



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY



# FORWARD FROM GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL



As Governor of the State of New York, I am pleased to unveil our state’s new customer experience strategy—a groundbreaking approach aimed at transforming how residents access services and benefits from the state. I first announced our commitment to this important priority in my 2023 State of the State address as part of an overall plan to make government work better for New Yorkers. This strategy, coined the New York Experience (NYX), underscores our unwavering commitment to placing the needs and experiences of our customers at the forefront of agency operations by enhancing performance, reducing waste, ensuring equity, and responding more effectively to the diverse needs of all New Yorkers.

The way we interact with our government should reflect the values we uphold—respect, efficiency, and accessibility. I have appointed New York’s first Chief Customer Experience Officer, Tonya Webster, to oversee the implementation of this strategy to ensure that encounters with state services meet the high standards our residents deserve.

Our strategy focuses on three key pillars:

1. **Customer-Centric Design:** By listening to our residents and understanding their needs, we will design services that are intuitive and responsive. We aim to streamline processes and provide clear, accessible pathways for all residents to interact with their government.
2. **Innovative Solutions:** We are committed to leveraging modern technologies and data-driven insights to improve service delivery. This means adopting digital tools and innovative practices that simplify access to information and services.
3. **Commitment to Excellence:** Upholding a culture of commitment to excellence and accountability is essential. We will implement rigorous performance standards and foster continuous improvement to ensure that our services are reliable and effective.

This strategy is not merely a vision for better government; it is a practical roadmap for making our state a leader in public service. It reflects our pledge to listen, innovate, and deliver, ensuring that every resident feels valued and heard.

I invite every member of our government and community to embrace this strategy. Together, let us build a state where every interaction with our government is a testament to our dedication to service and our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all.

Thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration as we embark on this exciting journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy Hochul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York

# MISSION

In today's fast-paced and digitally connected world, the expectations of New Yorkers are rapidly evolving as they demand transparent and personalized interactions with their government. For state agencies, this shift in expectations presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Prioritizing customer experience is not just about improving service delivery; it is about fundamentally transforming the relationship between the government and New Yorkers.

The Office of Customer Experience was established in 2023 with the objective to champion a customer-centric culture and transform the way New York residents access services and benefits from the state. This new office will prioritize service delivery and serve as a model for the state to advance our customer experience agenda.



## Goals

New York State's (NYS) commitment to a customer-centric government is more than a promise—it's a transformative journey that will benefit every customer, making government services more accessible, efficient, and responsive. Our goals are to:

- **Closing Enrollment Gaps:** Ensuring that government services are easily accessible to all New Yorkers, regardless of their location, socioeconomic status, or abilities. This includes simplifying our processes, offering services through multiple channels (i.e. online, in-person, phone), and ensuring that services are user-friendly.
- **Reducing the "Time Tax":** Giving time back to New Yorkers by simplifying lengthy government processes and applications, eliminating unnecessary steps to receiving services, and removing bureaucratic hurdles wherever possible to give time back to people.
- **Enhancing Operational Efficiency:** Streamlining government processes to reduce wait times, minimize red tape, and make services more efficient.
- **Improving the Digital Experience:** Improving the quality of interactions that people have with our online platforms. We will make digital interfaces more user and mobile friendly, intuitive, and responsive.
- **Increasing Customer Satisfaction:** Advancing the overall service delivery experience by making it more personalized, responsive, and aligned with a New Yorker's needs and expectations.

# OBJECTIVES

## SHORT TERM ▶ 6 Month Objectives



Agencies will standardize how they gather and measure customer experience feedback and identify key customer pain points to act on for improvements.



Agencies will review and update policies that create bureaucratic hurdles for those who use their services and will track the impact of those changes.



All projects with a customer-facing scope will incorporate human-centered design in the project's research, development, and implementation phases.



A New York State customer experience website will provide information and resources to all agencies on the customer experience strategy ([experience.ny.gov](http://experience.ny.gov)).

## MEDIUM TERM ▶ 12 Month Objectives



All new customer-facing communications from agencies will adhere to Plain Language Standards.



Agencies will prepare Customer Service Standards, including a 12-month training and rollout plan.



Governance, including a newly formed Task Force and Working Group, will lead and implement the NYX Strategy.



Agencies will create a customer-centric rewards and recognition program for employees.

### Critical State Service Providers

While all NYS agencies can use and implement the pillars of Customer Experience; three specific agencies will be the initial focus. The Office of Customer Experience has designated these agencies as Critical State Service Providers (CSSPs). CSSPs will be specifically required to implement this strategy and adhere to the NYX guidelines for the State of New York. CSSPs provide services with significant public impact, either due to a large customer base or critical service effects for New York.

### Critical State Service Providers

**Department of Health (DOH)**

**Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)**

**Department of Labor (DOL)**

**Critical State Service Providers (CSSPs):** Integrate customer experience improvements into the operations of three CSSPs: DMV, DOL, and DOH.

- **NYX Action Plan & Annual Report:** CSSPs will be review and update their policies and customer experience practices and file an annual report with the Office of Customer Experience by July 31st of each year. The NYX action plan will detail the CSSPs customer experience priorities, identify agency process improvements, and establish relevant metrics that support the five key areas mentioned above.
- **Employee Training:** CSSPs will embed customer experience trainings into employee development programs (i.e. human centered design, customer experience principles and how they apply in government, communication skills, and effective problem solving).
- **Digital & Mobile-Friendly First:** The Office of Customer Experience will collaborate with CSSPs to enhance digital capabilities including the development of user and mobile friendly websites and online service portals.
- **Human Centered Design:** CSSPs will implement systems to collect and analyze customer feedback about the services provided. They will also facilitate customer feedback mechanisms such as surveys to gather input from customers their experience with agency services. These insights should be used by the agency to identify and act on areas for improvement.
- **Accessibility:** Agencies will work to ensure services are appropriately tailored to New York's diverse population, promote cultural and generational competency, equity, ensure compliance with language access requirements, and develop targeted outreach programs to inform underserved communities about available state services and support.
- **Measure & Report Impact:** CSSPs will monitor, evaluate, and report on customer experience performance using metrics and public feedback. This information will help agencies understand public perceptions on how we deliver services to them. This voice of the customer data should also be used to make data-driven decisions on the agency's NYX strategy and action plans that drive improved outcomes for New Yorkers.



To support state agencies in adopting and implementing the NYX strategy, the Office of Customer Experience has launched the **NYX website** [experience.ny.gov](https://experience.ny.gov). This resource hub includes playbooks, templates, and best practices designed to help agencies integrate customer experience into the state's daily operations. You will also find case studies from across New York and insights to guide you through improving agency processes and service delivery.

A **NYX Task Force** is being established to ensure senior agency leaders are actively involved in sharing best practices, agency action plans, and outcomes. This group will meet quarterly with agendas curated to focus on high impact opportunities to improve the ways that we operate and to help prioritize inter-agency initiatives that have a have high impact for New Yorkers.

## CONCLUSION

New York's first customer experience strategy produces a framework for breaking down the silos in government that are barriers to accessing state services. The strategy presented is vital for transforming how government services are delivered and perceived. By prioritizing the needs and experiences of our residents, we can create a more efficient, accessible, and responsive government.

This strategy ensures that all interactions with state services are seamless, intuitive, and satisfactory, thereby enhancing public trust and engagement. It is through these efforts that we can build a more inclusive and supportive government that not only meets but exceeds the expectations of those we serve.





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