



# TEXAS STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING EXAMINERS

TSBPE  *Protecting the health and safety of Texans since 1947*

**TEXAS STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING EXAMINERS**

**REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE**

**SUBMITTED May 31, 2020**

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## Report on Customer Service

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### **Inventory of External Customers Served and Description of Services Rendered**

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) external customers include the licensees and registrants that it regulates, as well as the general public. Although customers of primary services were selected from each strategy, it is important to note that the majority of TSBPE's customers utilize services from more than one, and sometimes all strategies. The Agency considered that most of the individuals completing the survey were responding to their experiences with TSBPE for services provided in more than one strategy.

#### Strategy A.1.1. Examine and License Plumbers

The external customers under this strategy are primarily applicants for examination and registration; and the licensees and registrants who renew their licenses, registrations and endorsements. The agency serves these customers by administering examinations, issuing and renewing licenses, registrations and endorsements.

#### Strategy A.1.3. Inspections and Enforcement

The external customers under this strategy are primarily individuals who file complaints with the agency and those who had complaints filed against them. Additionally, external customers of this strategy would be those individuals, regulated or unregulated, who are visited during compliance checks. TSBPE serves these customers by receiving and investigating consumer complaints, monitoring plumbing job sites to ensure compliance, issuing administrative penalties to alleged violators, suspending and revoking licenses, reviewing criminal histories of applicants, assisting local authorities with the enforcement of the Plumbing License Law, and by monitoring required Plumber's Continuing Education Classes.

#### Strategy A.1.4. Consumer Education and Public Awareness

The external customers under this strategy are individuals in the general public who may be considering plumbing as a possible career option. Staff provides consumer education and public awareness to groups around the State to disseminate information in order to achieve a social media presence to further community outreach and public awareness. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, large gatherings are not permitted at this time and therefore no surveys were collected.

### Strategy B.1.1. Indirect Administration

The external customers under this strategy are primarily individuals who request open records or attend open meetings of the Board; and Continuing Professional Education Providers and Instructors that are approved by the Board and users of our online application software. TSBPE serves these customers by providing open government and performing the administrative functions of the Agency.

## **Information-Gathering Methods Utilized in Obtaining Input from Customers**

### Strategy A.1.1. Examine and License Plumbers

During the month of February 2020, the Examination Department randomly surveyed examination candidates testing for all types of examinations given by TSBPE. Dates for the distribution of surveys were randomly selected and all examinees testing on those days were surveyed. The surveys were given directly to the examinee upon completion of their examination and were to be completed and returned to staff other than Examination staff. The paper survey was given to **100** examination applicants, including Master Plumber examinees, Journeyman Plumber examinees, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensee examinees, Plumbing Inspector examinees, Medical Gas Endorsement examinees, Water Supply Protection Specialist Endorsement examinees, and Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist Endorsement examinees. Of the **100** paper surveys distributed, **6** responses were received.

During the month of February 2020, the License and Renewal Department randomly surveyed licensees and registrants who renewed their license or registration. During the February renewal process, renewal applicants from each category of licensees and registrants who renewed were sent surveys. The surveys were mailed to the licensees and registrants along with their renewed license or registration, and included a postage-paid self-addressed envelope for returning the survey. A portion of the surveys were also handed out to our walk-in customers. The paper survey was provided to **126** renewal applicants, including Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, and Plumber's Apprentices. Of the **126** paper surveys distributed, **33** responses were received.

### Strategy A.1.2. Inspections and Enforcement

During the month of February 2020, the Enforcement Department randomly surveyed individuals who had filed complaints and/or who had complaints filed against them; and individuals who were monitored for compliance checks with the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules. A report of complaints closed within the previous ninety-day period was generated and complainants and respondents were randomly selected and mailed a survey that included a postage-paid self-addressed envelope for returning the survey. The survey was mailed to **90** individuals who had filed a complaint that had been resolved in the previous 120-day period and **90** individuals who had complaints filed against them that had been resolved in the previous 120-day period. Of the **180** surveys distributed, **23** responses were received.

Additionally, during one week in February 2020, Field Investigators handed out surveys at random to individuals who were monitored during compliance checks. The survey included a postage-paid self-addressed envelope for returning the survey. Surveys were handed out to **160** individuals who were monitored during compliance checks. Of the **160** surveys distributed, **18** responses were received, for a total of **41 surveys** returned for the Enforcement Department.

The agency has a new strategy for Fiscal Year 2020 for Consumer Education and Public Awareness. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the amount of individuals assisted was less than anticipated and were counted within the Enforcement strategy.

#### Strategy B.1.1. Indirect Administration

During the months of March and May 2020, the Administration Department randomly surveyed individuals who had requested open records, attended open meetings and Continuing Professional Education Providers approved by the Board. A random selection of individuals, who requested open records via email during May 2020 were e-mailed surveys to complete. During the March 2020 Board meeting, surveys were distributed to individuals who had not already been sent a survey as part of the above described group. The survey was distributed to **5** individuals who had requested open records and **10** individuals who had attended the open meeting. Of the **15** surveys distributed, **10** responses were received.

In addition to the traditional paper surveys, TSBPE deployed a mass electronic survey to its licensees and registrants that regularly communicate through email and through our online licensing program. These are customers that are provided a variety of services the Agency offers including help with our online software program for renewals, various applications and license verifications. This population selection included all license and registration types as well as plumbing company office management. The electronic survey was sent to **14,423** e-mail addresses. Of the surveys sent electronically, **1,223** were completed. To get an even broader view of the customer service we provide, the same survey was also sent specifically to plumbing company's office management, owners and Responsible Master Plumbers.

### **Survey Results**

#### Number of surveys distributed:

Examination	100
Renewals	126
Enforcement	340
<u>Administration</u>	<u>14,438</u>
(Includes Electronic surveys)	
<b>Total Distributed</b>	<b>15,004</b>

Number of responses received:

Examination	6
License/Renewals	33
Enforcement	41
Administration	1,233
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>1,313</b>

**Overall response rate: 8.8%**

**Customer Category**

Responses received from licensees or registrants of the Board:	1,154
Responses received from non-licensees: <b>(Includes registrants not yet licensed)</b>	159
Responses from individuals who had experiences with Examination:	105
Responses from individuals who had experiences with Renewal/Registration:	950
Responses from individuals who had experiences with Enforcement:	54
Responses from individuals who had experiences with Administration:	1,233

*Note: Many of the individuals responding to the survey had experiences with more than one category of service.*

**Levels of customer-determined service quality**

TSBPE’s survey consisted of statements that respond to the seven customer service quality elements required by statute. Data from the surveys of each customer category was compiled. An answer of “not applicable” was counted when the respondent overlooked or did not answer a specific question.

The following chart shows a brief description of the questions and responses TSBPE’s customers were asked to rate, and the general overall results of each response:

<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
<b>General/Overall Satisfaction</b>	605	478	55	42	8
<b>Communication:</b>					
Proper routing of call, e-mail or letter	523	393	44	24	125
Clear explanations regarding services or procedures	531	382	51	20	114
Received necessary information to obtain services	583	415	43	22	71
<b>Complaint Process:</b>					
Knowledge of procedure for filing complaint	453	471	101	26	57
Believe that complaint would be handled in a reasonable manner	398	482	106	60	58
<b>Timeliness of Service:</b>					
Telephone call, letter or email answered within a reasonable time	414	372	69	48	172
Time waited to receive services was reasonable	423	394	76	55	141
Time waited for concern to be addressed was reasonable	346	339	68	45	195
<b>Website:</b>					
Access to Internet	721	312	13	5	29
Ease of use/organized	473	428	114	25	31
Current and accurate information	538	464	33	8	44
Ability to find contact information	488	408	36	15	37

<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
<b>Staff:</b>					
Staff answered questions	470	339	31	22	223
Staff was courteous, knowledgeable and willing to assist	484	305	32	20	219
Staff identified themselves	477	322	16	15	227

<b>Facility:</b>					
Board office is conveniently located	288	339	163	73	196
Facility is clean and orderly	386	344	14	6	302
Facility is open during reasonable hours	393	411	25	5	223
<b>Printed Information:</b>					
Received printed information explaining services available	288	313	140	55	199
Printed information was clear and understandable	335	333	58	19	305
Printed materials provided thorough and accurate information	340	322	57	18	296

### **Analysis of Findings Identified by the Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

The results of the survey show that **82.5%** of those who responded strongly agree or agree that they are satisfied with services they received and their experience with the Agency. The comments received indicate that **21.4%** of those responding do not have access to the internet or do not wish to have it. This survey was much larger than those previously performed. However, TSBPE continues to increase its performance measure related to the use of online applications. The overall online applications processed currently are at **87.9%**. This response indicates that the use of the internet by TSBPE's customers has increased as anticipated but there are many that still prefer pen and paper.

Additional results of the survey indicate that **9.9%** of those who responded indicate they are not satisfied with the amount of time required to receive services from the Agency.

Even though this represents a small percentage, TSBPE will continue to work harder to maintain a prompt level of service while working with an ever increasing work load. Of those that responded to the survey, **9.7%** indicated they did not know the procedure for filing a complaint. **12.6%** do not believe a complaint would be handled in a reasonable manner if they needed to file. The agency continues to place an emphasis on efforts to educate licensees, registrants and the public regarding the complaint process and the Agency’s enforcement authority. The Executive Director and department managers have reviewed the results of the surveys received and will monitor for improvement in any areas identified requiring improvement, as well as areas of the Agency rated exceptionally well.

**Performance Measures Related to Customer Service Standards and Customer Satisfaction (FY 2020)**

**Outcome Measures:**

Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received: **82.5%**

Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery: **9.3%**. Each recommendation or concern will be addressed individually.

**Output Measures:**

Total Customers Surveyed	<b>15,004</b>
Response Rate	<b>8.8%</b>
Total Customers Served	<b>83,923*</b>

**Efficiency Measures:**

Cost Per Customer Surveyed	<b>\$ 0.098</b>
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**Explanatory Measures:**

Total Customers Identified	<b>107,458**</b>
Total Customer Groups Inventoried	<b>4</b>

\* The estimated unduplicated number of individuals who are current and/or renewable licensees and registrants, examination applicants, complainants, complaint respondents, requestors of open records and general information, attendees of open meetings, education providers and education material publishers.

\*\*The estimated duplicated number of individuals who are current and/or renewable licensees and registrants, plumbing company owners, insurance providers, approved examination applicants, unapproved examination/registrant applicants, complainants, complaint respondents, education providers, education instructors, education material publishers, requestors of open records and general information, and attendees of open meetings.