

## Utility Company Customer Service Response Index – Overview

The New York State Department of Public Service has a broad mandate to ensure access to safe, reliable utility service at just and reasonable rates. The Department is the staff arm of the Public Service Commission. The Commission regulates the state's electric, gas, steam, telecommunications, and water utilities. The Commission also oversees the cable industry. The Commission is charged by law with responsibility for setting rates and ensuring that adequate service is provided by New York's utilities. In addition, the Commission exercises jurisdiction over the siting of major gas and electric transmission facilities and has responsibility for ensuring the safety of natural gas and liquid petroleum pipelines.

The Department of Public Service provides a variety of services to protect and assist utility customers. Its Office of Consumer Services assists consumers in resolving disputes with utilities. The Office also provides statistical information with regard to customer complaints and analyzes customer concerns and brings them to the attention of the Commission. There are several ways that consumers can contact the Department with complaints, inquiries or comments about their utility service. They can visit [www.dps.ny.gov](http://www.dps.ny.gov) to [file a complaint](#) or to review [complaint statistics](#), or [Ask-A-Question](#) about their utility service. Consumers can call the Helpline (for general complaints and inquiries) at 1-800-342-3377 (8:30 am - 4:00 pm), call the Competitive Energy Hotline (for complaints about Energy Service Companies) at 1-888-697-7728 (8:30 am - 4:00 pm), or call the Hotline (for terminations of gas or electric service) at 1-800-342-3355 (7:30 am - 7:30 pm). Consumers can also write to the Office of Consumer Services, NYS Department of Public Service, 3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223.

One of the ways the Department tracks utility performance is through the Customer Service Response Index (CSRI). This index identifies the current level of customer service and responsiveness delivered by each utility service provider under the Commission's jurisdiction with respect to consumer complaints filed with the Commission. The CSRI, which is reported in the Department's [Monthly Report on Consumer Complaint Activity](#), is determined by measuring four metrics. Complete CSRI data is posted on the first page of the report for those service providers that average ten or more initial complaints per month. For all other service providers, the performance in each area is reported on subsequent pages of the table, less the actual index measures because the index measures for companies with fewer than ten initial complaints have been found to show significant fluctuations on a month to month basis. These fluctuations may result in the reader reaching an inaccurate conclusion as to a service provider's performance. If a company is not listed on this report it is because there was no activity for the company in the reporting month. Below is an explanation of the data in each column.

**Initial Complaints** - This is the number of initial complaints we receive and forward to the utility company for resolution directly with the customer.

**Escalated Complaints** - This is the number of complaints that we escalated for further handling and investigation because the customer informed us that the utility failed to satisfy their initial complaint after we forwarded the initial complaint to the utility.

CSM Index - The Consumer Satisfaction Index scores the ratio of the number of initial complaints to the number of escalated complaints in the reporting month. A score of 5 points are awarded when a service provider receives no escalated complaints during the reporting month. There is no score awarded if a service provider satisfies less than 50% of the customers that the PSC refers to them.

Complaint Response Time - This is the average number of days it took for a utility to respond to initial complaints in the reporting month.

CRM Index - The Complaint Response Time Index scores the service providers responsiveness to initial complaints closed in the reporting month. A score of 2 points is awarded when a provider's average response time for initial complaints is 14 days or less. No points are earned if the average response time for initial complaints is more than 28 days (twice the acceptable reply standard).

E. Complaint Response Time - This is the average number of days it took for a utility to respond to escalated complaints in the reporting month.

ERM Index - The Escalated Complaint Response Time Index scores the service providers responsiveness to escalated complaints closed in the reporting month. A score of 2 points is awarded when a provider's average response time for escalated complaints is 10 days or less. No points are earned if the average response time for escalated complaints is more than 25 days (two weeks past due).

Avg. Age of Cases Pending - This is the average age of all the cases awaiting a response from the service provider.

PCM Index - The Pending Case Index scores the average age of all cases awaiting response by the service provider. A score of 1 point is awarded when a service providers' average age of all cases is 14 days or less. No points are earned if the average age of all cases exceeds 70 days (two months delinquent). A negative score is applied if the average age of all cases is over 70 days.

CSRI - The Customer Service Response Index is the overall score received by the service provider. It is the sum of the four indices.

The attached dataset identifies the metrics that comprise the Customer Service Response Index.