



# City of Dallas

## Development Services Department

**TO:** Development Services Staff

**DATE:** June 1, 2022

**SUBJECT:** **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE 100**  
Customer Service and Communication

**CREATED BY:** Executive Team

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**PURPOSE:** As a way to improve customer communication and City service delivery, the Development Services Department (DEV) is establishing this new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

**SCOPE:** The DEV staff is committed to providing exceptional and responsive customer service. Therefore, it is critical for all staff to respond to phone calls and email correspondence in a timely manner.

Staff will respond to all internal and external customer correspondence within 24 hours or next business day. The management and leadership team will respond to City Council or the City Manager's Office immediately.

Staff will ensure that all electronic correspondence includes their email address, phone number, address location, department feedback survey link, appropriate job title, and in the format outlined by the Department. Staff shall not include personal quotes, images, political, or religious statements in their email signatures.

Automated replies shall only be used when a team member is out of the office. Team members shall utilize the, "Out of Office" feature, provide the name, email, and phone number of contact person who will be assisting customers in their absence. Staff shall not utilize the Call Center as the, "Out of Office" point of contact. Supervisors and Managers will ensure that appropriate coverage and point of contact is available to assist customers during staff absences. Please see example of an appropriate, "Out of Office" reply.

*"Thank you for your email. I am currently out of the office and will return on Monday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. In the interim, please feel free to reach out to Sr. Plan Reviewer, Vernon Young @ 214.123.4567 or at [vernon.young@dallascityhall.com](mailto:vernon.young@dallascityhall.com) for assistance"*

While referring customers to designated Department email boxes during the CVOID pandemic may have been appropriate, this method of communication will no longer be used. Staff will not automate email replies or leave voicemail answering messages with a list of mailboxes or exhaustive directives. Staff are expected to send personal email responses and return phone messages by providing the name, phone number, and email of the appropriate team member.

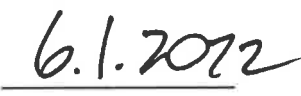
Supervisors and Managers are responsible for making sure customer follow up is occurring within the expected time frames and shall train staff on how to properly manage their daily work schedules to allow for dedicated time to follow up with customers. In addition, Supervisors and Managers shall issue this SOP to their staff and receive signed Acknowledgement Form from each staff member no later than one (1) week from receipt of this policy.

Exempt staff members will respond to emails and phone calls while on duty and must receive written approval from their immediate supervisor or manager to work outside of their normal work hours. Staff work hours shall not be flexed to avoid the payment of overtime and shall be compensated the appropriate overtime rate when more than forty hours per week are worked. At no time shall exempt team members perform any of the required correspondence or commutations without being compensated.

**Prepared By:** Development Services Executive Team

**Reviewed By:** Development Services Executive Team

**Approved By:**   
Andrew Espinoza, CBO, MCP, CCEA  
Director/Chief Building Official  
Development Services Department

  
**Date:**