients include executive directors, state agency general counsels and client agency staff, as well as appointed board chairs of state commissions and councils with whom the OAG divisions had direct contact when providing legal services. The final combined client list consisted of 577 individuals. Any client identified as receiving services from more than one OAG division was given the opportunity to complete a separate survey for each division with whom they were listed as a client. In total, 762 surveys were offered.

The 2018 legal services survey was conducted online beginning November 7, 2017. A web-based application, developed in-house specifically for this assessment, provides an online survey form and captures survey responses. Clients were e-mailed a link and asked to log in to a page on the OAG website using their email addresses to complete and submit the short survey. When the survey project closed on December 5, 2017, 227 individuals had responded (39 percent), and 286 surveys had been completed (38 percent of those offered). Results of the legal services client satisfaction assessment are based on this sample.

### **Customer Satisfaction Assessment: Clients of Legal Services**

In the 286 survey responses that were submitted, client agencies expressed a high rate of overall satisfaction with legal services received from the Office of the Attorney General. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the legal services they received. Three respondents indicated they were dissatisfied (1 percent), and three respondents (1 percent) indicated they were very dissatisfied with the services they received.

Legal services clients assessed several aspects of the customer service provided by OAG staff, including attorneys' timeliness and communication skills, understanding of the clients' concerns and objectives, and the handling of settlements and litigation. Legal services clients were asked to indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various statements using a five-point scale: 5 - "very satisfied," 4 - "satisfied," 3 - "somewhat satisfied," 2 - "dissatisfied," and 1 - "very dissatisfied." The final question on the survey asked respondents to rate their overall satisfaction with legal services received from the OAG.

### **Online Legal Services Client Survey Questions**

- Q1: How satisfied are you with the timing of the initial client communication from the assistant attorneys general (AAG) assigned to your cases?
- Q2: How satisfied are you with the instructions you received in the initial client communication about any discovery-hold obligations you have upon notice of the litigation?
- Q3: How satisfied are you with the overall helpfulness of initial client communications?
- Q4: How satisfied are you with the timeliness of written discovery sent out on your client's behalf?
- Q5: How satisfied are you with the tailoring of written discovery requests to the case at hand?

- Q6: How satisfied are you with the quality of objections made on your client’s behalf in responses to discovery requests?
- Q7: How satisfied are you with the quality of the responses to discovery requests made on behalf of your client?
- Q8: How satisfied are you with the guidance provided in determining your client’s responses to discovery requests?
- Q9: How satisfied are you with the timeliness of depositions taken?
- Q10: How satisfied are you with your AAG’s preparation for a plaintiff’s deposition?
- Q11: How satisfied are you with your client’s witness preparation for deposition by AAGs?
- Q12: How satisfied are you with the substantive factual and legal arguments made in pleadings filed on behalf of your client?
- Q13: How satisfied are you with the quality of the writing in pleadings filed on your client’s behalf?
- Q14: How satisfied are you with the amount of time you are given to review draft pleadings to be filed on your client’s behalf?
- Q15: How satisfied are you with your AAG’s preparation for a hearing, trial or appellate argument?
- Q16: How satisfied are you with your AAG’s advocacy skills in court?
- Q17: How satisfied are you with your AAG’s preparation for mediation?
- Q18: How satisfied are you with any settlements your AAG negotiated on behalf of your client?
- Q19: How satisfied are you with the overall level of communication provided by your AAG regarding your cases?
- Q20: How satisfied are you with the overall style of communication provided by your AAG regarding your cases?
- Q21: How satisfied are you that your AAGs are receptive to your concerns and input regarding key case tasks?
- Q22: How satisfied are you with the legal services provided by the OAG divisions in total?

Responses to specific questions are indicated in the table below.

Table 1: Legal Services Client Survey

Question	5s Very satisfied	4s Satisfied	3s Somewhat satisfied	2s Dissatisfied	1s Very dissatisfied	Sum	Average	%Satisfied (≥3)
1. How satisfied are you with the timing of the initial client communication from the assistant attorneys general (AAG) assigned to your cases?	143	95	13	1	2	254	4.0	99%
2. How satisfied are you with the instructions you received in the initial client communication about any discovery hold obligations you have upon notice of the litigation?	95	74	18	8	0	195	2.9	96%
3. How satisfied are you with the overall helpfulness of initial client communications?	136	85	20	3	0	244	3.8	99%
4. How satisfied are you with the timeliness of written discovery sent out on your client’s behalf?	66	54	20	6	1	147	2.2	95%

Table 1: Legal Services Client Survey continued

Question	5s Very satisfied	4s Satisfied	3s Somewhat satisfied	2s Dissatisfied	1s Very dissatisfied	Sum	Average	%Satisfied ( $\geq 3$ )
5. How satisfied are you with the tailoring of written discovery requests to the case at hand?	71	51	17	5	0	144	2.2	97%
6. How satisfied are you with the quality of objections made on your client's behalf in responses to discovery requests?	72	62	18	3	0	155	2.3	98%
7. How satisfied are you with the quality of the responses to discovery requests made on behalf of your client?	70	58	18	2	2	150	2.2	97%
8. How satisfied are you with the guidance provided in determining your client's responses to discovery requests?	65	56	18	6	3	148	2.2	94%
9. How satisfied are you with the timeliness of depositions taken?	44	56	16	4	2	122	1.8	95%
10. How satisfied are you with your AAG's preparation for a plaintiff's deposition?	57	43	12	3	1	116	1.7	97%
11. How satisfied are you with your client's witness preparation for deposition by AAGs?	57	46	14	3	1	121	1.8	97%
12. How satisfied are you with the substantive factual and legal arguments made in pleadings filed on behalf of your client?	117	70	11	0	3	201	3.2	99%
13. How satisfied are you with the quality of the writing in pleadings filed on your client's behalf?	116	66	16	3	4	205	3.2	97%
14. How satisfied are you with the amount of time you are given to review draft pleadings to be filed on your client's behalf?	86	71	25	13	6	201	2.9	91%
15. How satisfied are you with your AAG's preparation for a hearing, trial or appellate argument?	98	55	14	2	2	171	2.7	98%
16. How satisfied are you with your AAG's advocacy skills in court?	83	57	13	2	2	157	2.4	97%
17. How satisfied are you with your AAG's preparation for mediation?	56	37	16	0	1	110	1.7	99%
18. How satisfied are you with any settlements your AAG negotiated on behalf of your client?	84	62	12	4	1	163	2.5	97%
19. How satisfied are you with the overall level of communication provided by your AAG regarding your cases?	130	78	23	6	4	241	3.7	96%

Table 1: Legal Services Client Survey continued

Question	5s Very satisfied	4s Satisfied	3s Somewhat satisfied	2s Dissatisfied	1s Very dissatisfied	Sum	Average	%Satisfied (≥3)
20. How satisfied are you with the overall style of communication provided by your AAG regarding your cases?	134	82	14	6	4	240	3.7	96%
21. How satisfied are you that your AAGs are receptive to your concerns and input regarding key case tasks?	146	60	23	4	4	237	3.7	97%
22. How satisfied are you with the legal services provided by the OAG divisions in total?	163	73	20	3	3	262	3.7	98%

A comment section was also provided for legal services clients. Responses were shared with all levels of management so that any concerns, complaints, or suggestions submitted by clients can be addressed and appropriate plans of action developed.

## Child Support

### Information Gathering Methods:

The Child Support Division (CSD) emphasizes continual improvement of customer service by developing programs that encourage direct feedback from customers regarding services.

- In an effort to enhance the accessibility and convenience of child support services to all customers, an ambitious initiative was undertaken to open more customer service storefront locations in areas that had been historically isolated because of distance, lack of public transportation, or population shifts and growth. These smaller locations are equipped to provide immediate case information, accept case-related documents regardless of where the court case is located, and remedy the concern at the point of contact. This initiative has allowed for an increase in responsiveness to the customer needs which increases efficiency. This shift in direction would not have been possible without the advancements in technology and the retraining of staff away from the concept of compartmentalization. Staff are learning to address issues more holistically and understand the entire child support process, so the external customer receives a more accurate and thorough response.
- Customers who visit child support locations around the state are provided customer service surveys, allowing them to give instant feedback regarding the quality of their visit. These cards may be left with the office, placed in a locked customer survey card box in the lobby, or mailed to a central collection site at the CSD State Office. Survey card data is entered into a database, which allows for reports to be run focusing on overall statewide satisfaction or more specific office and regional satisfaction. Survey-card comments and trends in satisfaction rates are reviewed by CSD Executive Management.

- Customers express satisfaction with services through the “compliment” option on the Child Support Interactive (CSI) website, personal customer visit, or telephone. These compliments are then logged and tracked with a “kudos” code, so positive feedback can be recognized.
- Customers have the opportunity to submit comments, complaints and suggestions through the CSI website. Customer suggestions and comments are shared with managers of appropriate business areas for action. Formal complaints are responded to through the agency’s ombudsman program, which tracks and resolves complaints at the local office level. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local office level, ombudsmen at the regional and state offices review and resolve the customer complaint. All complaints are documented through the CSD computer system to ensure uniformity throughout the state.
- In an effort to further enhance the customer’s experience when dealing with the CSD, the website and mobile application were redesigned and rolled out to increase accessibility. These steps have made it easier for the customer to access their account information and complete applications without having to call or go to an office.
- Both internal and external customer service has been a cornerstone of the CSD for many years, and there are numerous initiatives that take place within the agency to ensure the highest quality of customer service. The training division has several courses which focus on this topic, and more are being developed, assisted by the ability of organizational leaders to participate in development courses through The University of Texas’ Governor’s Center leadership development programs.

## **Customer Satisfaction Assessment: Child Support Customers**

### **Customer Survey Cards**

Customer survey cards are available in English and Spanish at all CSD field offices. The cards ask customers to rate their satisfaction with all aspects of their experience at the office, using a five-point scale: 5 is the highest level of satisfaction and 1 the lowest. The questions ask:

#### **How satisfied are you:**

- Question 1: with the amount of time you waited to see someone who could help you with your case?
- Question 2: with the courtesy of the person at the front desk upon your arrival?
- Question 3: with the courtesy of the person who helped you with your case?
- Question 4: with the knowledge of the person who helped you with your case?
- Question 5: that your questions were addressed?
- Question 6: with the overall experience at the office you visited?
- Question 7: with the office facilities: for example—waiting room, parking, overall appearance and cleanliness?

Table 2: Child Support Survey Card Results

Question	5s Very Satisfied	4s Satisfied	3s Somewhat Satisfied	2s Unsatisfied	1s Very Unsatisfied	Sum	Average	% Satisfied ( $\geq 3$ )
1. How satisfied are you with the amount of time you waited to see someone who could help you with your case?	2,858	529	306	103	183	3,979	4.45	92.8%
2. How satisfied are you with the courtesy of the person at the front desk upon your arrival?	3,729	456	207	60	95	4,547	4.69	96.6%
3. How satisfied are you with the courtesy of the person who helped you with your case?	3,986	256	97	25	76	4,440	4.81	97.7%
4. How satisfied are you with the knowledge of the person who helped you with your case?	3,960	258	112	23	81	4,434	4.80	97.7%
5. How satisfied are you that your questions were addressed?	3,955	257	111	28	91	4,442	4.79	97.3%
6. How satisfied are you with the overall experience at the office you visited?	3,818	376	112	34	93	4,433	4.76	97.1%
7. How satisfied are you with the office facilities: For example—waiting room, parking, overall appearance and cleanliness?	3,542	394	126	31	59	4,152	4.77	97.8%

Between January 2016 and December 2017, a total of 4,571 customers completed survey cards. Of the total cards returned during this time period, 97 percent (rating  $\geq 3$ ) expressed satisfaction regarding the overall experience at the CSD office they visited (question six).

The survey card also directs customers who have additional comments to the CSI website. CSI offers customers the opportunity to submit comments, problems, and suggestions through the website.

## Crime Victims

### Information Gathering Methods

In January 2018, a one-page survey was mailed to a sample of 4,960 randomly selected, eligible crime victims and surviving family members who applied for compensation in FY 2017. A self-addressed, pre-paid postage envelope was enclosed, and customers were asked to respond by February 12, 2018. Three hundred twenty-one (321) eligible victims responded, which is a 6.5 percent response rate and similar to results in prior years.

### Customer Satisfaction Assessment: Eligible Victims of Crime

A one-page survey in English and Spanish was mailed to 4,960 randomly selected beneficiaries of the Crime Victims’ Compensation Fund. The survey recipients were separated between those who had already received a payment and those who had been approved for benefits, but had not yet received a payment.

Respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement with the following statements (questions 1-8) using a five-point scale: 5 - “strongly agree,” 4 - “agree,” 3 - “somewhat agree,” 2 - “disagree,” 1 - “strongly disagree,” and 0 - “not applicable or don’t know.”

### Crime Victim Survey Statement

- Q1: When calling CVC, I usually talked to someone who could help.
- Q2: When I left a message by telephone, someone called me back promptly.
- Q3: CVC staff listened to my concerns and understood how the crime affected my life.
- Q4: CVC staff answered my questions and provided the information I needed.
- Q5: CVC staff clearly explained the benefits program and application process.
- Q6: The application for CVC benefits was easy to complete.
- Q7: CVC let me know within a reasonable time that my application had been received.
- Q8: CVC let me know within a reasonable time that my application had been approved.
- Q9: Overall, how satisfied are you with the customer service you received from the staff of the Crime Victims’ Compensation Program?
- Q10: How satisfied are you with the benefits you received from the CVC program?
- Q11: If you were not satisfied with the award of benefits in your case, what was the main reason for your dissatisfaction?
- Q12: If you were denied some expenses for which you applied, was the reason for the denial clearly explained to you?

Table 3: Crime Victim Survey

Question	5s Strongly Agree	4s Agree	3s Somewhat Agree	2s Disagree	1s Strongly Disagree	Sum	Average	%Satisfied (≥3)
1. When calling CVC, I usually talked to someone who could help.	94	59	49	34	49	285	3.0	71%
2. When I left a message by telephone, someone called me back promptly.	72	56	32	33	83	276	2.6	58%
3. CVC staff listened to my concerns and understood how the crime affected my life.	100	56	36	35	54	281	3.0	68%
4. CVC staff answered my questions and provided the information I needed.	106	55	40	31	57	289	3.1	70%



Table 3: Crime Victim Survey continued

Question	5s Strongly Agree	4s Agree	3s Somewhat Agree	2s Disagree	1s Strongly Disagree	Sum	Average	%Satisfied (≥3)
5. CVC staff clearly explained the benefits program and application process.	98	55	40	26	62	281	2.9	69%
6. The application for CVC benefits was easy to complete.	103	82	56	28	38	307	3.4	79%
7. CVC let me know within a reasonable time that my application had been received.	91	71	35	37	66	300	3.1	66%
8. CVC let me know within a reasonable time that my application had been approved.	86	51	28	45	82	292	2.8	57%

Question 9 asked customers to rate their overall satisfaction with the customer service they received from the OAG staff within the CVC program. Customers rated their satisfaction on a five-point scale. Out of 301 respondents who answered Question 9, 190 (63%) answered with a three or higher, expressing overall satisfaction with the services received.

All customers surveyed were eligible applicants for the CVC program, but not all had yet received benefits. Per statute, the Crime Victims’ Compensation Fund is the payer of last resort – after insurance and other sources of assistance have been exhausted. For those who already received benefits from the CVC program, question 10 asked customers to rate their satisfaction with the benefits they received. If dissatisfied, they were given an opportunity to identify the main reason for their dissatisfaction in question 11.

Out of the 268 customers who responded to question 10 rating their satisfaction with benefits, 60 percent were satisfied, 14 percent were dissatisfied, and 26 percent were very dissatisfied with the amount of benefits received. Out of those responding to question 11 (reasons for dissatisfaction), 38 percent said the amount of the award was too low, 51 percent said expenses were disallowed that they thought should have been covered, 29 percent needed compensation for loss of property—which is not a statutorily covered expense—and 49 percent replied other. Several customers checked more than one “main reason” for their dissatisfaction. Finally, for those denied expenses, question 12 asked customers if the reason for the denial was clearly explained. Of those denied expenses, 14 percent agreed the denial reason was clearly explained, while 5 percent disagreed and 10 percent strongly disagreed.

## **Follow-Up to Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

In addition to providing customers a forum to address concerns that are special to their cases, the OAG also looks for broader indicators that are instructive as Executive Management continues re-evaluating program strategies to ensure all operations are as effective and efficient as possible. The results of the surveys were tabulated and reported to all levels of management. Survey instruments were then provided to division managers. Based on statistical survey results and narrative comments from customers, affected division chiefs are developing responsive action plans. Division chiefs responsible for managing litigation divisions have been tasked with conducting proactive outreach to any client agencies that expressed concerns or suggested improvements to help facilitate candor among respondents. Crime Victim Services and Child Support customers had the option of responding anonymously. While most respondents declined to disclose their identities, any who identified themselves and expressed concerns will be contacted by the appropriate division in an attempt to resolve whatever issues were identified. The OAG will continue to appraise survey methods to increase customer response rates, including additional electronic interface options for customers.

## Performance Measures for Customer Service/Satisfaction

Table 4 Goal: Provide Legal Services

<b>Legal Services</b>	Data
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents (Client Agencies) Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Legal Services Received	98%
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents (Client Agencies) Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery	10%
Number of Customers (Client agency heads and/or agency counsel) Surveyed	286
Number of Customers (Client agency heads and/or agency counsel) Served	577
Cost Per Customer (Client Agency) Surveyed	\$2.10

Table 5 Goal: Enforce Child Support Law

<b>Child Support</b>	Data
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents (Custodial and noncustodial Parents) Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Child Support Services Received	97%
Percentage of Customers (Custodial and noncustodial Parents) Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery	<1%
Number of Customers (Custodial and noncustodial Parents) Surveyed	4,571
Number of Customers (Custodial and noncustodial Parents) Served	2,532,539
Cost Per Customer (Custodial and noncustodial Parents) Surveyed	\$0.15
Percentage of Phone Calls Answered by the Child Support Customer Service Centers	89%

Table 6 Goal: Crime Victim Services

<b>Crime Victim Services</b>	Data
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents (Eligible Crime Victim Applicants) Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Crime Victims' Compensation Services Received	63%
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents (Eligible Crime Victim Applicants) Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery	55%
Number of Customers (Eligible Crime Victim Applicants) Surveyed	4,960
Number of Customers (Eligible Crime Victim Applicants) Served	19,907
Cost Per Customer (Eligible Crime Victim Applicant) Surveyed	\$1.19

Table 7 Agency-wide: Customer-Related Explanatory Measures

<b>Explanatory Measure</b>	Data
Number of Customers Identified	2,553,023
Number of Customer Groups Inventoried	7

## Inventory of External Customers Served By Strategy

Table 8: Customers Served

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Customers</b>	<b>Services</b>
Legal Services	State agency executive directors and general counsel, boards and commissions of state government, authorized opinion requestors, open records decision requestors, bond counsel, the Legislature, and criminal prosecutors.	Legal counsel, litigation, and alternative dispute resolution; attorney general opinions, open records rulings, bond review.
Child Support Enforcement	Custodial and noncustodial parents.	Establish paternity and child support obligations, enforce orders, and distribute monies.
State Disbursement Unit	Custodial and noncustodial parents.	Establish paternity and child support obligations, enforce orders, and distribute monies.
Crime Victims' Compensation	Eligible applicants for crime victims' compensation.	Review claims, determine eligibility, and pay allowable expenses.
Victims Assistance Grants	VAG grant applicants and grantees.	Administer grants and contracts for victim assistance and sexual assault services.
Medicaid Investigation	Administrators of the federal Medicaid program, taxpayers.	Investigate and prosecute Medicaid fraud and criminal abuse and neglect in Medicaid-funded long-term care facilities.
Administrative support for SORM	SORM	Administrative support for the State Office of Risk Management.