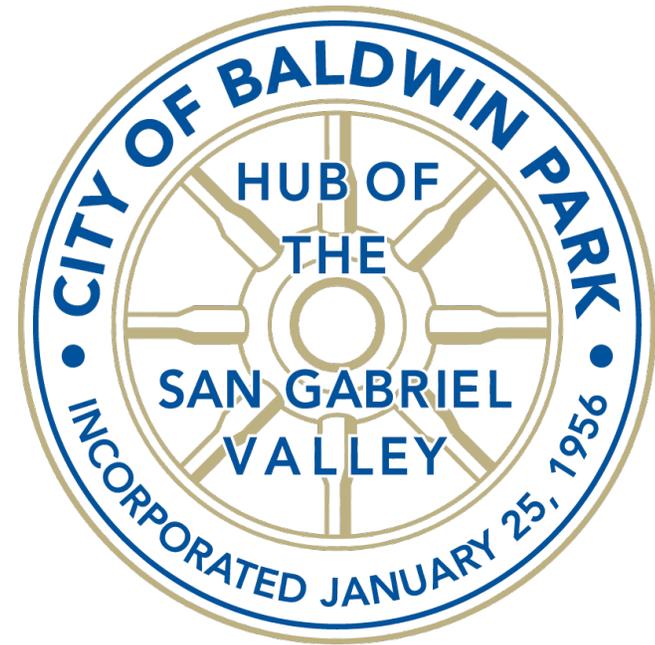


CITY OF BALDWIN PARK



CUSTOMER SERVICE MANUAL



Human Resources Department
Created August 2008

Vision Statement

“The Vision of Baldwin Park is to emerge as a leader in the San Gabriel Valley while preserving family and community values.”

Tips on Non-Verbal Communication

Studies reveal that in face-to-face communication over half of the information that a customer receives from you is non-verbal. Did you know that most often your body language reflects your true feelings more accurately than other means of personal communication? A few of the important non-verbal communication areas are:

HANDSHAKE

When shaking hands, offer a firm (but not overly firm!) handshake. During the handshake, always try to look the other person in the eye.

SMILES

Offer a smile. The old adage of “A smile is a curve that sets everything straight” is true! A smile seems to soothe and persuade.

GESTURES

Open gestures portray a receptive demeanor that tends to say, “I’m approachable.”

EYE CONTACT

Look at the customer when you speak to them. Your eyes are a strong reinforcement of your message.

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Front Counter Etiquette

- Front counter must be staffed by an employee at all times during work hours
- Front counter must be kept neat and orderly
- Only information that should be accessible to outside customers is allowed on front counters. NO information that is privy only to employees should be placed on the front counters
- When a customer approaches the front counter, acknowledge them with a standard greeting such as, “Good morning/Good afternoon. May I help you?”
- When a customer comes to the front counter, please help them to the best of your ability
- If the phone rings while helping a customer, inform the customer that you will assist them as soon as you can. Answer the phone within three (3) rings

MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of Baldwin Park is to provide superior city services distinguished by innovative ideas that promote family oriented neighborhoods and successful businesses that enhance the quality of life for our community.”

Electronic Mail

- E-mail is to be checked and responded to on a daily basis, when possible, but no less than every 24 hours (excluding weekends, holidays, sick or vacation days).
- Use the “Out of Office Assistant” if you will be gone from the office.

E-mail Etiquette Tips

- Keep it short and to the point
- Use proper punctuation and grammar
- Use “spell check”
- Separate text with paragraphs
- Address people by name
- Be polite and respectful
- Make the subject line specific
- Don’t type in all capital letters
- Don’t type in all lower case letters
- Use standard business fonts avoiding script
- Answer all asked questions
- Provide information by anticipating questions
- FW: Clean up forwards in the subject line
- Sign your message with your auto signature/title/ phone number
- Don’t send an email as a reaction when annoyed or angry- you might regret it!

Introduction

The City of Baldwin Park is committed to providing excellent customer service to our internal and external customers. As a City government, we will continue to place a high value on building partnerships with members of our community to assure their needs are met and will continue to deliver quality services they desire in the most effective manner possible.

This manual is intended to be a guide to all City employees.

Standards

As a city employee, please review these standards on a regular basis and incorporate each standard into your daily work activities.

Telephone Use

- Answer telephones within three (3) rings in a professional and courteous manner.
- Answer every call by greeting the customer with a good morning/afternoon, giving your name and City identity such as your department, division, or work function.
- Be conscientious of the length of time when placing a call on hold. If longer than 30 seconds, notify caller of your status.
- When transferring a caller, stay on the line until they are connected with the right person. Let them know or ask permission to transfer your customer. If voice mail answers, ask caller if they would like to leave a voice message or have you take a message.
- Use the City of Baldwin Park Telephone Directory when transferring calls.
- Do not give the perception of screening callers. Solicit sufficient information to answer their question, transfer them to the appropriate person, or take a message.
- Have staff available to answer phones and greet the public from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

Voice Messaging

- Update your voice mail greeting consistently to reflect any days away from work (i.e. vacation or conferences). Your greeting should inform the caller as to the staff member available to assist them in your absence, with the full phone number (not just extension number).
- Every voice mail message should provide callers with an extension they can dial to speak with support staff.
- Check voice mail messages a minimum of twice a day.
- Voice mail requests are to be responded to the same day, when possible, but not longer than 24 hours from receipt of message (excluding weekends, holidays, sick, or vacation days).

Tips on Handling the Telephone

Proper Telephone Techniques

- Know the features available on your telephone. Practice the use of transfer, hold and other features.
- Hold the transmitter directly in front of your mouth. If you don't, you risk being misunderstood.
- When available, consider using telephone headphones when answering large volume of calls. They will allow you to have "hands free" while talking to your customers and locating information for them.
- Never have side conversations while talking on the telephone. Your party deserves your full attention.
- When you place a caller on hold to answer another line, ask for permission and *wait for an answer*.
- When interacting with customers, use the LEA formula:
 - Listen- to the customer, ask questions to clarify their need.
 - Empathize- you may be the only contact with City government your customer will experience this year. Give that person your attention and concern.
 - Act- when you determine what the customer needs, act on it. Follow- up, if possible, with the customer to confirm they received the proper assistance.
- **Do not** share personal information about a co-worker with a customer:
 - "I'm sorry, but Mr. O'Neil is still at lunch."
 - "He left for a doctor's appointment."
 - "She went home early." Or "She's gone for the day"
 - "Mrs. Jones is on her coffee break."

Instead use statements such as "I'm sorry, but he is unavailable at the moment, may I be of assistance?"