

Memorandum

To: Honorable Jerome E. Horton, Chairman
Honorable Michelle Steel, Vice Chair
Honorable Betty T. Yee, First District
Senator George Runner (Ret.), Second District
Honorable John Chiang, Controller

Date: June 19, 2012

From: Jeffrey L. McGuire, Deputy Director
Sales and Use Tax Department (MIC 43)
David J. Gau, Deputy Director
Property and Special Taxes Department (MIC 63)
Todd Gilman, Chief
Taxpayers' Rights and Equal Employment
Opportunity Division (MIC 70)

Subject: Board Meeting June 25-27, 2012
Item P1- Executive Director's Report
Introduction of Proposed Customer Service Improvements Initiative

Please place this item on the Board's June 25 – 27, 2012 Sacramento meeting calendar under "P. Other Administrative Matters."

P. Other Administrative Matters

P1. Executive Director's Report.....Ms. Cazadd

3. Introduction of Proposed Customer Service Improvements Initiative..... Mr. McGuire/ Mr. Gau/ Mr. Gilman

JLM:dh

Attachment

cc: Ms. Regina Evans-Jarrett
Mr. Joel Angeles
Mr. Alan LoFaso
Mr. Sean Wallentine
Ms. Marcy Jo Mandel

Approved:
Kristine Cazadd
Executive Director



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Service Improvements Initiative

Excellent customer service is an essential part of the Board of Equalization's (BOE's) mission. It is the BOE's goal to treat all taxpayers with dignity, respect, and professionalism in order to fulfill the BOE's mission of serving the public through fair, effective, and efficient tax administration. The BOE remains committed to providing service of the highest quality to the public and has broadened its excellence in customer service through the following enhancements:

- Increased range of services tailored to the diverse needs of the state's businesses
- Redesigned multilingual webpages
- Expanded multilingual forms and publications
- Enhanced taxpayer and public outreach
- Expanded online educational and learning products

In line with the BOE's Ethics Policy, the BOE continually strives to employ a workforce that is committed to service and accountability to the public. The public's confidence can be maintained only to the extent that the BOE's activities and contacts with the public reflect the highest ethical and moral standards.

In accordance with the BOE's mission and Ethics Policy, we recommend the following actions be taken to help our employees achieve excellence in customer service through a "Customer Service Improvements Initiative" (Initiative). The Initiative includes but is not limited to the following goals and objectives:

- I. Clarify and enhance BOE strategies for taxpayer and customer service improvements.
 - Review current strategies.
 - Identify needed enhancements.
- II. Enhance BOE's Guidelines for Professional Conduct for employees.
 - Review current professional standards.
 - Identify needed enhancements.
- III. Develop a proposed "Customer Service Commitment" for Board adoption.
 - Draft a proposed "Customer Service Commitment" framed by BOE's Ethics Guidelines.
 - Incorporate best practices learned from other revenue agencies.
 - Develop a "Customer Service Commitment" video for our customers.
 - Develop a "Customer Service Commitment" poster for display in Headquarters and District Offices.
 - Develop "Customer Service Commitment" outreach material(s).
- IV. Develop and implement an employee Customer Service training program.
 - Retain an outside expert to develop and deliver a Customer Service training program.
 - Focus on cultural diversity and business etiquette.
 - Encourage interactive participation by attendees using mock situational practice scenarios.
 - Conduct post program evaluation of the training effectiveness.

With your support, we recommend moving forward with this Initiative and propose placement under the jurisdiction of the BOE's Customer Service and Administrative Efficiency Committee.

During the August 2012 Board meeting, the Deputy Directors of the Sales and Use Tax Department and Property and Special Taxes Department and the Taxpayers' Rights Advocate will provide an update on their progress.

Customer Service Improvements Initiative Project Sponsors and Project Team

| <u>Project Sponsors</u> | <u>Project Team*</u> | <u>Executive Office Contact</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Jeff McGuire | Susanne Buehler – Lead (SUTD) | Sid Matsumoto |
| David Gau | Lynn Bartolo (PSTD) | |
| Todd Gilman | Randy Ferris (Legal) | |
| | Liz Houser (Administration) | |
| | Mary Tompkins (Administration) | |
| | Jaime Garza (External Affairs) | |
| | Christina Herrera (External Affairs) | |
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| *Project Team members may request supplemental staff assistance based on project requirements. | | |

Customer Service Improvements Initiative Workplan

| Task | Date (week of) | Responsible Parties |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| Develop High Level Project Description. | 5/21 | Sid Matsumoto |
| Initial meeting to determine project scope. | 5/21 | Sid Matsumoto |
| Form Team of Subject Matter Experts (Project Team) and draft Workplan. | 6/4 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman |
| Customer Service Improvements Initiative Executive Summary and Workplan placed on June 2012 Board Agenda. | 6/13 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman |
| Customer Service Improvements Initiative Executive Summary and Workplan presented to Board Members at June 2012 meeting for consideration and direction. | 6/25 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman |
| Kickoff Meeting to refine deliverables under project scope and detail Workplan with Project Team. | 7/2 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman Project Team* |
| Extrapolate key principles of BOE's Ethics Guidelines for professional conduct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review current professional standards. ➤ Identify needed enhancements and best practices for application. | 7/2 | Project Team* |
| Clarify and enhance BOE strategies for taxpayer and customer service improvements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review current strategies. ➤ Identify needed enhancements. | 7/2 | Project Team* |
| Develop a proposed "Customer Service Commitment" for Board adoption. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft a proposed "Customer Service Commitment" framed by BOE's Ethics Guidelines. ➤ Incorporate best practices learned from other revenue agencies. ➤ Develop a "Customer Service Commitment" video for our customers. | 7/18 | Project Team* |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop “Customer Service Commitment” posters/banners for display in Headquarters and District Offices. ➤ Develop “Customer Service Commitment” outreach material(s). | | |
| <p>Develop and prepare for Board approval an employee Customer Service training program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Retain an outside expert to develop and deliver a Customer Service training program. ➤ Include focus on cultural diversity and business etiquette to enhance communication with various ethnicities. ➤ Encourage interactive participation by staff attendees in mock situational practice scenarios. ➤ Conduct post program evaluation of the training effectiveness. | 7/18 | Project Team* |
| <p>Project Sponsors submit project update to Executive Director and Board Members that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft of proposed “Customer Service Commitment” ➤ Status update for “Customer Service Commitment” video and posters/banners ➤ Draft Customer Service Training Program | 8/20 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman |
| <p>Project Sponsors submit final project report to Executive Director and Board Members.</p> | 11/12 | Jeff McGuire David Gau Todd Gilman |