

## **VENTURA COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY: CUSTOMER RELATIONS**

### **Summary**

The 2007-2008 Grand Jury (Grand Jury) conducted an investigation into the Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) customer relations program. The Grand Jury determined that although RMA has procedures in place for code compliance complaints; there is a lack of management focus on a comprehensive customer service program.

The Grand Jury found that RMA does not have a comprehensive customer relations program, nor does it have written procedures for handling service-related complaints.

The Grand Jury concludes that RMA has no performance standards for improving customer relations, which contributes to public misunderstanding and frustration.

The Grand Jury recommends that the RMA management implement a customer relations program. The program should include training for all staff, establish performance standards for customer service, and develop and implement a consistent system for resolving service-related complaints.

### **Background**

The RMA has four divisions with direct public contact: Building and Safety, Planning, Weights and Measures, and Environmental Health. A fifth division, Operations, provides administrative support.

For unincorporated areas, the RMA enforces building codes, collects fees, and levies fines, which raise the potential for dissatisfaction, public hostility, and conflict with the Agency.

### **Methodology**

The Grand Jury interviewed RMA management and staff, reviewed previous Grand Jury Reports, reviewed RMA documents, and consulted with County Counsel. In addition, the Grand Jury compared the service-related complaint procedures used by selected County cities.

### **Findings**

**F-01.** The RMA staff does not receive formal training in customer service or public relations.

**F-02.** The customer relations program for the RMA consists of:

- Mission Statement

- Web site
  - Public Opinion Forms [Att-01 through Att-03]
  - several Municipal advisory committees in the Planning Division
- F-03.** Public Opinion Forms measuring customer satisfaction are used by all divisions with the exception of Weights and Measures. [Att-01 through Att-03]
- F-04.** The Weights and Measures Division maintains its own method for receiving, logging, and tracking customer complaints.
- F-05.** The Agency Director reviews monthly summaries of all Public Opinion Forms received.
- F-06.** There is no performance standard related to customer service for any of the four divisions having public contact. Service-related complaints are resolved informally (generally over the telephone) by the Building Official, a Division Deputy Director, or a Program Manager.
- F-07.** There are no RMA appeal processes for service complaints. The public's only recourse is to appeal to the BOS or file a complaint with the Grand Jury.
- F-08.** Public telephone customer complaints are not logged.
- F-09.** RMA Deputy Directors and Program Managers are responsible for public opinion record keeping in their divisions.
- F-10.** Public Opinion Forms are not pre-numbered or date stamped. [Att-01 through Att-03]
- F-11.** The number of customers visiting each Division is not consistently tracked.

## **Conclusions**

- C-01.** The RMA does not provide staff with customer relations training. (F-01)
- C-02.** The RMA does not have a customer relations program. (F-02 through F-04, F-06 through F-09, F-11, F-12)
- C-03.** The RMA has no performance standards or benchmarks for improving customer relations. (F-06 through F-12)
- C-04.** The RMA is unable to determine how many customers complain by telephone since calls are not logged. (F-09, F-12)

## **Recommendations**

- R-01.** The RMA should develop and implement a customer relations program. (C-01 through C-04)
- R-02.** An RMA customer relations program should include customer relations training for all staff. (C-01, C-03, C-04)

**R-03.** RMA should establish performance standards and submit quarterly progress reports to the County Executive Officer. (C-03)

## **Responses**

### Response Required:

Board of Supervisors, County of Ventura (R-01 through R-03)

### Response Requested:

Resource Management Agency, County of Ventura (R-01 through R-03)

## **Attachments**

- Att-01 Master Public Opinion Form
- Att-02 Public Opinion Form, Building and Safety
- Att-03 Public Opinion Form, Zoning

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**Attachment-01**  
**Master Public Opinion Form**

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## County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

**Your Comments Are Important To Us!**

To help us evaluate the permit process, please take a minute to complete this questionnaire. Your responses are confidential and will be anonymous if you choose.

Thank You,  
Christopher Stephens, Director

**1. Type of permit applied for: (check all that apply)**

- ☐ Planned Development (PD) Coastal
- ☐ Planned Development (PD) Non-Coastal
- ☐ Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
- ☐ Subdivision (tentative tract, tract, parcel map, parcel map Waiver, conditional certificate of compliance)
- ☐ Permit or Site Plan Adjustment/Modification
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Zone Change
- ☐ General Plan Amendment

**2. Project number (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_**3. Check all County agencies involved and your overall impression of their service:**

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental					
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
APCD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Dept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building &					
Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flood Control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Permit Billing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. How long were you in the permit process ( from application submittal to final approval)?**

0-3 mo	3-6mo	6-12mo	more than 12 mo
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5. Please list any staff members:**

who were especially helpful \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

who were especially difficult \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. What was the easiest part of the permitting process:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. What was the most frustrating part of the permitting Process:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. What suggestions would you make to improve our services:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please print (optional)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

May we call for follow-up information? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Thank you for your time and comments. Your opinion will make difference!

Please fold and seal this card and put into mail today.

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**Attachment-02**  
**Public Opinion Form, Building and Safety**

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County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency  
Christopher Stephens, Director

## Your Opinion is Valuable

Please take a minute to complete this questionnaire.

We expect our employees to serve the public with courtesy, respect and efficiency.

Please take a moment and let us know how we're doing.

Your responses will help us improve our service.

*Jim MacDonald, Building Official*

### Rate the Service That We Provided:

	Outstanding	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Promptness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 1. What Services Did You Request?

- ☐ Building Permit
- ☐ Electrical Permit
- ☐ Mechanical Permit
- ☐ Plumbing Permit
- ☐ Combination Permit
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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### 2. Please list any staff that were especially helpful to you:

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### Were there any that were especially difficult?

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### 3. Do You have any Suggestions for Improvement?

- ☐ Yes, they are: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Yes, but I would like to discuss them with a manager.
- ☐ No

### OVERALL

How would you rate our service?

Outstanding	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This Information is requested, but not required

Are you the Property Owner? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is your relationship to the owner?

- ☐ Professional Designer
- ☐ Contractor
- ☐ Agent

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time and comments. Your opinion counts!

Please fold this form and drop it in the mail today!

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**Attachment-03**  
**Public Opinion Form, Zoning**

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## Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division

### Your Opinion is Valuable

Please take a minute to complete this questionnaire.

We expect our employees to serve the public courteously and efficiently.

Please take a few minutes and let us know how we're doing.

Your responses will help us improve our service.

Kim Rodriguez, Director, Planning Division

#### 1. Rate today's visit:

	Outstanding	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Promptness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Reason(s) for your visit:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Septic Systems           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solid Waste         | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Water       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use            | <input type="checkbox"/> Reclaimed Water          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vector Control      | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Establishment       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Water Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Food-Special Event       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Connection    | <input type="checkbox"/> Underground Tank Control |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Waste            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____         |   |

2. If a staff member was especially helpful, please let us know so we may show our appreciation. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Suggestions for improvement:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### OVERALL

How would you rate our service?

Outstanding	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

Time of your visit \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want a manager to call you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

#### Optional Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time and comments. Your opinion will make a difference!**  
**Please drop this form in the Comment Box before you leave today.**

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