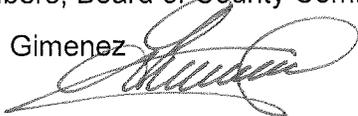


Memorandum



Date: September 19, 2014

To: Honorable Chairwoman, Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: Secret Shopper Program - Directive 132597

The following information is provided in response to Resolution R-144-14, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on February 4, 2014, directing the Mayor or Mayor's designee to develop a plan for the creation of a secret shopper program to monitor and improve customer service to our residents.

In 2001, the Secret Shopper Program (Program) was created to evaluate the County's customer service to the public. Originally managed by the Office of Performance Improvement, which later merged with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Secret Shopper Program measured the public's satisfaction of County services by using County employees volunteered by the Departments to conduct secret shops. The program was structured to evaluate service in the same manner as the public experiences it, i.e. through telephone and in-person shops as well as exit interviews of actual customers. Departments were provided with an annual report of the results from the shops. Approximately 21,000 shopping experiences were conducted through the life of the program.

In February 2006 the program was transferred from the Office of Management and Budget to Government Information Center, presently, Community Information and Outreach (CIAO). At the time, the program was redesigned to outsource the data collection to Florida International University's Metropolitan Center and assign CIAO's Strategic Customer Research and Development Unit to manage the program. This approach produced an unbiased, timely analysis of the customer experience through targeted secret shops in similar fashion, by telephone and in-person. It also provided thorough analysis, reports and recommendations to improve service. FIU's deliverables included 400 telephone shops and 75 in-person shops per month as well as a report and data file of the outcomes from the shops.

The prior Administration in fiscal year 2009-2010 implemented mid-year targeted reductions to include the elimination of the Strategic Customer Research and Development Unit which eliminated the administration of the Secret Shopper Program. Prior to being eliminated, the program was administered by the equivalent of one full time position valued at \$100,000, and the cost for the outsourced services for FIU was \$97,000.

The proposed plan for the re-implementation of the Secret Shopper program involves the following:

- Identify a funding source for the program to include staffing levels
- Identify and secure an outside entity to conduct phone and in-person shops
- Develop a matrix of County Departments and customer service points
- Develop a customer service quality monitoring tool specific to each service point
- Establish benchmarks and performance standards for each customer service point
- Establish a timeline for the program and action plan for volume/type of shops for each department
- Communicate program guidelines and implementation plan to all Department Directors
- Establish a mechanism for review and measure of customer service improvements

Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners
Page 2

While this program is valuable and worthwhile, identifying and securing funding for this effort is essential before proceeding with any actionable plan.

If you have questions, please contact Henry F. Sorí, Director, Community Information and Outreach, at 305-375-5527.

- c. Robert A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Department Directors
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor
Christopher Agrippa, Clerk of the Board