

# Case Study

## Los Angeles County, CA



### LA County DPSS Call Center Success at a Glance

- Access hours expanded from two hours/day to ten hours/day, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 pm.
- Self-service interactive voice response system adds 24/7 access to case information and program and emergency hotlines
- Three district offices now supported with a combined caseload of 122,000
- Monthly call volume: 80,000 of which 50,000 are offered to an agent and roughly 45,000 are handled by an agent
- Monthly tracking tickets: over 34,000
- Trained call center customer service representatives directly handle approximately 60% of inquiries
- Customer satisfaction survey rates are 99%
- District office lobby traffic reduced by 33%

## Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Embraces Lagan to Maintain Customer Service Center Leadership

### Challenge

With more than 10 million people, Los Angeles County is one of the largest counties in the United States. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) currently serves over 2.1 million participants each year and a caseload of over 1.1 million across its various public assistance programs. Through DPSS, the County provides a range of programs including CalWORKs (California's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program), Food Stamps, Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program), and General Relief. Eligibility determination for all of these programs is provided through a case management system called LEADER (Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination Evaluation and Reporting). With demand for these programs and the complexity of administering them ever growing, LA County's DPSS needed a solution that would increase case worker accessibility, improve operational efficiency and enhance the overall customer service experience.

### Solution

In August 2006, DPSS selected Lagan to implement a centralized customer service call center for approximately 86 eligibility workers designed to service the San Gabriel Valley District Office—the first wave of a planned enterprise roll-out that ultimately will touch approximately 6,000 case workers and 600-800 customer service representatives (CSRs).

The call center went live in January 2007, achieving a key project milestone early on – integration with the existing LEADER system – thanks to Lagan’s open interface toolkit. Lagan and LEADER created an interface that allowed case information to populate on the Lagan application and case comments to automatically populate on the LEADER system without re-typing the comments. CSRs have direct access to over a million eligibility case records in the County’s LEADER system while fielding live calls in a contact center environment. Later that year, the County added two more district offices, bringing the total number of cases serviced through the call center to 122,000. In January 2008, the County implemented a self-service component through an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system giving callers 24 hour access to case information, such as benefit amounts and case status, as well as emergency hotlines. A few months later, LA County DPSS upgraded the Lagan application to version 7, the latest version of Lagan’s Enterprise Case Management (ECM) product suite. The new version, in addition to various application enhancements, provides increased automation, further streamlining ticket routing to district offices, tracking and follow-up.

Through the call center, participants have access to service information Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. via an 800-number. Support is provided in four languages—English, Spanish, Mandarin and Vietnamese. As a result of a well-developed knowledgebase and system ease of use, approximately half of the calls received can be handled directly by the customer service center without the need to generate additional work for the case workers. The remaining calls are automatically routed via a tracking ticket to the district office for case worker follow-up. Supervisors have instant access to case files and can track progress in real time. Reports and notifications are automatically generated to inform supervisors where bottlenecks and issues may be occurring, making it far easier to manage the day-to-day work of the agency.

## **Results**

LA County DPSS deployed the solution in a fraction of the time it would have taken for a traditional solution; the initial phase of the project took less than six months from contract signature to implementation and rollout.

Today, the LA County DPSS customer service center receives about 60,000 calls per month, of which an average of 45,000 reach a customer service representative. Approximately half of the 34,000 tickets generated each month can be fielded by the 86 representatives in the call center. The remaining 17,000 tickets are sent to the appropriate district office for follow-up.

There were several key factors that have made the deployment of Lagan Human Services and the expanded customer service center capabilities a success: defining processes up front; encouraging involvement of case workers, supervisors, customer service representatives and the technology department throughout the process; garnering support and buy-in from top administrators; and fostering collaboration between Lagan and the County.

The successful collaboration between department and vendor was critical to reach the goal. Defining the business process along with input and feedback from users was integral to the success of the project and will ensure success though expansion.

Preliminary customer satisfaction surveys have yielded a 99% satisfaction rate and lobby traffic in the initial pilot district office (San Gabriel office) has dropped 33%. Through the centralized call center, participant access to case information has increased from two hours a day to ten hours a day. The self-service option ensures that more questions can be answered with a single phone call, with fewer visits to the district offices. The response, both internally and externally, has been excellent.

The net results:

- For staff, the opportunity to excel by providing more responsive and accurate guidance to participants
- For supervisors, higher levels of accountability since all data is being tracked in real time
- For the County, a highly cost-effective means of improving accessibility to services through the application of non-invasive technology
- For the participant, a completely new way of interacting with DPSS—one which saves trips to the district office and yields positive outcomes in shorter periods of time

Today, the customer service center handles calls for three of the line district offices. The goal is to expand support to handle calls for all 33 LA County district offices. Plans are also in place to extend the IVR system and expand county-wide with multiple full-service contact center locations serving as one virtual center. Longer term, the county seeks to incorporate other programs, additional customer service and hotline numbers, and internet-based automated services.

209 Airport Road West  
Belfast  
Co. Antrim  
Northern Ireland  
BT3 9EZ

T: 44 (0) 28 9078 8300  
F: 44 (0) 28 9078 8339  
E: [info@lagan.com](mailto:info@lagan.com)

KANA  
Siena Court  
Maidenhead  
SL6 1NJ  
United Kingdom

T: 44 (0) 16 2850 9006  
F: 44 (0) 16 2850 9119  
E: [info@lagan.com](mailto:info@lagan.com)

200 West Jackson  
Boulevard  
Suite 1350  
Chicago, IL 60606  
U.S.A.

T: 312-291-4176  
F: 312-291-4235  
E: [info\\_us@lagan.com](mailto:info_us@lagan.com)