

Annual Report to City Council by 311

Date: May 3, 2021

To: General Government and Licensing Committee

From: Director, 311 Toronto

Wards: All

SUMMARY

City Council, at its meeting on September 30, 2020, requested the Director, 311 Toronto, to provide information on trending issues received via 311 Toronto (311).

The purpose of this report is to provide an understanding of 311's services and trends received for the year of 2020 in order to better inform Members of Council and the residents of Toronto about the services and operations provided by 311 and City divisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, 311 Toronto recommends that:

1. The General Government & Licensing Committee receive this report for information

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on September 30, October 1 and 2 2020, City Council adopted MM24.11 "Annual report to City Council by 311", which directed the Director, 311 Toronto to submit an annual update report to the General Government and Licensing Committee outlining important service issues and trends. The motion also recommended that the Director, 311 Toronto send a quarterly Briefing Note to all City Councillors summarizing quarterly trends and findings from a 311 perspective.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.MM24.11>

COMMENTS

311 provides residents, businesses and visitors with easy access to non-emergency City services, programs and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 311 can offer assistance in more than 180 languages and via multiple channels, such as, phone, email, online, mobile application.

311 responds to general inquiry calls, which represents approximately 70% of its contacts, and has the ability to initiate and track service requests, representing 30% of contacts, from the public for identified sections within select integrated service divisions; they are, Solid Waste Management Services, Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Municipal Licensing & Standards, Toronto Animal Services and Urban Forestry.

Phone Channel

311's phone channel target Service Level (SL) is to respond to 80% of calls within 75 seconds. In 2020, 311 responded to 1.24 million phone channel customer contacts and achieved a SL just above target at 82% on average, as referenced in the 311 Toronto Key Metrics Report within the appendix.

Over the past three years, 311 has seen a steady increase of 9% in phone channel contact volume which accounts for 89% of all channels. In 2020, 311 had an increase of 0.13 million more phone channel customer contacts from 2019.

Table 1: 2020 & 2019 Calls Handled

Year	Calls Handled	Calls Handled within the SL Standard of 75 Seconds	SL Target Achieved
2020	1.24 Million	1.01 Million	82%
2019	1.11 Million	0.90 Million	81%

Email Channel

Incoming emails to 311 are triaged within 72 hours of receipt by a 311 Customer Service Representative (CSR). An additional level of triaging automatically filters emails for key words that may indicate an immediate response is required and are placed in priority sequence.

311 has seen less volume from its email channel. In comparison to 2019, 2020 volume dropped by 4,934 emailed requests. It's important to note that the 311 email channel was inaccessible at the onset of the State of Emergency being called, i.e. March and April 2020, which contributes to the decline in the 2020 volumes.

Online Service Requests (SRs) Submissions

A combined 31,856 SRs were submitted via Toronto.ca and the 311 Application Programming Interface (API), or mobile applications, and accounted for approximately 8% of SRs submitted over all 311's service channels.

Due to City services being reduced to essential services at the onset of the pandemic, starting in March of 2020, 311 disabled its online channel; therefore, 311's online SRs and knowledge base were unavailable to the public from March to June 2020. As a result, 311 saw 15,743 less online and mobile submissions than in 2019. 311's API feed was also disabled and was only available for the months of January, February and most of March.

Table 2: 2020 & 2019 Online SR Submissions for Toronto.ca and the 311 API

Year	Web Channel (Toronto.ca)	Mobile Channel (311 API)	Total SR volume via Online Channel
2020	31,849	7	31,856
2019	47,592	303	47,895

COVID-19 Response

On March 17, 2021 a State of Emergency was declared in Ontario, and City services were reduced to essential services only. As a result, 311 took thousands of inquiries related to COVID-19 restrictions and reduced non-essential services whilst continuing to submit Service Requests for essential services.

In comparison of customer contacts from 2019 and 2020, 311 saw a 2% monthly average increase, equating to approximately 2000 more calls handled per month. Even though the City's service were reduced to 20%, 311 submitted approximately 353,000 essential SRs. Additional details can be viewed within the 311 Toronto Key Metrics Report within the appendix.

Working Remotely

To ensure 311 could still meet SL targets and comply with health and safety guidelines, teleworking, or remote working, was introduced for call centre staff. In 2020, 311 trained over 200 staff, including supervisors, coordinators, customer service representatives and redeployed staff, to work remotely; more than 60% were trained in the first two months of the declaration of the state of emergency.

CONTACT

Gary A. Yorke, Director, 311 Toronto, 416-338-7789
Gary.A.Yorke@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Gary A. Yorke
Director, 311 Toronto

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – 311 Toronto Key Metrics Report