

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

311 CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER *Jessica S. Tisch, Commissioner*



WHAT WE DO

The 311 Customer Service Center delivers fast and easy access to government services and information to all New Yorkers. NYC 311 can be reached via the call center, [311 Online](#), [311 Mobile App](#), [311 Facebook](#), [311 on Twitter](#), text messaging at 311-NYC (692) and 311 TTY at (212) 504-4115. Information and assistance are also accessible by Skyping “NYC311” or by using a video relay service at (212) NEW-YORK (212-639-9675). NYC 311’s services are available in more than 180 languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. In April 2020, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) resumed management of the 311 Customer Service Center.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

NYC 311 is committed to equitably serving the public interest of all New York City residents, business owners and visitors. With so many New Yorkers accessing government resources through 311, its work is inherently tied to fair and transparent service delivery, particularly for non-English speakers, who it aims to serve in their preferred language. Historically underserved communities rely on 311 for support and this has never been truer than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, COVID-related inquiries to 311 (requesting meals, information on medical care and small business loans, etc.) have been top drivers of its call volume. To ensure that 311 provided prompt service to underserved communities in a time of crisis, 311 expanded its operations with new call centers, increased the number of surge call takers, prioritized hiring Spanish-speaking call takers, and reorganized resources to create “express lanes” to give precedence to COVID-related requests.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Provide public access to City government.

Goal 1a Increase public access to government services and information.

HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2020

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Goal 1a Increase public access to government services and information.

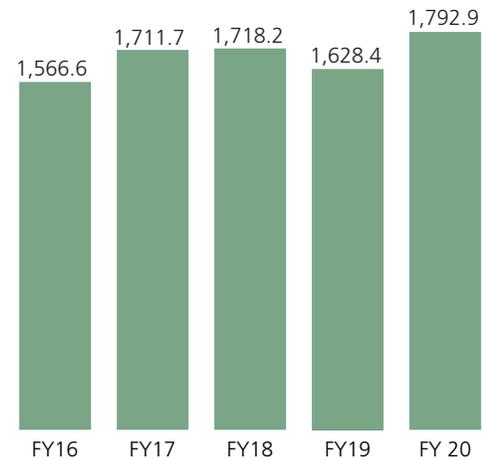
In Fiscal 2020, 311 received over 21 million calls, a more than 10 percent increase compared to the prior year. Spanish calls increased by more than 25 percent and calls in languages other than English or Spanish increased by 36 percent. Text contacts increased by 68 percent.

Much of the increase in calls was driven by the COVID-19 pandemic when, at peak volume, 311 received more than 180,000 calls per day. During the pandemic, the City has refocused 311 to be the first place New Yorkers call for assistance with meals, access to healthcare and information on returning to work and reopening small businesses. Initially, this resulted in long wait times. From March 13 (when the City declared an emergency) to April 16, the average wait time to reach Tier 1 during peak hours was six minutes and 38 seconds and during off-peak hours it was four minutes and 27 seconds. The increased call volume due to the pandemic also lengthened the average 311 call wait times for all of Fiscal 2020.

On April 17, the City placed a renewed focus on 311 operations to minimize wait times and improve customer service. “Express lanes” were created for coronavirus-related calls and GetFood inquiries, surge call takers were hired and staff were dedicated to these topics to shorten wait times. As a result of these changes, average wait times at peak times fell to two minutes and at off-peak times to 47 seconds (measured from April 17 to June 30).

The decrease in the number of knowledge articles accessed in Fiscal 2020 was due to two main factors: a consolidation of knowledge articles to put more information in each and a gap in reporting for the first quarter of the fiscal year that resulted from issues associated with transition to a new 311 customer relationship management system in June 2019. The decrease in the number of online site visits was due to a change in how search engines referred people to the 311 website.

Calls to 311 - Monthly Average (000)



Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ 311 calls (000)	18,799	20,540	20,618	19,541	21,515	*	*	Neutral	*
311 Spanish language calls (000)	692	698	733	714	897	*	*	Up	*
311 calls in languages other than English or Spanish (000)	72	71	65	60	81	*	*	Neutral	*
311 mobile app contacts (000)	1,010	1,365	1,829	2,234	2,201	*	*	Up	Up
311-NYC (text) contacts (000)	156	144	254	253	424	*	*	Up	*
★ 311 Online site visits (000)	13,018	17,246	19,345	20,185	10,553	↑	↑	Neutral	Up
★ Completed service requests (000)	2,792	2,895	3,074	3,254	2,913	*	*	Neutral	*
Knowledge articles accessed (000)	18,762	22,538	24,667	24,026	12,194	*	*	Down	*
★ Average wait time (tier 1 calls) Peak hours (11am-3pm, M-F) (minutes:seconds)	0:11	0:20	0:26	0:27	1:38	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ Average wait time (tier 1 calls) Off-peak hours (minutes:seconds)	0:19	0:14	0:32	0:23	1:03	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ Critical Indicator	"NA" Not Available		↑↓ Directional Target	* None					

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
Customer Experience									
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Neutral	*
Customer satisfaction index	85	84	83	84	85	*	*	Neutral	Up
★ Critical Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None									

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual ¹					Plan ²		5yr Trend
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	
Expenditures (\$000,000) ³	\$43.8	\$44.2	\$43.6	\$45.7	\$45.2	\$44.9	\$46.9	Neutral
Personnel	358	347	355	375	403	405	409	Up
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$176	\$238	\$231	\$252	\$239	\$239	\$239	Up

¹Actual financial amounts for the current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at nyc.gov/mmr for details. ²Authorized Budget Level ³Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available * None ⁴The figures shown in the table above are subtotals of the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications totals that appear in the DoITT chapter of this report.

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- In April 2020, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) resumed management of the 311 Customer Service Center. In December 2019, Jessica Tisch was appointed Commissioner of DoITT and oversees the operations of 311.
- The indicators 'Calls handled in languages other than English (%)' and 'Completed requests for interpretation' were removed and replaced with the numerical count indicators of '311 Spanish calls (000)' and '311 calls in languages other than English or Spanish (000)' to give more detail.
- The indicators 'Average wait time (Tier 1 calls) (mins:secs)' and 'Calls answered in 30 seconds (%)' were removed and replaced with separate metrics for average Tier 1 call wait times during peak and off-peak hours. These new indicators provide a more complete picture of 311 operations.
- The indicator 'Call takers time occupied (%)' was removed because it only accounted for Tier 1 call takers. A significant percentage of 311 call takers do not work in Tier 1.
- The indicator 'Calls resolved at 311 without transfer to agency for resolution (%)' was removed as its level was consistently above 90 percent so that it did not provide useful information to improve performance.
- The indicator 'Complaints about 311 per million calls' was removed because the volumes and year-to-year changes that were previously observed did not provide meaningful information to observe or improve performance.
- The indicator 'Completed service requests' was added to provide a more comprehensive measure of the volume of the 311 Customer Service Center.
- The indicator "Knowledge articles accessed" was added to more fully measure the response to the information offered on the 311 website.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information on items referenced in the narrative, go to:

- 311 Online:
<http://www.nyc.gov/311>
- 311 Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/NYC-311/84372567650>
- 311 on Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/nyc311>
- 311 Mobile App:
<http://www1.nyc.gov/connect/applications.page>