Performance Audit:
ATL311

October 2024

City Auditor's Office

City of Atlanta

File #24.02

CITY OF ATLANTA
City Auditor's Office
Amanda Noble, City Auditor
404.330.6750

October 2024

Performance Audit:

ATL311

Why We Did This Audit

The city implemented ATL311 in 2014 to function as the primary phone number for government information and non-emergency services. We undertook this audit to assess the effectiveness of operations, including staffing and scheduling.

What We Recommended

To enhance call center operations and improve the customer experience, the customer service commissioner should:

- at least annually review workload requirements to determine the optimal number of staff
- enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day
- implement accessibility methods to ensure employees and the public with differing accessibility needs have equitable access to information
- offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions

To prevent loss of city-owned equipment, the human resources commissioner should:

- update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination

For more information regarding this report, please use the "contact" link on our website at www.atlaudit.org

What We Found

ATL311 plans to implement a customer relationship management system by the fourth quarter of 2024. This new system will be integrated with other city department systems to offer a more seamless customer experience. ATL311 staff confirmed that departments with integrated systems will be able to engage and view real-time updates during the life cycle of the case.

We found that staff has met or exceeded most of its metrics from January 2023 to early 2024; however, staff told us that staffing levels were not optimal. In December 2023, ATL311 had 43 vacant positions in Customer Service, and most vacancies were in customer service representative positions. A previous workload analysis, completed in 2021, was based on call volume and did not appear to consider the staffing level needed to meet the department's performance targets.

ATL311 could improve its compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Staff told us that the call center discontinued teletypewriter (TTY) or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) services under the former Customer Service Commissioner because it was rarely used. We also found that not all communications have been translated. ATL311's videos are only offered in English and its frequently asked questions page appears as an image that cannot be interpreted by the Google language feature.

ATL311 did not enforce the city's employee exit policy. Between January 2022 and December 2023, about 74% (54 of 73) of separated employees took two business days and up to 35 business days to return city equipment. In one instance, a separated employee had not returned issued equipment. The city's telework agreement establishes parameters for working remotely; however, the agreement does not include language that addresses equipment return post-employment with the city, which may pose a potential risk to the city's ability to safeguard its assets.

Management Responses to Audit Recommendations

Summary of Management Responses		
Recommendation #1: We recommend that the customer service commissioner at least annually review workload requirements with consideration to calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands to determine the optimal number of staff to meet these requirements without difficulty.		
Auditee Response: Agree	**Status:** Partly Implemented	**Estimated Completion Date (M/Y):** 01/25
Recommendation #2: We recommend that the customer service commissioner enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day.		
Auditee Response: Partially Agree	**Status:** Started .	**Estimated Completion Date (M/Y):** 10/24
Recommendation #3: We recommend that the customer service commissioner implement accessibility methods to ensure employees and the public with differing accessibility needs have equitable access to information.		
Auditee Response: Agree	**Status:** Started	**Estimated Completion Date (M/Y):** TBD
Recommendation #4: We recommend that the customer service commissioner offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions.		
Auditee Response: Agree	**Status:** Started	**Estimated Completion Date (M/Y):** 10/24
Recommendation #5: We recommend that the human resources commissioner update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination.		
Auditee Response: Disagree	**Status:** Started	**Estimated Completion Date (M/Y):** 10/24

CITY OF ATLANTA

AMANDA NOBLE
City Auditor
anoble@atlantaga.gov

STEPHANIE JACKSON
Deputy City Auditor
sjackson@atlantaga.gov

CITY AUDITOR'S OFFICE
68 MITCHELL STREET SW, SUITE 12100
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-0312
http://www.atlaudit.org
(404) 330-6452
FAX: (404) 658-6077

October 3, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

We undertook this audit to assess the effectiveness of ATL311's operations because ATL311 saw an overall increase in call volume, while the percentage of calls handled declined during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ATL311 plans to address concerns about transparency in resolving customer requests with the implementation of its new customer relationship management system in the fourth quarter of 2024. ATL311 management agreed with three of the recommendations and partially agreed with one recommendation, which focus on conducting annual workload review to ensure optimal staffing levels enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day, implement accessibility methods to ensure employees and the public with differing accessibility needs have equitable access to information offer translated communications for various sources. Human resources management disagreed with the recommendation to update the city's telework agreement and proposed that ATL311 collaborate with AIM to develop an employee equipment acknowledgment statement, to be signed by employees when they are issued city equipment.

The Audit Committee has reviewed this report and is releasing it in accordance with Article 2, Chapter 6 of the City Charter. We sent a draft report to ATL311 management on August 6, 2024, and received their response on September 30, 2024. We sent a draft report to Human Resources management on September 25, 2024, and received their response on October 24, 2024. We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation of city staff throughout the audit. The team for this project was Myra Hagley, Anijarae Dade, and Zoë Geiger.

Amanda Noble
City Auditor

Danielle Hampton
Chair, Audit Committee

ATL311

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Background 1
ATL311 Is an Omni-Channel Non-Emergency Customer Service Line 1
ATL311 Uses ServiceNow to Track Calls 4
Back-Office Representatives Handle Most Service Escalations 5
Four Divisions Support Customer Service Operations 5
ATL311 Call Center Has Extended Hours for Live Agents 8
ATL311 Tracks Call Center Representative Performance 9
ATL311 Performance Metrics Align with the Mayor's Initiatives 11
Most Calls Were Related to Watershed, Public Works, and Municipal Court 12
Audit Objectives 14
Scope and Methodology 15
Findings and Analysis 17
Process Changes Could Improve Customer Experience 17
Cases Are Closed Although Work May Not Be Completed 18
Implementation Of New Customer Relationship Management System Is Underway, But Gaps Remain 20
Staff Met Performance Goals Despite Vacancies 22
ATL311 Typically Meets Key Performance Indicators 23
Staff Appear to Be Satisfied with Current Department Culture 33
ATL311 Operations Follow Most Industry Best Practices 35
Key Performance Indicators Align with Best Practices 36
Agent Offboarding Needs Additional Inventory Controls 37
Recommendations 41
Appendices 43
Appendix A: Management Review and Response to Audit Recommendations 45
Appendix B: ATL311 Employee Survey Questions and Results 50

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 1: ATL311 Provides Several Methods for Customer Contact 3
Exhibit 2: ATL311 Sends an Email for Transferred Cases 4
Exhibit 3: Agents Create Child Cases for Existing Case Follow-up and Escalation 5
Exhibit 4: Call Center and Back Office Agents Respond to Customers 7
Exhibit 5: ATL311 Had 131 Active Positions as of December 2023 8
Exhibit 6: Call Representatives Used Several Systems to Manage Workload as of June 2024 .. 10
Exhibit 7: ATL311 Made Several Changes to Their KPIs in 2024 11
Exhibit 8: Majority of Cases were Public Works, Watershed Management, and Municipal Court from 2021 to 2023 12
Exhibit 9: ATL311 Tracks Cases Made by Contact Type 13
Exhibit 10: From 2021 to 2023, Most Requests Were Made by Phone 14
Exhibit 11: Service Request Status Is Unclear to Customers 19
Exhibit 12: Not All Systems Will Integrate with the New CRM System 21
Exhibit 13: ATL311 Has Met the Quality KPI Since January 2023 23
Exhibit 14: ATL311 Staff Follow a Fixed Schedule Each Shift 25
Exhibit 15: Between 2023 and 2024 Wrap Code Was Met in 14 of 15 Months 26
Exhibit 16: ATL311 Consistently Met Its SLA KPI Goal Every Month in 2023 27
Exhibit 17: The Case to Call KPI Has Been Exceeded Since Implementation 28
Exhibit 18: Majority of Vacant Positions Were in the Call Center in December 2023 29
Exhibit 19: ATL311 Could Not Fill All Representative Positions Between 2021 and 2023 30
Exhibit 20: Staff Were Able to Handle Call Workload During 2023 Despite Vacancies 31
Exhibit 21: Reduced Call Volume Allowed ATL311 to Meet its Performance Goal 32
Exhibit 22: Most ATL311 Responses Were Positive 34
Exhibit 23: The Majority of Survey Participants Were Individual Contributors 34
Exhibit 24: Customer Service Did Not Enforce Timely Equipment Return 39
Exhibit 25: Majority of Separated Employees Did Not Return Equipment on Time 39

Introduction

The city implemented ATL311 in 2014 to function as the primary phone number for government information and non-emergency services. The center also operates an online portal, live agent chat, a mobile app, social media, and a mass notification system. We undertook this audit to assess the effectiveness of operations, including staffing and scheduling.

Background

The mission of ATL311 (Department of Customer Service) is to provide the public with simple and convenient access to all City of Atlanta government services and information while offering quality service that emphasizes accountability, responsiveness, and efficiency. According to city code Section 2-225, the department is responsible for strategic and operational management of ATL311, the city's non-emergency contact center; providing performance management reports and analysis for city services delivered by departments that use the system; sponsoring and participating in community engagement and outreach activities; and collaborating with and assisting other agencies and departments in the city on matters related to customer service.

ATL311 operates as a call intake center for city services, non-emergency calls, and 911 non-emergency referrals to the Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative (PAD) program and housing initiatives, which address mental health, substance abuse, poverty, and housing needs. The back-office team handles escalated requests that may have gone unaddressed or had unsatisfactory resolution for a customer. The call center is not responsible for service delivery beyond providing general information, documentation of complaints and compliments, and routing cases to city departments for fulfillment.

ATL311 Is an Omni-Channel Non-Emergency Customer Service Line

Customers can request assistance from ATL311 by phone, email, social media, mobile app, website, or live chat. By dialing 311 or (404)546-0311, customers can contact the ATL311 call center after

navigating an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) menu. The IVR menu includes department and other selections for keys 1-8 that include:

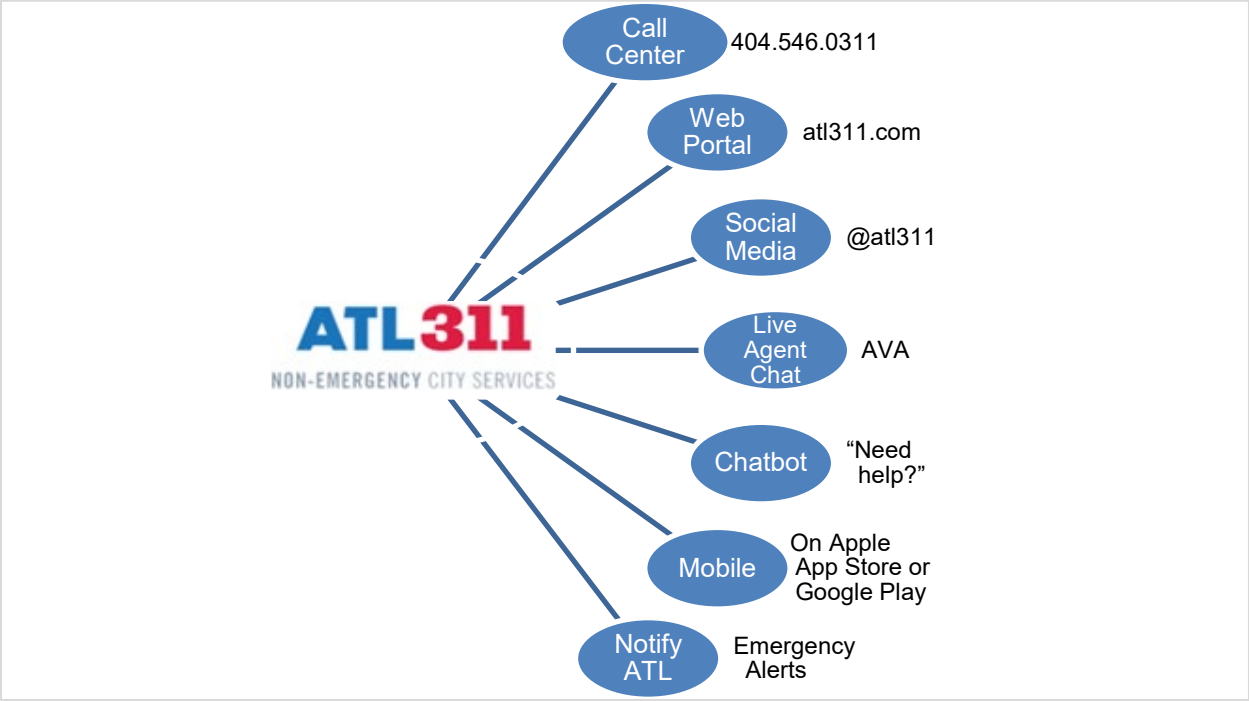
1. Supportive Services/Policing Alternatives & Diversion (PAD)
2. Department of Watershed Management
3. Department of Public Works
4. Atlanta Department of Transportation
5. Atlanta Police Department's Code Enforcement Division
6. Mayor's Office of Film & Entertainment
7. Department of Finance's Office of Revenue
8. all other city services

ATL311 is also available by email at atl311@atlantaga.gov, or by accessing the department's website atl311.com. The website offers the option to create an account where citizen profiles allow users to create, track, and update requests made on the site. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page of the website provides additional guidance on how customers can create an account, submit a request, and check the status of cases submitted. Additionally, customers can request assistance via social media using @ATL311 on platforms such as:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- SeeClickFix
- Next Door
- Reddit
- YouTube

ATL311 introduced a new live agent chat option in April 2024 on the ATL311 website. The chatbot was enhanced with a live chat option that allows customers to interact with staff in real-time at request during hours of operation. Additionally, the ATL311 app can be downloaded to devices for on-demand access to citizen profiles and customer assistance. Customers can also sign up for alerts through NotifyATL, the city's emergency alert program, and receive updates on emergencies and other community news, such as severe weather and road closures, crime alerts, and community events. Exhibit 1 illustrates each of these seven contact methods.

Exhibit 1: ATL311 Provides Several Methods for Customer Contact



Source: Prepared by auditors based on ATL311 website information

Several of ATL311's contact sources are available in other languages. ATL311 uses a language interpretation service that allows customers to call in and request translation in various languages. When requested, ATL311 agents add a contracted third-party translator to the call to identify the needed language and translate between the agent and the customer. According to a summary of the total usage of interpretation services from October 2022 to October 2023, customers requested 19 different languages; most requests were for Spanish language interpretation.

According to ATL311's website, popular requests include:

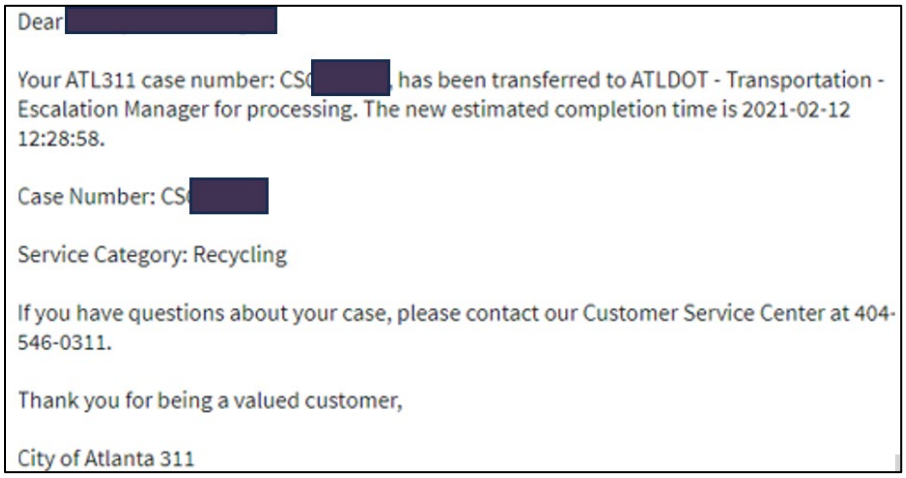
- How to request an adjustment to your water and sewer bill
- Potholes
- Missed yard trimmings
- Report a leaking or broken water meter
- Missed residential garbage/missed recycling
- Damaged garbage/recycling cart replacement
- Code Enforcement — junk, trash, debris (private property only)

ATL311 Uses ServiceNow to Track Calls

ServiceNow, also known as ATLServ, the department's customer management system, manages and analyzes customer interactions and data through cases, which are records used to document, track, and resolve customer issues. ATL311 maintains a knowledge database in ServiceNow with knowledge articles that include a public answer, customer service representative instructions, a list of city departments, SLA (service level agreement) information, customer and departmental email response templates, City Council district information and Police Zones. The system is also GIS integrated.

Cases are created in ServiceNow for all calls including dropped calls and cases created in error. Customers can submit a case through the self-service web portal, chat, or email. Customer service representatives in the back-office team, also known as back-office agents, create cases in ServiceNow. Customers can also call the ATL311 call center to have customer service representatives create cases in ServiceNow on their behalf. For general information inquiries, the representative can resolve and close the case during the call with the customer. If the representative cannot resolve an issue in the call center, the representative either routes the case or creates a work order and routes it to the appropriate department for fulfillment. The representative then closes and saves the case with resolution notes, and uses a response template to email the customer, as shown in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: ATL311 Sends an Email for Transferred Cases


Dear [redacted]

Your ATL311 case number: CS[redacted] has been transferred to ATLDOT - Transportation - Escalation Manager for processing. The new estimated completion time is 2021-02-12 12:28:58.

Case Number: CS[redacted]

Service Category: Recycling

If you have questions about your case, please contact our Customer Service Center at 404-546-0311.

Thank you for being a valued customer,

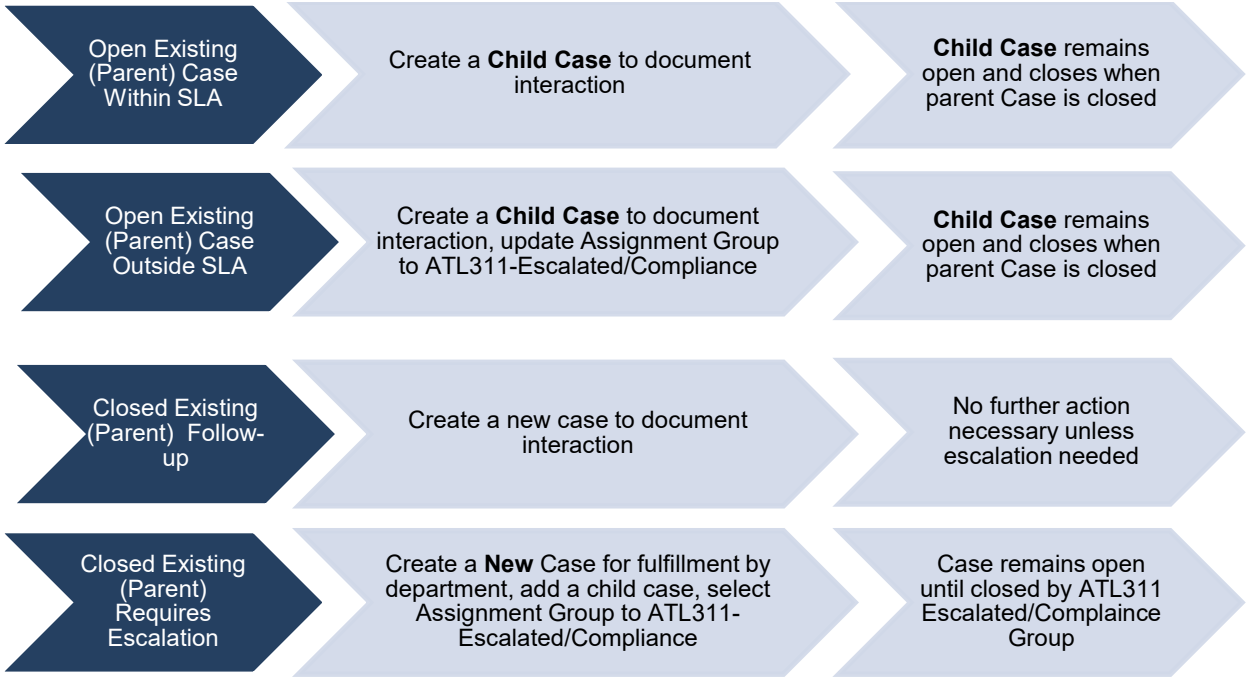
City of Atlanta 311

Source: ATL311 training materials

Back-Office Representatives Handle Most Service Escalations

Generally, when a citizen follows up on an existing case, referred to as the "parent case," a back-office representative creates a "child case," a secondary case created with the same service. Although back-office representatives are primarily tasked with escalations, according to leadership, this process can be carried out by any staff member who receives an escalation request.
If the parent case is within the service level agreement (SLA), the representative adds the child case to document the interaction. A child case can only be added to an open case. If a case is closed, but the issue is not resolved, then the agent must create a new case for fulfillment and a case for escalation (see Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Agents Create Child Cases for Existing Case Follow-up and Escalation



Source: ATL311 training materials

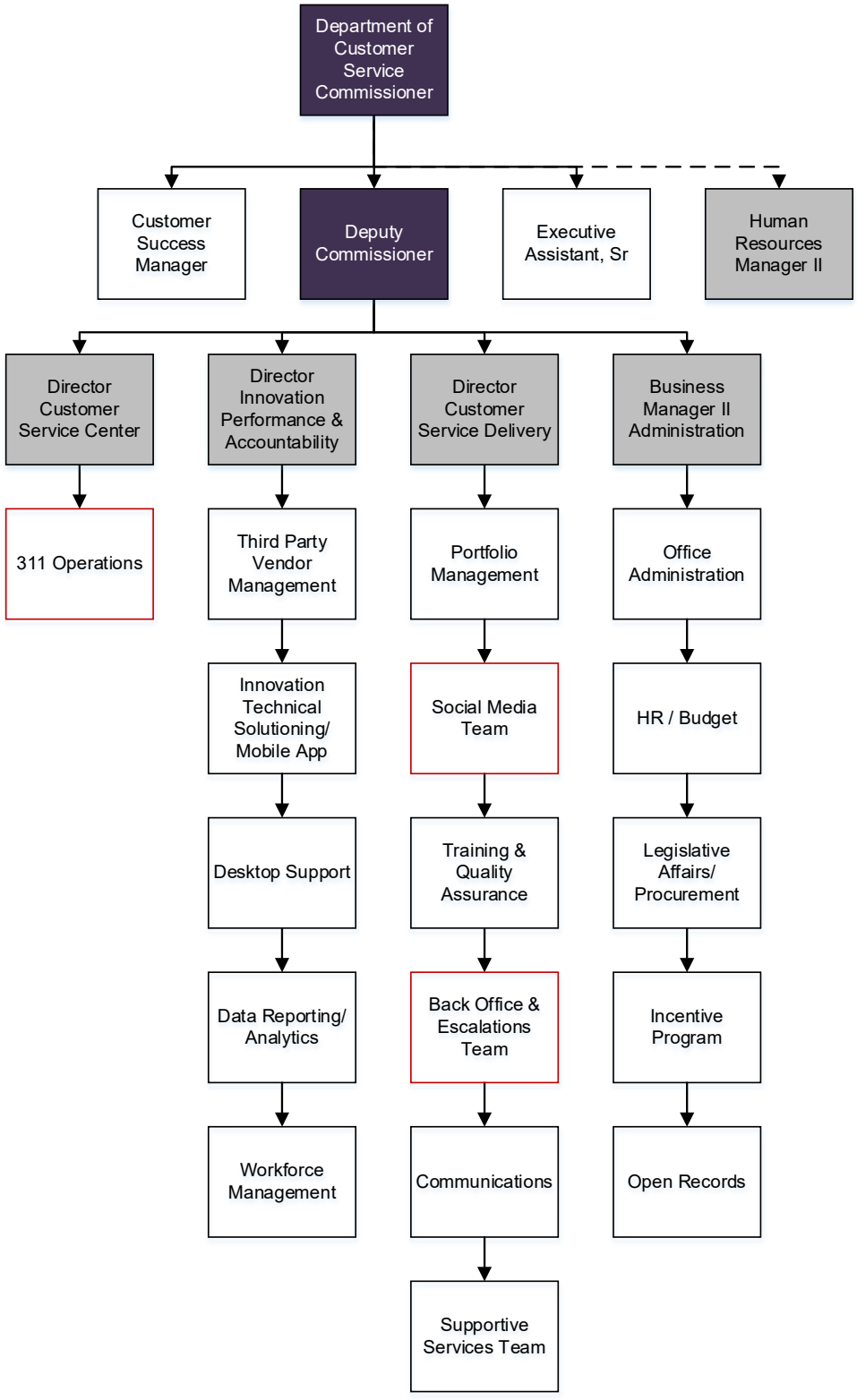
Four Divisions Support Customer Service Operations

The department is organized into four divisions that handle customer calls, report on call center performance, handle social media and app customer requests, and manage administrative business needs. Exhibit 4 shows these divisions and the units responsible for handling customer requests, which are outlined in red.

The four divisions are:

1. **Customer Service Center**—manages customer service phone requests and call center representative performance
2. **Innovation, Performance, & Accountability**—performs data analytics and provides reports on call center performance
3. **Customer Service Delivery**—provides back-office support for non-telephone service requests (social media, mobile app, chatbot), handles escalations, provides call center representative training, and collaborates with user departments
4. **Administration**—manages human resources, records, budget, legislative, and procurement needs, and employee recognition

Exhibit 4: Call Center and Back Office Agents Respond to Customers



Source: Department of Customer Service/ATL311 as of July 2024

The department's operating budget is derived from the city's general fund, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Watershed Management. As of December 2023, ATL311 had 132 active positions. Of these, 88 were filled and 43 were vacant (see Exhibit 5). About 59% (77 of 132) of the active positions were call center representative positions.

Exhibit 5: ATL311 Had 131 Active Positions as of December 2023

	Number of Positions by Calendar Year		
Positions	2021	2022	2023
All Active	128	129	131
Filled Active	97	87	88
Vacant Active	31	42	43

Source: Prepared by auditors based on Oracle data from 2021 through 2023

ATL311 Call Center Has Extended Hours for Live Agents

Call representatives' schedules are staggered during operating hours, 7 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Friday. The department added an additional shift to accommodate extended operating hours effective July 1, 2024. Agents work one of the following shifts:

- 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- 3:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

ATL311 staff are designated as essential personnel. As such, employees are expected to report to work or remain at work, as directed by their supervisor, during weather-related events, city closings, or other emergencies. Staff are also assigned to Emergency Call Back (on-call), which requires employees to be available and ready to work within one and a half hours of the initial call-back. According to staff, essential personnel remain on standby for one week, and events such as major power outages, traffic conditions, major water main breaks, or special events (such as the Super Bowl), could trigger the initiation of the on-call policy.

Employees are equipped to work remotely. The department provides call center representatives with a laptop, monitor, network cord, gigabit adapter, mouse, MiFi device, and headset. All other department staff receive a laptop, one or two monitors, a network cord, and a MiFi device. ATL311 leadership told us that certain staff

may also receive city cell phones, with approval from a director, the deputy commissioner, and the commissioner.

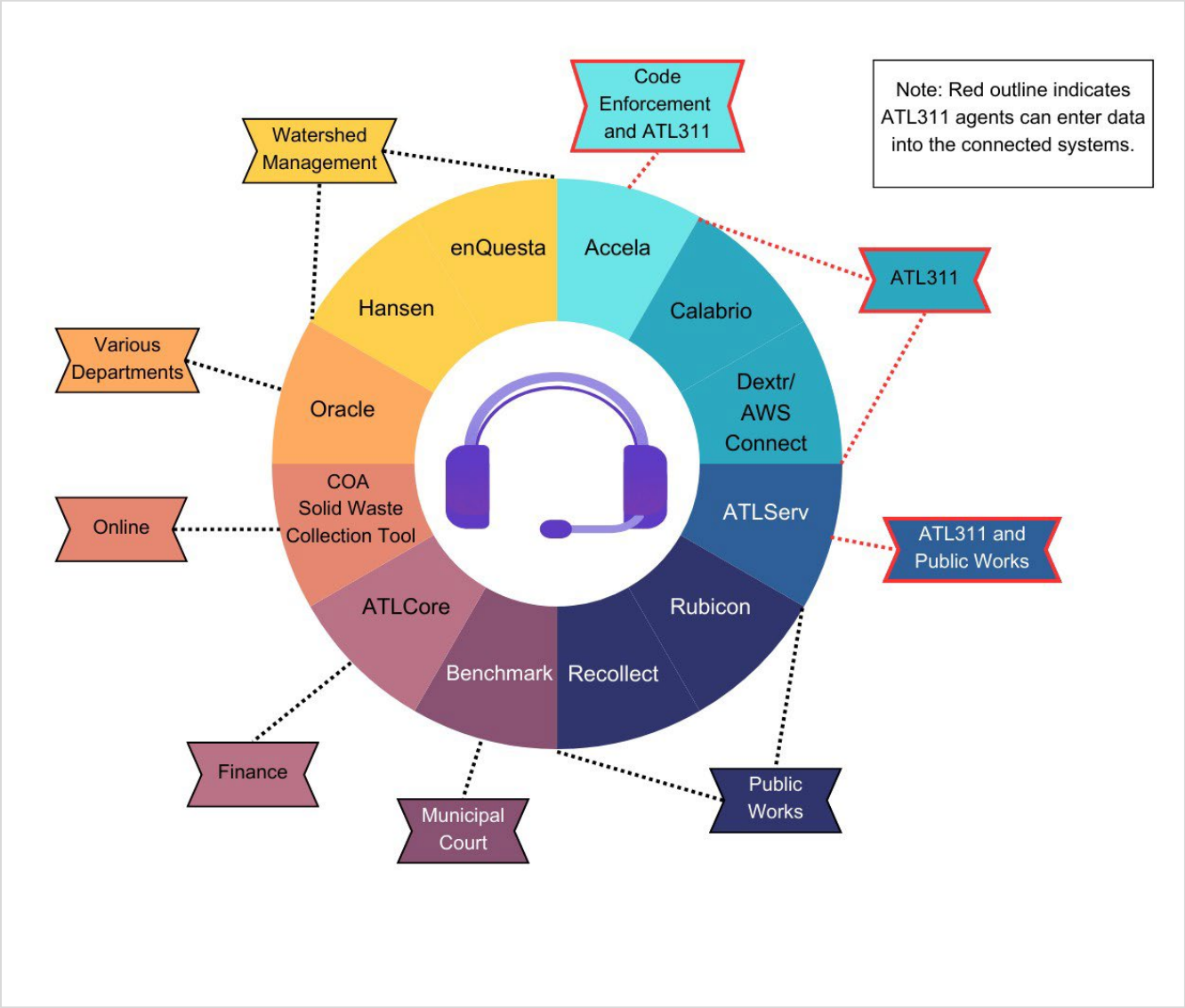
ATL311 Tracks Call Center Representative Performance

The department provides call center representatives with training on the use of call center systems, department services, and customer service soft skills. We reviewed an agent guide, several desk aids on evaluating agent calls for quality assurance, basic guides for using some systems, and several trainings on cultural competency and soft skills. The training documents we reviewed were updated as of 2023. ATL311 leadership told us that they frequently review their training guides and update as needed. To address customer requests, customer service representatives use 12 information systems to record, initiate, track, and complete cases:

- **ServiceNow**—Case management
- **Dextr/AWS Connect**—Daily agent performance data (now known as Connect Path)
- **Calabrio**—Workforce and call management/recordings
- **Rubicon**—Track DPW Services
- **Recollect**—Schedule for bulk collections
- **Benchmark**—Court cases
- **ATLCore**—Business license information
- **Accela**—Code Enforcement cases and records
- **COA Solid Waste Collection Tool**—Recycling/disposing information
- **Oracle**—Various purposes
- **Hansen**—Service Requests for wastewater-related issues
- **enQuesta**—City of Atlanta water customer accounts and billing

Of these 12 systems, customer service representatives can enter data into four systems and have view-only access to eight systems. Only staff in other departments or city entities can access the remaining eight systems. Exhibit 6 illustrates the varying systems used by ATL311 and personnel who can access those systems as of June 2024.

Exhibit 6: Call Representatives Used Several Systems to Manage Workload as of June 2024



Source: Developed by auditors based using information from interviews with ATL311 staff and observations

The department provides a quarterly report to City Council's Finance/Executive Committee highlighting the department's performance, staffing, and departmental highlights, which includes the following customer service performance metrics:

1. **Average Call Handle Time**—average duration of a customer call, from start to finish that a customer was connected with an agent
2. **Average Speed of Answer**—average wait time, in seconds, that customers are in queue before being connected with an agent
3. **Calls Presented**—any call that appears in the queue
4. **Calls Handled**—any call that the agent interacts with

5. **Caller Abandonment**—number of calls dropped before being answered by an agent

The department monitors four internal key performance indicators (KPIs) to track call center representative performance:

1. **Service Level Agreement (SLA)**—percentage of calls answered within a number of seconds, with the number of seconds as the average speed to answer
2. **Adherence**—how well agents adhere to their schedule in Calabrio, expressed as a percentage
3. **Quality**—how well agents perform certain aspects of calls, such as greeting and providing service without placing the customer on an immediate hold, expressed as a percentage
4. **Wrap Code**—the percentage of calls provided with a disposition code (i.e., assigned to a department)

In 2024, the call center made several changes to its KPIs and added a new KPI, Case to Call, which is the ratio of calls handled to the number of cases created, with the expectation of at least one case created per call (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: ATL311 Made Several Changes to Their KPIs in 2024

	KPI Standard	
KPI Metric	2023	2024
Service Level Agreement (SLA)	80% of calls answered within 60 seconds	No change
Adherence	88% adherence to assigned schedule	90% adherence to assigned schedule
Quality	90% quality score	90% quality score
Wrap Code	90% of calls provided with wrap code	95% of calls provided with wrap code
Case to Call	N/A	At least one case per call (100%)

Source: Developed by auditors based on ATL311 KPI information as of March 2024

ATL311 Performance Metrics Align with the Mayor's Initiatives

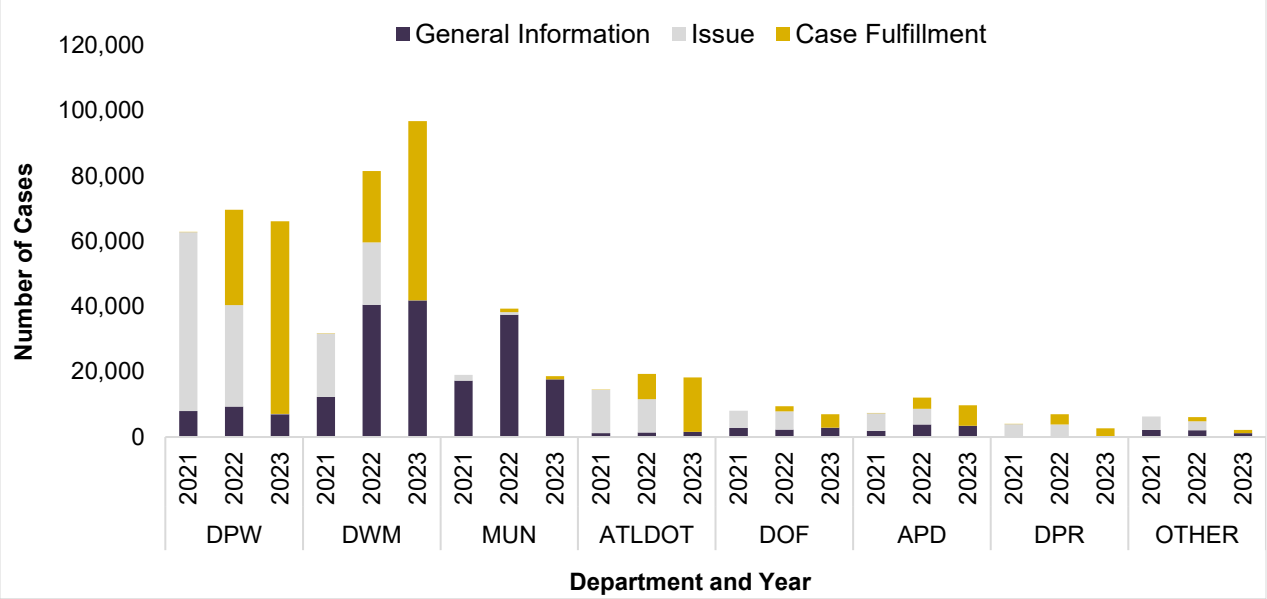
ATL311 is one of the 45 city entities reviewed by the Mayor's Office of Innovation and Performance and one of the 12 that sends performance metrics monthly. ATL311 sends 20 metrics to Innovation and Performance, 18 of which are operational, and two

strategic. The strategic metrics align with one of the four pillars developed by the Mayor's Office: Effective and Ethical Government.

Most Calls Were Related to Watershed, Public Works, and Municipal Court

ATL311 manages its call center call volume by assigning customer service representatives who have been trained to provide general information and handle fulfillment requests for specific IVR queues for the departments of Transportation, Public Works, Watershed Management, and Finance, as well as the Mayor's Office of Film & Entertainment, Municipal Court, and Code Enforcement. ATL311 also has a team that handles non-emergency service requests referred to the Atlanta Police Department's Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative (PAD) for concerns related to quality-of-life issues such as mental health, substance use, or extreme poverty. Exhibit 8 shows that most cases were for Public Works, Watershed Management, and Municipal Court between 2021 and 2023.

Exhibit 8: Majority of Cases were Public Works, Watershed Management, and Municipal Court from 2021 to 2023



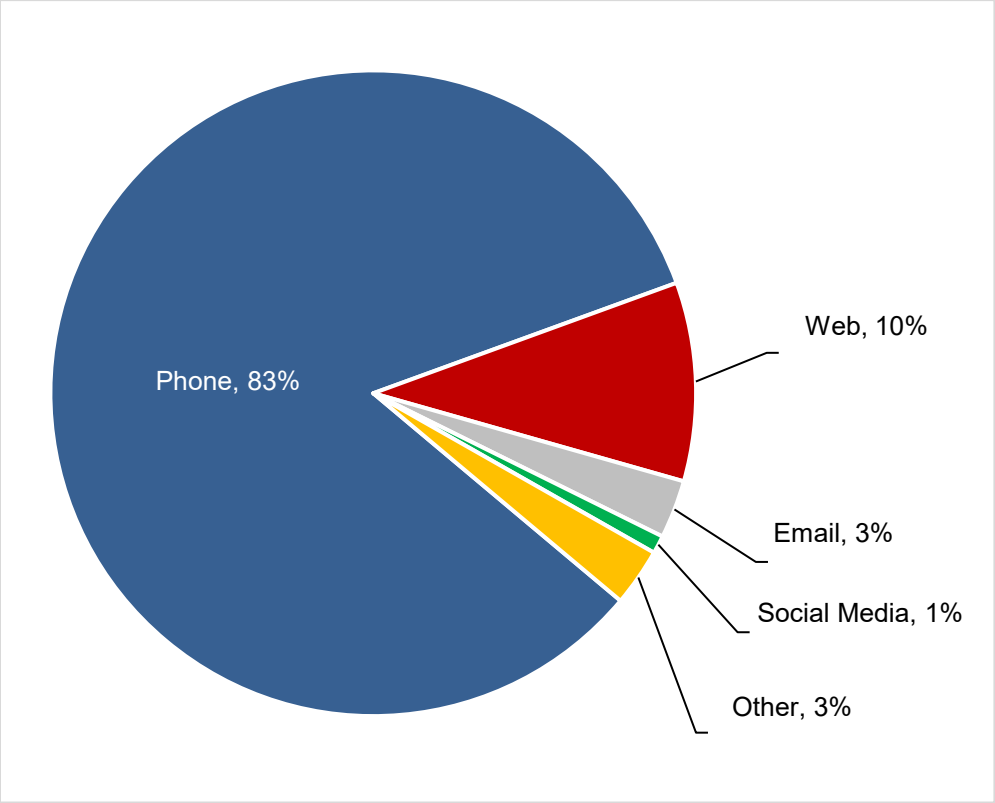
Source: Prepared by auditors based on ServiceNow data from 2021 through 2023

From 2021 to 2023, ATL311 representatives created about 1.5 million cases in ServiceNow. Of those, 89% (1,374,921 of 1,546,517) were accessible for analysis[1]. Of the 1,374,921 available cases,

[1] 171,596 cases were not accessible through download within the ServiceNow system.

about 83% were created from requests made by phone (see Exhibit 9).

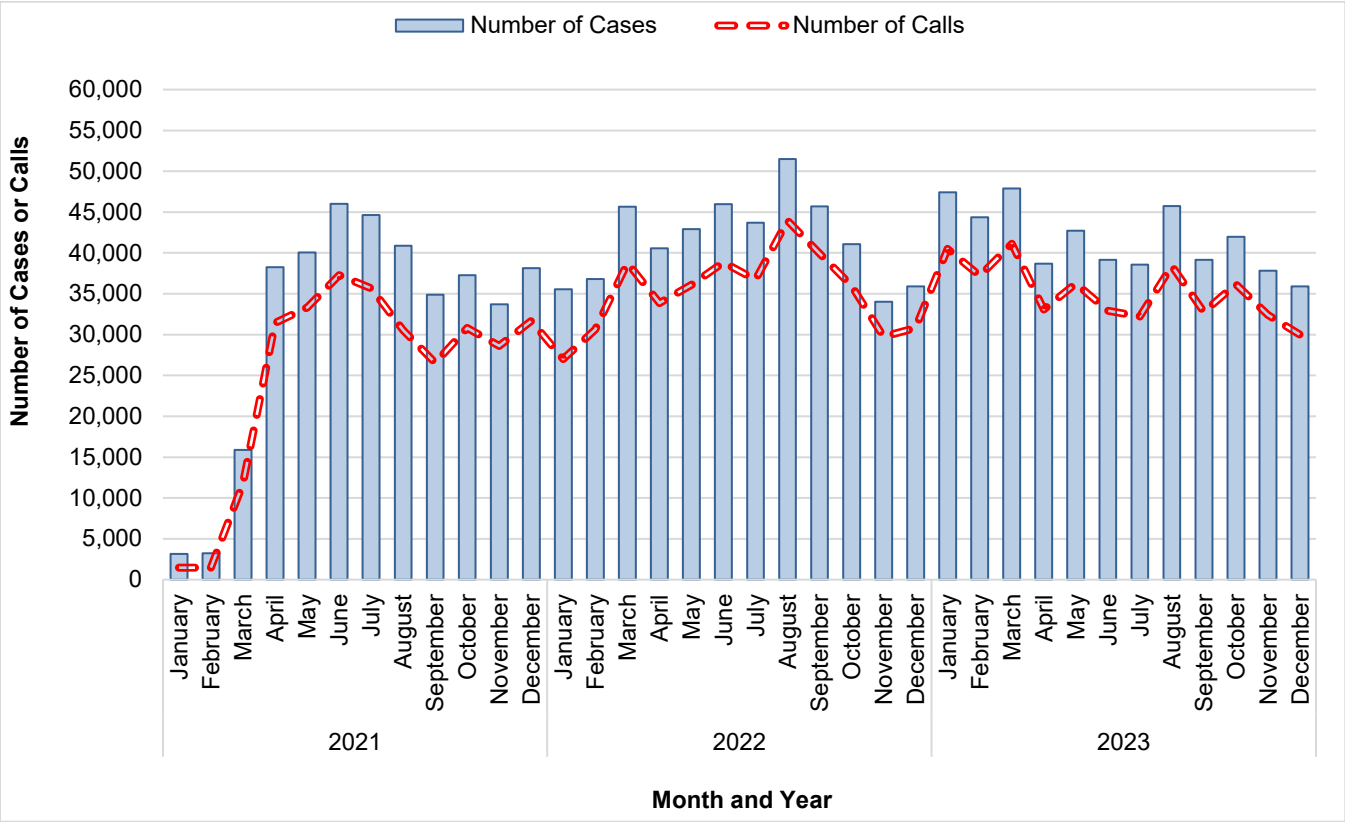
Exhibit 9: ATL311 Tracks Cases Made by Contact Type



Note: "Social Media" includes the following data entries: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, SeeClickFix, Reddit, YouTube, Snapchat, Social, and Social Media. "Other" includes the following data entries: Council, In Person, Mail, Fax, Mobile, Chatbot, IVR, and Community Meeting.
Source: Prepared by auditors based on ServiceNow data from 2021 through 2023

As shown in Exhibit 10, the number of cases made from phone requests peaked in August 2022 at almost 44,000 but has since remained in a range of about 30 to 40 thousand calls per month.

Exhibit 10: From 2021 to 2023, Most Requests Were Made by Phone



Source: Prepared by auditor based on ServiceNow data

Audit Objectives

This report addresses the following objectives:

- Is ATL311 uniformly addressing and accurately monitoring service requests?
- Are ATL311 staffing levels adequate to support call center operations?
- Does ATL311 follow industry best practices for measuring call center performance?

Scope and Methodology

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. We reviewed department standard operating procedures, policies, key performance indicator data since 2021, and call volume data between January 2021 and December 2023.

Our audit methods included:

- reviewing the department's standard operating procedures and training guides to determine guidance on case management through ATL311's various platforms
- researching state law and city code provisions regarding the ATL311 call center
- researching industry best practices for 311 call centers to compare the department's methods
- analyzing key performance indicator data to determine whether ATL311 is meeting goals
- observing ATL311 call center operations staff to understand the duties and responsibilities of agents, team leaders, and supervisors
- analyzing case and call volume and staffing data to determine workload
- reviewing the department's policies and process maps to understand agent responsibilities
- interviewing department staff to understand policies, procedures, and practices

Generally accepted government auditing standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Findings and Analysis

Process Changes Could Improve Customer Experience

ATL311 is responsible for receiving cases from citizens and documenting service requests. Some requests, mostly general information, can be handled directly by customer service representatives during the call. Other requests are referred to other departments for resolution; ATL311 does not monitor the outcome of these requests but provides monthly data reports to departments on escalations and cases outside of SLA. Because ServiceNow, ATL311's current customer relationship management system, is not integrated with all systems used by other departments, information on customer requests from intake to resolution is not always available to both customer service representatives and citizens. When cases are referred to another department for resolution, the customer service representative closes the case and opens the case in another city department system. ATL311 sends an email to the customer stating that the case has been closed, even though the issue has not been resolved, and provides the new case number from another system. For example, ATL311 closes APD Code Enforcement cases in ServiceNow, and opens a new case in Accela. Customers can access case updates in the Accela Citizen portal or by contacting ATL311. The referred department may not consistently update case status in the ServiceNow system. This can result in customer confusion and dissatisfaction.

ATL311 has acquired a new customer relationship management system; however, the department confirmed that the new system will not fully integrate with key systems until phase two of the system implementation. ATL311 customer service representatives and back-office agents will still need to swivel from the system to enter cases for service requests and work orders for some departments. Closing the case and swiveling to another system does not provide customers with information on the status of their request, or a timeline for when the request will be resolved. However, to ensure that customers receive timely and accurate case updates, ATL311 has created a premature closure team for the Department of Watershed Management's cases that follows up on daily reports of completed work orders to ensure that the service requests were addressed.

ATL311 staff track metrics to ensure that representatives are following the department's standard policies and procedures. The metrics evaluate the quality and conduct during calls, compliance with assigned daily task schedules, speed of answering calls, and whether a department and case is assigned for each call based on the request type. We found that staff has met or exceeded most of its metrics from January 2023 to early 2024.

Although ATL311 has mostly met its performance goals, staff told us that staffing levels are not optimal. In December 2023, ATL311 had 43 vacant positions in the Customer Service Center division, and most vacancies were in customer service representative positions. Although the call center has been able to handle the call volume despite vacancies, the current staffing levels may be unable to sustain adherence to performance targets if the call volume increases. ATL311 leadership has created a formula to determine the ideal staffing level to address the call volume for each queue. The analysis, however, does not also consider the staff needed to meet performance targets without leading to staff burnout.

We found the current culture at the department to reflect a positive environment. We surveyed ATL311 staff in April 2024 to gauge employee satisfaction. The questions were designed to capture whether employees understood performance requirements, felt recognized, respected, had high morale, and were satisfied with salary and other benefits. Of the nearly 80% of staff who responded, most of the responses were positive. To maintain a productive environment with high morale, we recommend that the commissioner of ATL311 at least annually review workload requirements while considering calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands, to determine the optimal number of staff to meet the requirements without difficulty.

Cases Are Closed Although Work May Not Be Completed

ATL311's current customer relationship management system lacks capabilities to provide transparency in the service request workflow from intake to resolution. Customers' cases can be closed by ATL311 and field workers from other departments before work has been completed when cases are referred to other departments for resolution. The system ATL311 uses does not integrate with other department systems, but ATL311 and departments can still add updates to cases to update customers. Also, although customers can create accounts with ATL311 to submit cases, analytics of the journey of a case are currently unavailable. Customers cannot log

into ServiceNow to view the real time status of their cases but can see that a case is submitted and when it was resolved.

When a service request requires resolution by a user department, the current process involves representatives closing service requests in ServiceNow and then "swiveling," or re-entering the data, into the appropriate work order system used by the responsible department. For example, ATL311 opens and closes APD Code Enforcement requests in ServiceNow for tracking purposes, and then creates a code enforcement service request in Accela for resolution. According to ATL311's policies and procedures, if a customer's issue cannot be resolved or handled within the call center, the customer service representative creates a case or work order and routes it to the appropriate department identified in the knowledge article for fulfillment. The representative then closes the case, and an email is sent to the customer stating that the case has been closed (see Exhibit 11), but a new case number is opened in another system. The representative then provides the customer with the new case number. If a customer's case requires additional work, an ATL311 agent creates a new case with the referred department to resolve the issue. Because the issue is not resolved, closing the case can result in customer confusion and dissatisfaction.

Exhibit 11: Service Request Status Is Unclear to Customers


ATL311
NON-EMERGENCY CITY SERVICES

We have received your request for Missed Residential Garbage and ATL311 has closed your original case; however, if the case requires additional action, a new case was opened with the referred department. To obtain the current status of your case, please contact ATL311 by dialing 404-546-0311, online at www.atl311.com, by email at atl311@atlantaga.gov or on social media @ATL311.

Case Number
[redacted]

Date Submitted
04/20/2023 09:03:51 EDT

Department
DPW - Department of Public Works

Source: ATL311

Closing the case and swiveling to another system does not provide customers with information on the status of their request, or a timeline for when the request will be resolved. Representatives communicate the SLA for the requested service requests to customers, but ATL311 lacks insight into departments' schedules. Code enforcement's Accela Citizen portal provides customers with updates, but for all other cases customers can log into the ATL311

portal or contact ATL311. Departments are responsible for updating ServiceNow on the case status but are not consistently doing so. ATL311 will reach out to the departments for updates to share with the customers. Call center staff said that customers will likely call again to obtain the status of the original case. If a customer calls again about the request and the case is beyond the service level agreement, the case is escalated. In this instance, the representative will create a child case and reenter the same case details in ServiceNow or create an entirely new case if the parent case has already been closed. To ensure that Watershed Management cases are updated, ATL311 has created a premature closure team to follow the request life cycle until work is completed on cases and work orders to ensure that the service request was addressed. ATL311 staff told us that as a result, customers should not receive a premature closure email for Watershed Management's cases.

ATL311's current customer relationship management system (CRM) lacks key best practice elements. Best-in-class elements identified by the U.S. General Administration's Center of Excellence (CoE) include a contact center's ability to share data between channels to inform decisions and collect customer journey analytics. To improve the customer experience, the CRM system should include up-to-date status through the lifecycle of the requests to customers and representatives.

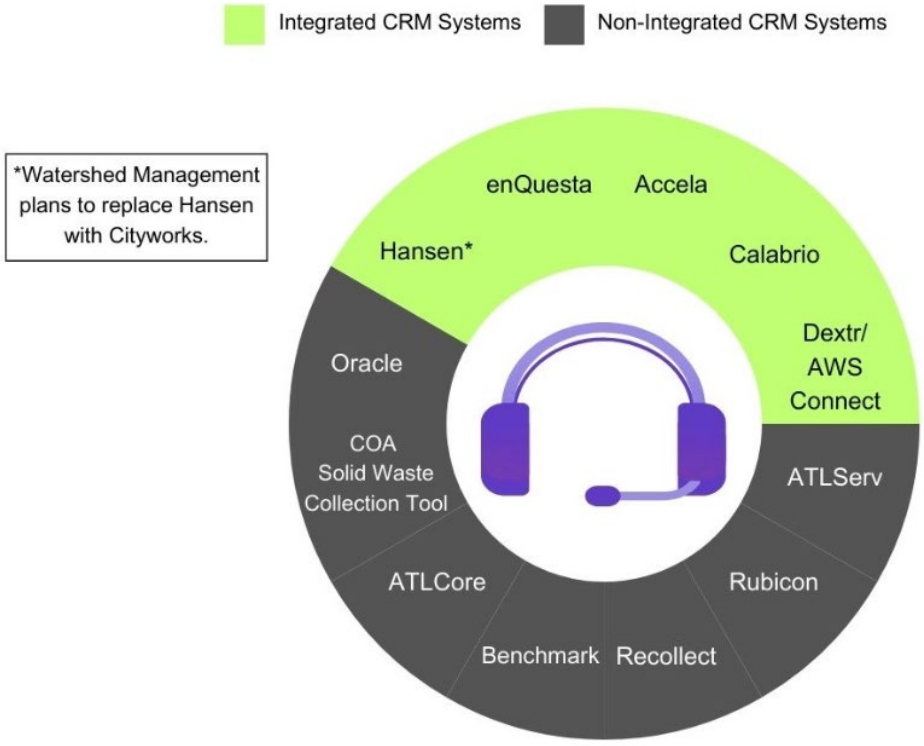
ATL311 is in the process of implementing a new customer relationship management system; however, the new system will not fully integrate with key departments' systems initially. The department plans for the new system to be fully integrated in phase two. ATL311 customer service representatives and back-office agents will still need to swivel from the system to enter cases for service requests and work orders for Watershed Management. However, the department has created a premature closure team to follow up on cases and work orders completed in non-integrated systems to ensure that the service request was actually addressed.

Implementation Of New Customer Relationship Management System Is Underway, But Gaps Remain

The city recently signed a contract with Accenture LLP to acquire a new system to replace and address issues with ATL311's current customer relationship management system. The new customer relationship management system may enhance customer communications for some departments by integrating with key city systems for customer engagement. System integration would

provide information regarding the status of service requests and work orders and offer a more seamless customer experience. Department leadership told us the system is expected to launch by the end of the fourth quarter of 2024. Exhibit 12 illustrates the systems expected to integrate with the new CRM system and those not expected to. Non-integrated systems are considered non-critical according to ATL311 leadership. Customer service representatives will still swivel to these systems to assist customers, which may cause a delay in some case updates.

Exhibit 12: Not All Systems Will Integrate with the New CRM System



Source: Developed by auditors based on contract between the City of Atlanta and Accenture, LLP

The proposed system is powered by Microsoft and is intended to be a scalable, secure, and flexible platform. According to the contract proposal, the system will include major components such as a resident and agent portal. The resident portal is intended to provide an option for customers to check the status of service requests and allow customers to see an 'Estimated Completion' SLA, a feature not currently available to users. Additionally, the new customer relationship management system is intended to be omnichannel. The omnichannel feature allows the use of multiple channels over several interactions while maintaining history and

context. Moreover, customer service representatives and field service workers will use systems that are interfaced, and representatives should be able to manage service requests from creation to resolution.

ATL311 will also continue to use its current IVR and telephony providers, and systems for KPI tracking, such as Calabrio and Connect Path, formerly known as Dextr. ATL311 staff confirmed that high call volume departments with or without integrated systems will be able to engage and view real-time updates during the life cycle of the case. Departments with systems that do not integrate will update the platform manually. We reviewed a process map for the premature closure team that shows how the team will follow up on completed work orders and cases for Watershed Management. Leadership told us that they plan to use this process for Watershed Management open cases until their enQuesta and Cityworks systems are fully integrated with ATL311's new CRM system.

Staff Met Performance Goals Despite Vacancies

ATL311 staff track metrics to ensure that representatives are following the department's standard policies and procedures. The metrics evaluate the quality and conduct during calls, compliance with assigned daily task schedules, speed of answering calls, and whether a department and case are assigned for each call based on the request type. We reviewed data related to key performance indicators and observed staff at different levels of the organization to understand how they interact with each other, how representatives are evaluated, and how customers are served. We found that staff has met or exceeded most of its goals from January 2023 to early 2024.

Staffing levels for call center representatives fluctuated between 41 and 57 filled positions from 2021 to 2023; the department has been unable to fill all 76 representative positions. Turnover can result in longer hold times due to fewer call takers who have been trained on all departments. ATL311 staff told us that current staffing levels affect the call center's ability to meet the performance targets consistently each day. Department staff also said that during high call volume periods call center supervisors and team leaders have had to handle calls to ensure that the department continues to meet its performance goals. We surveyed ATL311 staff and found that the responses indicated morale was high; however, a heavy call volume

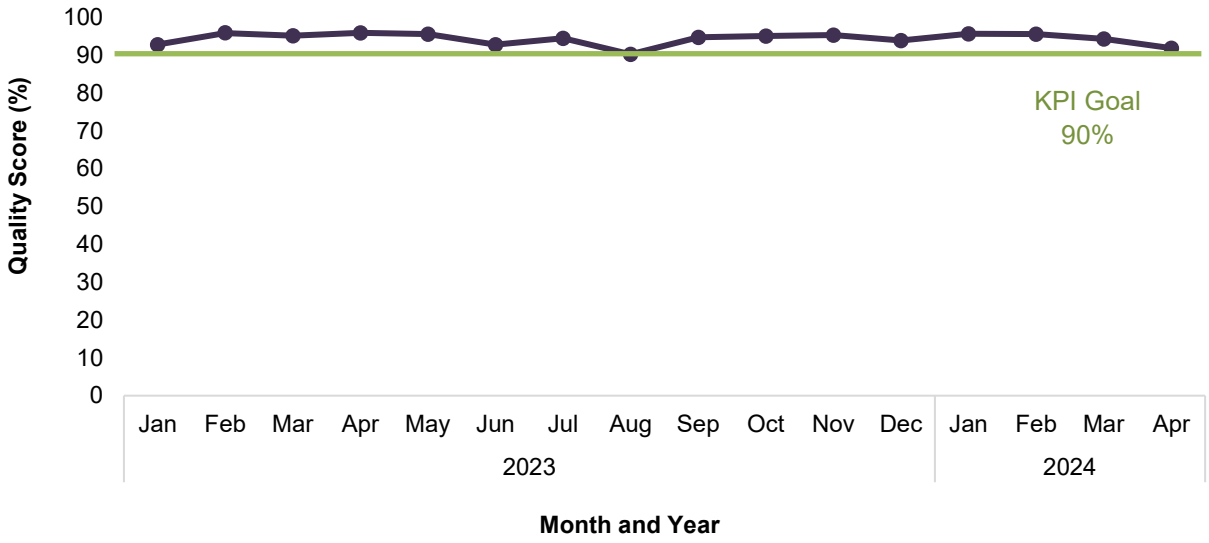
coupled with high vacancies can result in reduced employee morale, as well as burnout.

ATL311 Typically Meets Key Performance Indicators

ATL311 measures internal success using 5 metrics: 1) Quality, 2) Adherence, 3) Wrap Code, 4) SLA, and 5) Case to Call. We found that between 2023 and 2024 the call center typically met its key performance targets. We also found that as of 2024, the call center's newest KPI, Case to Call, was met each month between January and March. To analyze KPI data, we ran reports accessed from ATL311 systems including Dextr, Calabrio, and ServiceNow, and compared results to KPIs to determine whether the goal was met for each key performance indicator within our scope.

Since January 2023, ATL311's Quality KPI goal has either been met or exceeded. Quality assesses how well agents are meeting specific criteria while conducting calls. It measures quality expectations such as whether the agent stated the proper greeting, whether the agent was prepared to provide customer service, and if the agent avoided immediately placing the customer on hold. The department's goal for the quality metric is 90%. Call center representatives scored an average between 90% and 96%, as shown in Exhibit 13.

Exhibit 13: ATL311 Has Met the Quality KPI Since January 2023



Source: Developed by auditors based on Quality data from Calabrio from January 2023 to April 2024

Team leaders and supervisors regularly evaluate customer service representatives' calls. Supervisors and team leaders must evaluate

each agent on their team at least three times monthly. Supervisors also evaluate team leaders. Based on these evaluations, supervisors conduct coaching and development sessions with team members to discuss previous months' performance and areas of opportunity. Staff told us that supervisors and team leaders randomly select three calls for review for each agent but attempt to choose one call between one and two minutes, one call of approximately five minutes, and one call between seven and ten minutes. Staff also told us that the Quality Assurance team reviews agent calls and assesses them for the quality standard—typically three quality audits per agent per month.

The Calabrio system is used to evaluate calls. Two built-in forms, one for Municipal Court and another for all other calls, allow evaluators to follow along while listening to a call and indicate either "yes" or "no" to whether the representative met the criteria. An agent automatically receives a "yes" if the question is not relevant to the call. Each criterion is weighted; for example, a greeting is worth 20% of the total score, and whether the agent asked for the customer's contact information and service location is worth 50%.

The Adherence KPI was typically met in 2023 and 2024. The accuracy of the Calabrio system was affected by system issues where agent adherence data registered as zero. In 2023, the Adherence KPI goal was 88%, meaning agents adhered to their schedule 88% of the time. Generally, ATL311 surpassed the goal, including an adherence rate of almost 94% in August 2023. At the beginning of 2024, the KPI goal changed to 90%, and as of March, Adherence had been met each month.

Workforce Management, a team within the Customer Service Center division of ATL311, creates and manages schedules for agents in Calabrio. Staff told us that the Adherence goal only applies to representatives and does not include team leaders and supervisors. Supervisors check agents' schedules to ensure alignment with the goal. If team members do not adhere to their schedules, supervisors can seek an exception on an agent's behalf. Exhibit 14 illustrates a potential schedule for a representative working a shift from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Exhibit 14: ATL311 Staff Follow a Fixed Schedule Each Shift

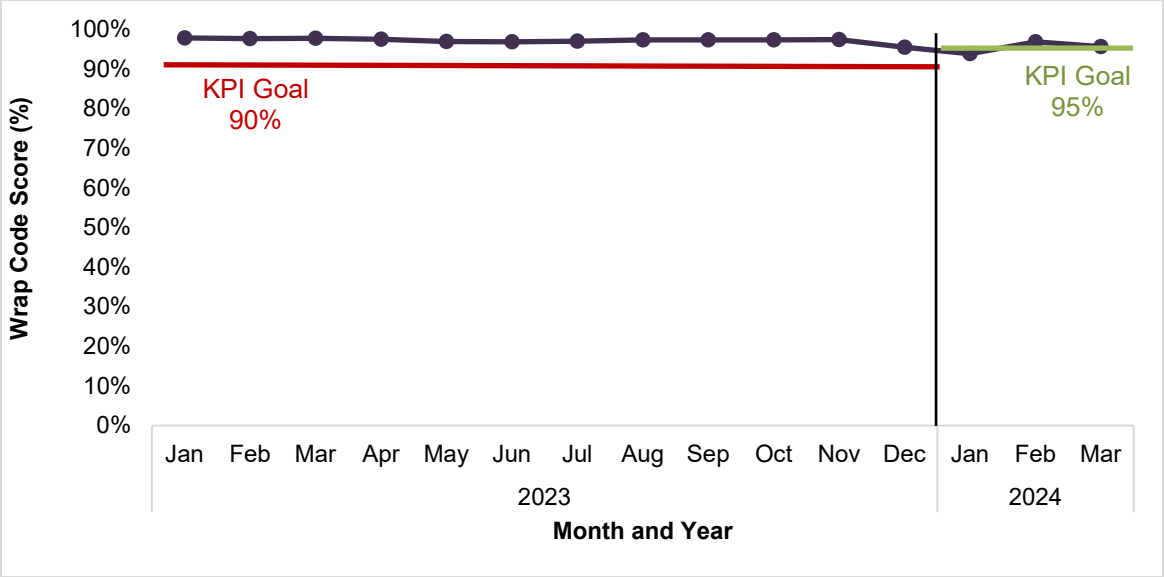
7:00 AM - 8:45 AM	In Service
8:45 AM	Break
9:00 AM - 10:45 AM	In Service
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	Lunch
11:45 AM - 2:15 PM	In Service
2:15 PM	Break
2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	In Service

Source: Developed by auditors based on observations with ATL311 staff

Agents are expected to take calls during times labeled as In Service and either be on break or lunch for the remaining time. The workforce management team can grant exceptions for agents who fail to adhere to their assigned schedules. According to staff, exceptions are only granted if the agent is 15 or more minutes out of Adherence. In this instance, the supervisor can send an email to the workforce management team to request an exception to the assigned schedule. After the exceptions are granted, the overall reporting reflects the scores with exceptions.

ATL311 met its Wrap Code KPI in 14 out of 15 months between 2023 and 2024. After completing a call, customer service representatives are expected to assign a Wrap Code, identifying the department to which the call was related. Between January and December 2023, customer service representatives dispositioned about 97% of 384,069 transferred and inbound calls to the call center, exceeding ATL311's 90% Wrap Code KPI goal. ATL311 did not meet the Wrap Code KPI goal in January 2024, as shown in Exhibit 15. The department changed the Wrap Code goal from 90% in 2023 to 95% in 2024.

Exhibit 15: Between 2023 and 2024 Wrap Code Was Met in 14 of 15 Months



Source: Developed by auditors based on data in Dextr from January 2023 to March 2024

Staff told us that if call representatives do not comply with the target, supervisors assign additional training sessions and guide the representative to revisit the knowledge articles. Disposition codes include:

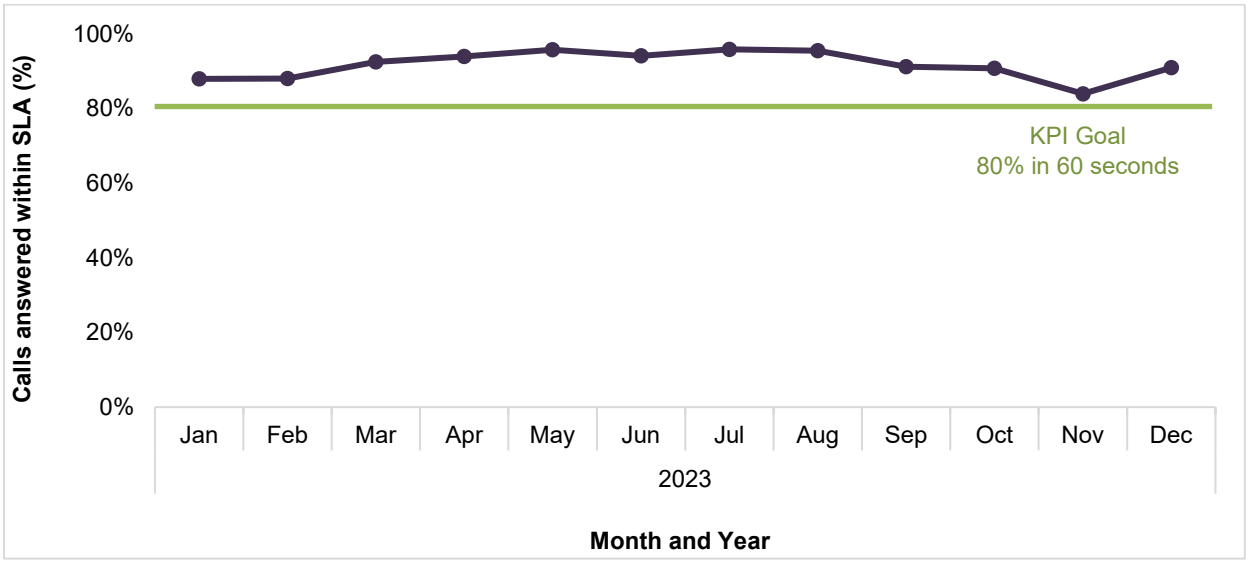
- APD Code Enforcement (APD-CODE)
- Atlanta Fire Department (AFRD)
- Atlanta Police Department (APD-Other)
- City Council (Council)
- Customer Service Center (CSC)
- Department of Finance (DOF)
- Department of Human Resources (DHR)
- Department of Law (DOL)
- Department of Watershed Management (DWM)
- Department of City Planning (DCP)
- Department of Enterprise Asset Management (DEAM)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPRCA)
- Department of Procurement (DOP)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Department of Transportation (ATLDOT)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Department of Aviation (DOA)
- Executive Offices (EXE)
- Film and Entertainment (FE)

- Municipal Courts (MUN)
- Non-Atlanta Call (NON-ATL)
- Office of Constituent Services (OCS)
- Office of Mayor (OOM)
- Pre-Arrest Diversion (PAD)
- Supportive Services (SS)

ATL311's Innovation, Performance, and Accountability division generates and distributes a call disposition report weekly to the call teams to provide consistent visibility across teams, showing the outcomes of calls to identify areas of improvement. These reports are created from data within Dextr/AWS Connect, now known as Connect Path.

ATL311's SLA indicator requires all calls to be answered by an agent within one minute after entering the call queue. ATL311's SLA KPI for 2023 required 80% of calls to be answered within 60 seconds. During 2023, ATL311 met the SLA KPI every month, with a gradual improvement from 88% to 96% between January through August and a decline to 91% by the end of the year (see Exhibit 16). ATL311 staff told us that they are considering changing the KPI to 80% of calls answered in 40 seconds to get closer to industry standards.

Exhibit 16: ATL311 Consistently Met Its SLA KPI Goal Every Month in 2023

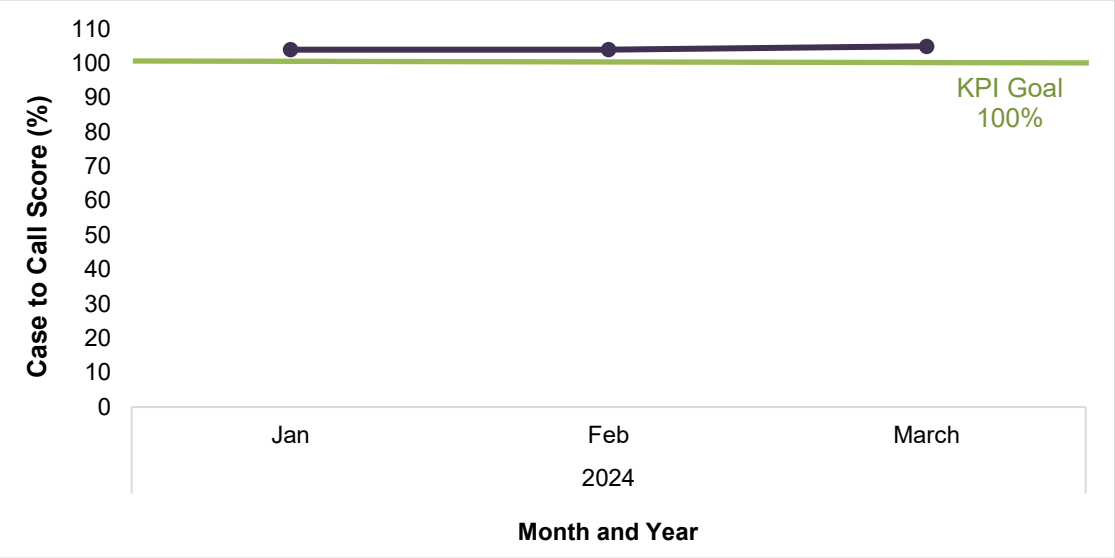


Source: Developed by auditors based on SLA data from Amazon Web Services from January to December 2023

Beginning in 2024, ATL311 implemented a new KPI called Case to Call, which measures the ratio of cases created to calls handled. At least one case created per call is expected or a 1:1 ratio. Some

calls required multiple created cases, as customers may make more than one request at a time. ATL311 met the Case to Call KPI between January and March 2024. The goal broadly assesses whether each call has an associated case—a ratio below 100% indicates the condition hasn't been met. The call center was above 100% in all three months, as shown in Exhibit 17.

Exhibit 17: The Case to Call KPI Has Been Exceeded Since Implementation



Source: Prepared by auditor based on data from ServiceNow and Dextr from January to March 2024

Staff Vacancies Could Affect Performance

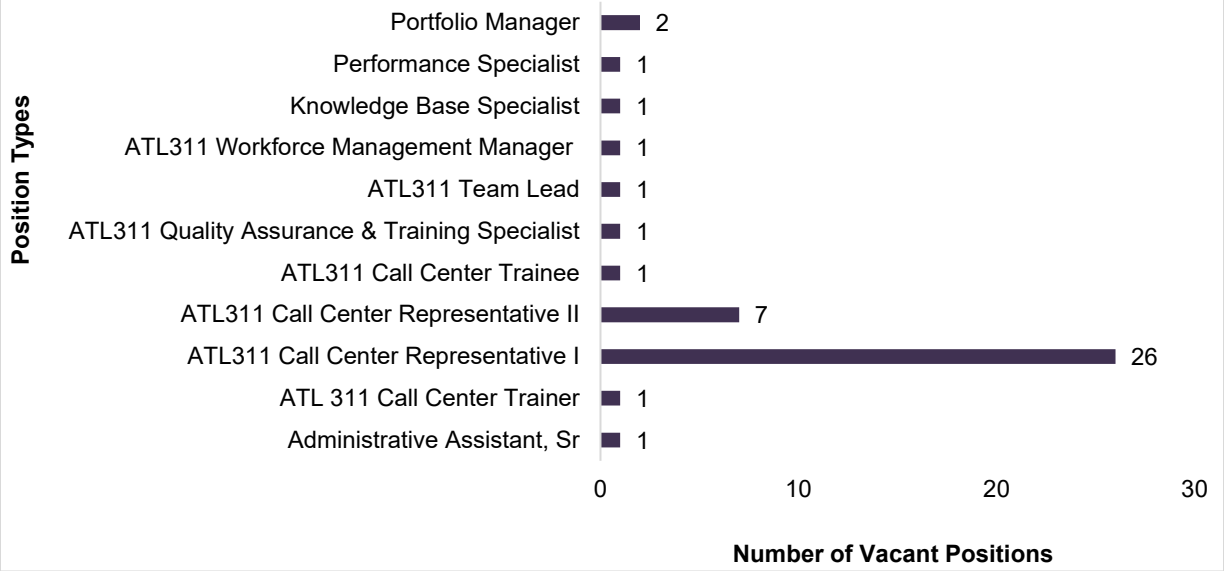
Although ATL311 has mostly met its performance goals, staff told us that staffing levels are not optimal. In December 2023, ATL311 had 43 vacant positions in Customer Service, and most vacancies were in customer service representative positions. Although the call center has been able to handle the call volume despite vacancies, the current staffing levels may be unable to sustain adherence to performance targets if the call volume increases. Division leadership told us the call center can operate in an all-hands-on-deck manner to meet performance goals, with supervisors and team leaders handling calls when needed, although they report it has been some time since this was necessary. ATL311 leadership has a formula to determine the ideal staffing level needed to handle the workload based on call volume by queue; we saw evidence of this workload analysis last being completed in 2021. This workload analysis formula does not appear to consider the staffing level required to meet performance targets without leading to staff burnout. We recommend that the commissioner of ATL311 at least

annually review workload requirements, considering calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands, to determine the optimal number of staff to meet these requirements without difficulty.

We also found that as of April 2024, only about 54% (22 of 41) of representatives were trained to handle calls for all departments. The cycle of hiring and attrition affects the level of knowledge and experience in the department.

Although ATL311 meets its performance goals, staff told us that staffing levels are not optimal. We found that between January 2022 to December 2023, the department lost 75 employees. ATL311 experienced an attrition rate of about 58% in 2022, and about 24% in 2023. In December 2023, ATL311 had 43 vacant positions (see Exhibit 18). About 77% (33 of 43) of those vacancies were customer service representative I and II positions.

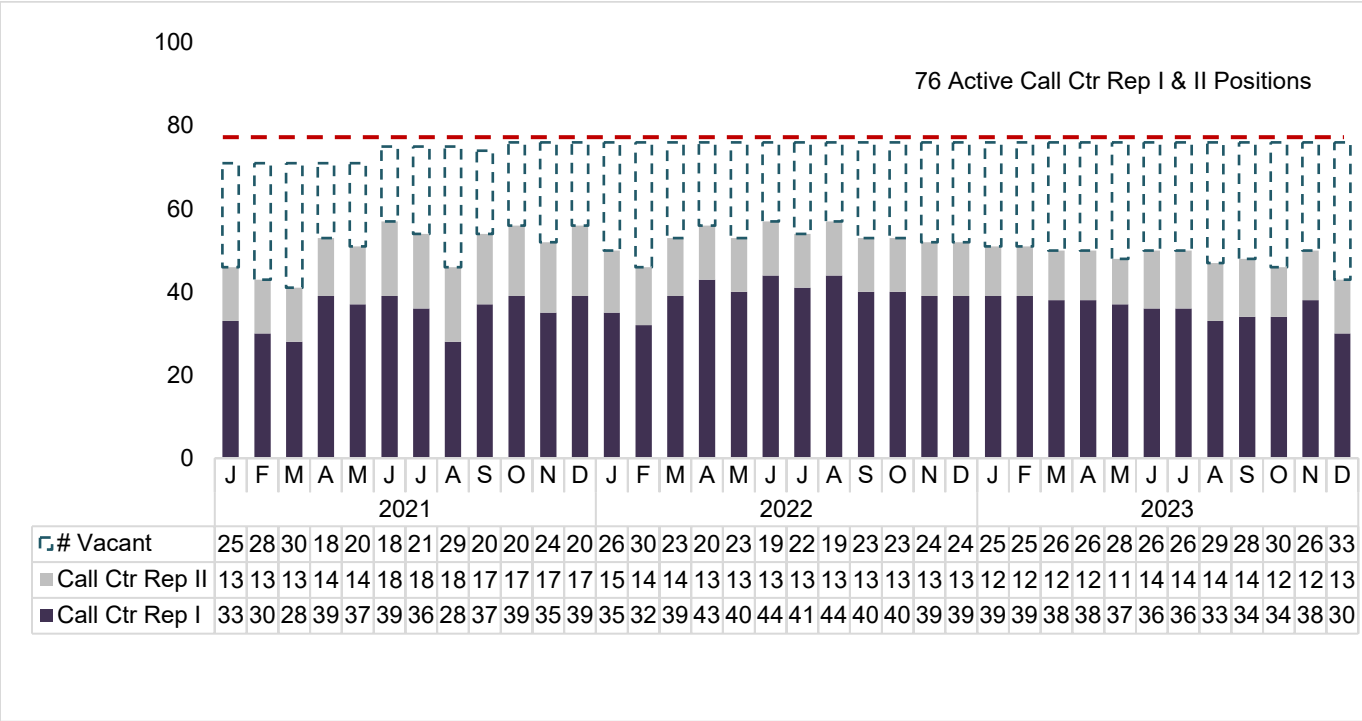
Exhibit 18: Majority of Vacant Positions Were in the Call Center in December 2023



Source: Prepared by auditors based on Oracle data as of December 2023

We also found that the department did not fill all of its call center representative positions between 2021 and 2023 (see Exhibit 19). On average, about 32% (24 of 76) of its call center representative positions were vacant per month during this period.

Exhibit 19: ATL311 Could Not Fill All Representative Positions Between 2021 and 2023



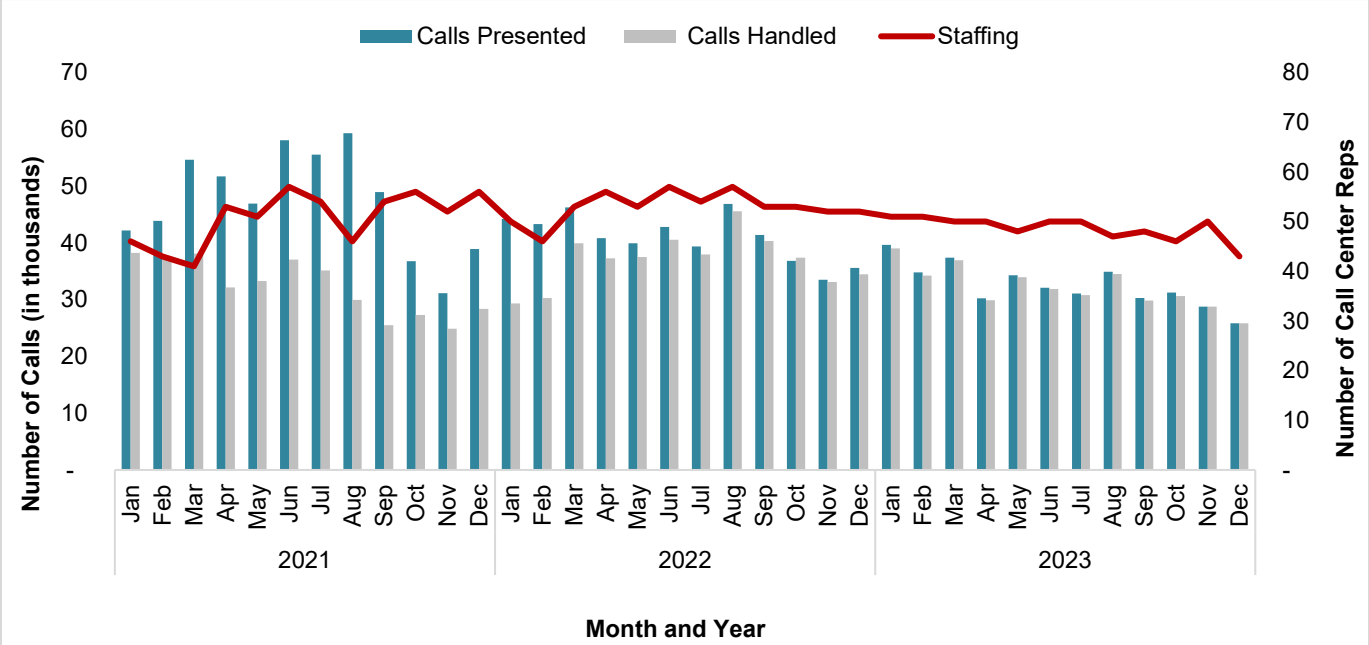
Source: Prepared by auditors based on Oracle data as of December 2023

Department leadership said that the nature of the job and salary and staff transfers to other city departments contribute to the difficulty of retaining staff. Leadership told us that they advocated for an additional pay raise for agents after completing initial job training. Additionally, they have been working with Human Resources to improve their hiring practices, including updating job descriptions and promoting internally; however, the department could not provide a methodology for its current staffing allocation. The department hired a workforce manager in August 2024, to manage staffing.

Staff vacancies, paired with high call volume can overwhelm ATL311 operations. Department staff told us that call center supervisors rarely take calls but may assist call representatives when major events happen in the city, such as the Superbowl or a water main break. Team leaders only take calls on Mondays or when call wait times in the queue increase. We observed in one instance, the call taker was not able to fully close out cases before receiving another call due to call volume; this could result in information not being entered into ServiceNow.

Exhibit 20 shows that the call center was able to handle the call volume despite vacancies in 2023; however, the current staffing levels may be unable to sustain adherence to performance targets if the call volume increases.

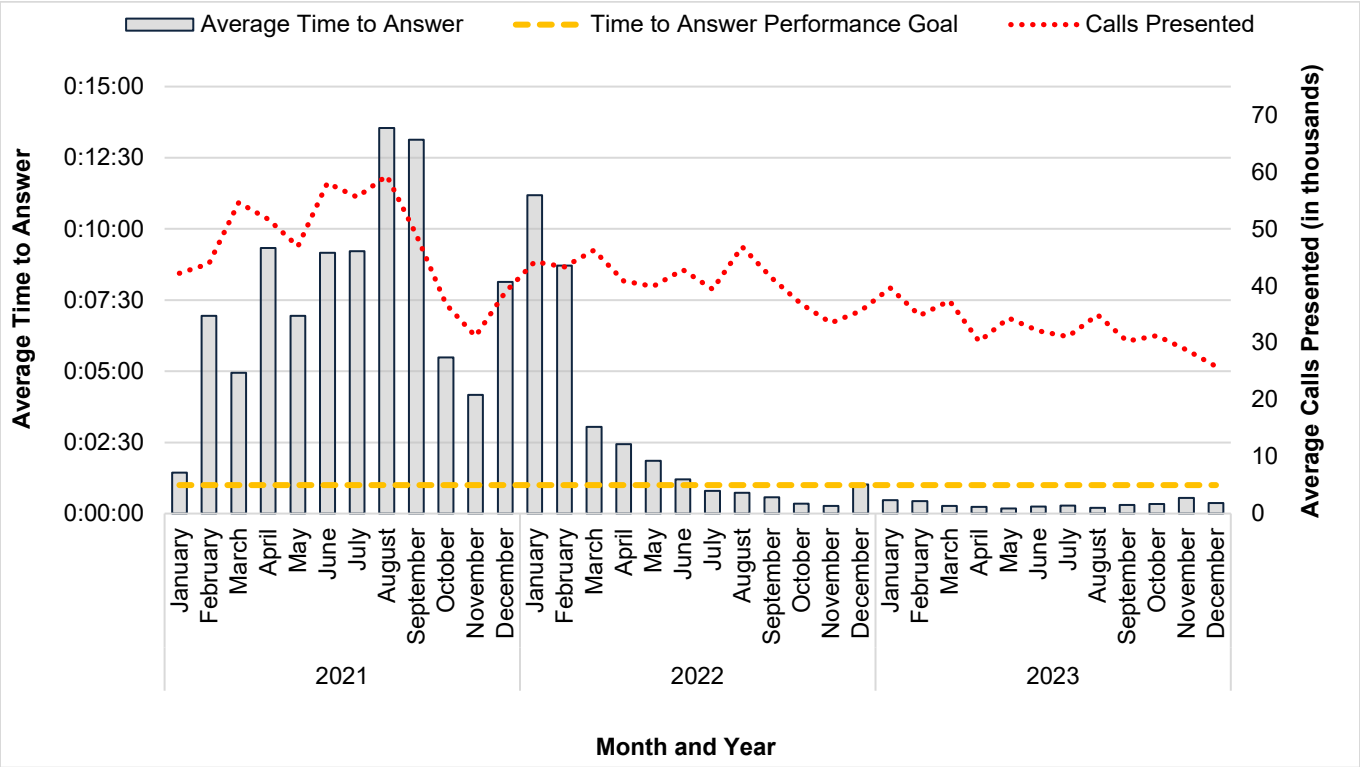
Exhibit 20: Staff Were Able to Handle Call Workload During 2023 Despite Vacancies



Source: Prepared by auditors based on ServiceNow data and Oracle staffing data between 2021 and 2023

As shown in Exhibit 21, ATL311 met its time to answer performance goal as the number of calls presented went down. We assessed call volume compared to the average time to answer from January 2021 through December 2023.

Exhibit 21: Reduced Call Volume Allowed ATL311 to Meet its Performance Goal



Source: Prepared by auditors based on ATL311 Performance Management reports between 2021 and 2023

Because staff retention may affect the department's ability to meet performance goals, ATL311 should conduct an assessment to align workload needs with staffing levels. We recommend that the commissioner at least annually review workload requirements, considering calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands, to determine the optimal number of staff to meet these requirements without difficulty.

Not all call center representatives were trained to handle calls for each department, which could lead to higher call wait times. Staff told us that when they receive a call for a department they are not trained to handle, they transfer the caller to another representative who has been trained; this happens most often with customers who are confused by the IVR system.

As of September 2024, 77% (34 of 44) of ATL311 agents are trained in all departments and general information calls. The department tracks which agents have been trained to handle general information calls, and requests for Transportation, Public Works, Watershed Management, Finance, Mayor's Office of Film & Entertainment, Municipal Court, and Code Enforcement. Department leadership told us that the goal is to ensure each customer service

representative is trained to handle calls for all departments. The department anticipates having all agents trained in all departments by the end of November 2024. Going forward, all new hires will be fully trained when they start.

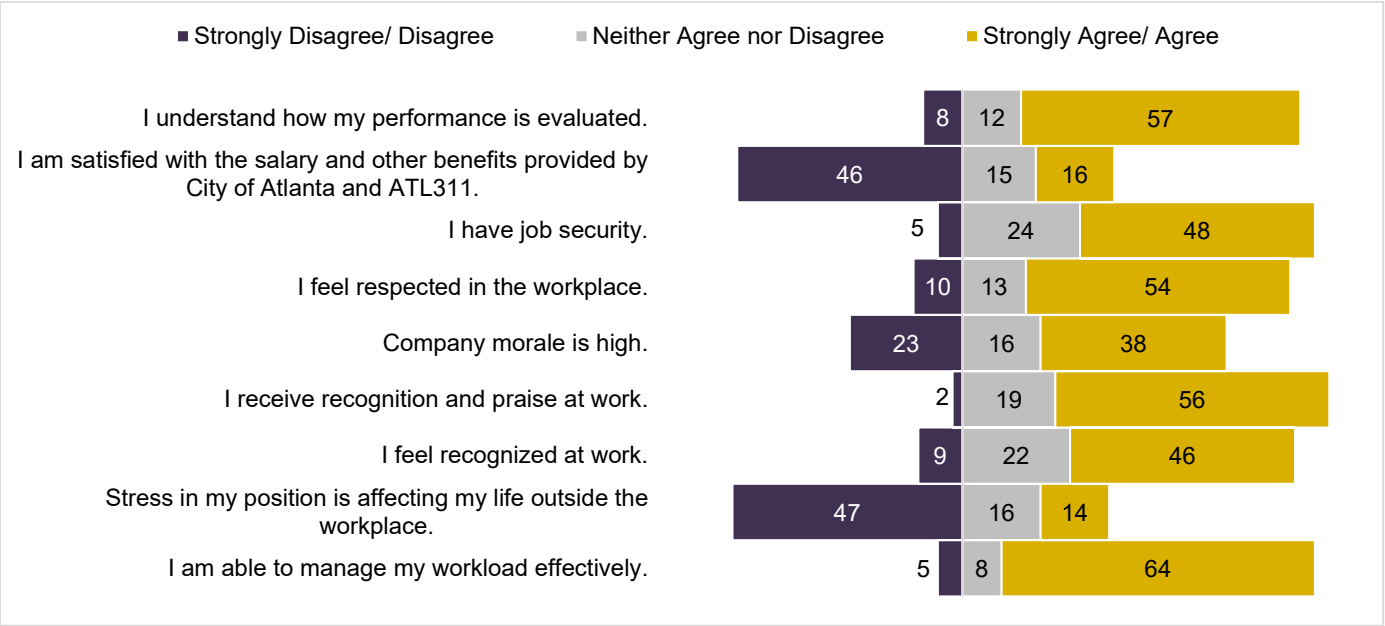
Staff Appear to Be Satisfied with Current Department Culture

ATL311's senior leadership team revamped its Employee Recognition Incentive Program in 2022 to keep team morale high. Through the program, leadership can reward employees monthly and provide quarterly recognition for reaching milestones related to employment anniversaries, retirements, holidays, and more. To gauge employee satisfaction, we surveyed ATL311 staff between April 4, 2024, and April 16, 2024, using 20 questions. The questions were designed to capture whether employees understood performance requirements, felt recognized and respected, had high morale, and were satisfied with salary and other benefits. A copy of the survey questions and results is included in Appendix B.

Approximately 79% (77 of 98) of ATL311 staff responded to the survey. Most of the responses were positive, but respondents expressed dissatisfaction with salary and other benefits across roles and tenure (see Exhibit 22). Specifically, the survey results indicated:

- most respondents agreed that stress does not affect employees outside the workplace
- close to half of respondents (38 of 77) agreed that morale is high
- more respondents with 1-2 years' work experience with the city or less agreed that morale is higher, than respondents who had been with the city longer
- most responses (393 of 693) indicated that employees agreed that they can manage their workload, and receive respect and recognition

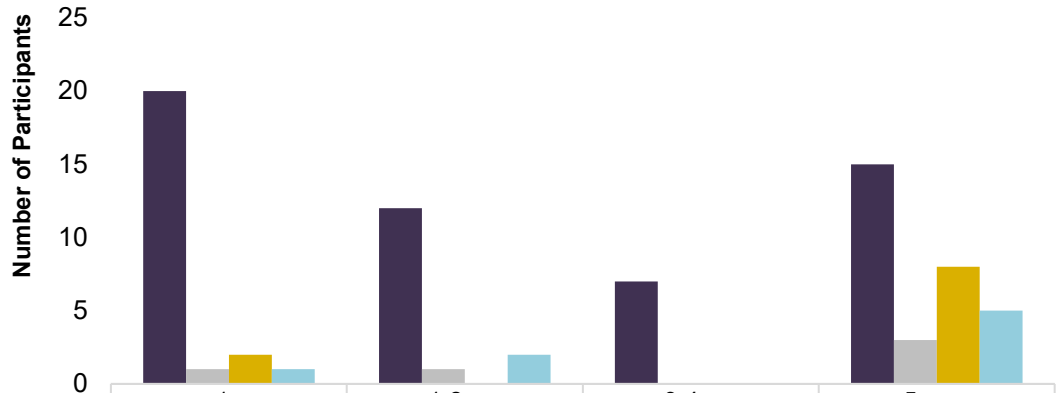
Exhibit 22: Most ATL311 Responses Were Positive



Source: Prepared by auditors based on staff survey responses in April 2024

Most participants in the survey were individual contributors and had less than one year of employment with the department. Exhibit 23 shows the role and tenure of respondents.

Exhibit 23: The Majority of Survey Participants Were Individual Contributors



	<1 yr	1-2 yrs	3-4 yrs	5+ yrs
Individual contributor	20	12	7	15
Senior executive	1	1	0	3
Manager	2	0	0	8
Team lead	1	2	0	5

Number of Participants by Role and Tenure

Source: Prepared by auditors based on staff survey responses and Oracle data as of April 2024

Based on the survey responses, we concluded that staff are generally satisfied with the department's current culture. Although salary seems to be staff's biggest concern, due to the city's ongoing pay classification study, we determined efforts to address this issue are already underway and out of scope for this audit.

ATL311 Operations Follow Most Industry Best Practices

ATL311 is following some industry best practices for call centers and is in the process of implementing others. The department has established clear policies and procedures for its call center, provides training, and has systems in place to track key performance indicators.

While ATL311 supports multiple channels for customer communication, staff could not verify that they provide teletypewriter (TTY) or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) communication access for customers who experience deafness, hearing limitations, or who have speech impairments. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that state and local governments communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities. We also found that not all of the online resources available from the department are able to be translated to other languages. To guarantee equitable access to city information and services, the department should implement accessibility methods for employees and the public with differing accessibility needs. The department should also offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions.

The department has not enforced compliance with the city's employee exit process policy. The policy requires the separated employee to relinquish all phones and other communication devices effective immediately on the day of resignation or termination. However, we found that ATL311 employee equipment returns ranged from less than one business day to 35 days. Allowing separated employees to retain city-issued equipment poses the risk of loss and potential unapproved access to city systems. The department should enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day. To make sure that all teleworking staff acknowledge the timely equipment return, the human resources commissioner should update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination.

Key Performance Indicators Align with Best Practices

ATL311 follows best practices for measuring internal and external success. According to the U.S. Contact Center Decision-Makers' Guide 2023, a random sample of 205 contact center managers and directors identified internal and external measures important for improving quality and performance. The internal metrics identified include:

- call duration/average handle time
- agent occupancy rate
- call throughput/abandonment rate
- staff attrition rate
- average speed to answer

We found that ATL311 tracks each of these metrics. Call duration/ average handle time, agent occupancy, call abandonment, and average speed to answer are calculated using the Calabrio system. Staff attrition is tracked monthly by the department's business managers, including representatives from Human Resources, Atlanta Information Management, and ATL311, who all send reports to ATL311 leadership stating the date and reason for attrition.

Best practices also identified external metrics:

- customer satisfaction
- first contact resolution (FCR)
- agent quality scores
- adherence to service levels

ATL311 tracks customer satisfaction through surveys and complaints to determine potential improvements. Team leaders and supervisors use Calabrio to assess agent quality scores and Connect Path, formerly known as Dextr/AWS Connect, to measure adherence to the service level agreement. First contact resolution is the only external metric ATL311 does not measure, and staff told us this is because most calls are referred to departments for resolution.

Best practices for call centers are not one size fits all for every call center and some practices are specific to the environment of the call center. The U.S. General Services Administration Contact Center's Center of Excellence (CoE) released the Contact Center Best Practices report highlighting best-in-class elements that centers may include. We found that ATL311 incorporates various best-in-class elements, including intelligent IVR, leveraging data to identify

skillset gaps for training and to improve overall customer experience, and utilizing an integrated knowledge base and CRM.

ATL311 could improve its compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The federal law requires state and local governments to communicate effectively with individuals who communicate differently. Staff told us that the call center no longer provides a teletypewriter (TTY) or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) service for customer use and was discontinued under the former Customer Service Commissioner. TTY/TDD devices allow people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impairments to communicate by text over the phone. According to staff, the option was previously available but was removed because it was rarely used. ATL311 may not be aware of the Georgia Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), which is a free service that provides trained communications assistants to convey messages through video relay with an American sign language interpreter, speech-to-speech, and speech-to-text. According to the TRS website, customers in Georgia can dial 7-1-1 or go online at www.georgiarelay.org to access the service.

The department could improve accessibility by publicizing this service on its customer web portal and social media. We recommend that the commissioner implement accessibility methods to ensure those with accessibility needs have equitable access to information and assistance.

We also reviewed ATL311's website and communications. Department staff told us that the department does not currently have staff that are bilingual, or multilingual. ATL311 representatives use a third-party vendor, Language Access Line, to assist with translating calls in any language. The ATL311 website uses the Google language feature to provide language translation functionality; however, not all communications have been translated. ATL311's videos are only offered in English and its frequently asked questions page appears as an image that cannot be interpreted by the Google language feature. To ensure all ATL311 communications are accessible, the commissioner should offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions.

Agent Offboarding Needs Additional Inventory Controls

The department is not consistently enforcing Human Resources' exit process policy for employees to return equipment immediately after termination. According to Human Resources' employee exit process

policy, IT access should be disabled and devices should be returned immediately, on the day of resignation or termination. According to department leadership, ATL311 works alongside Human Resources to carry out this process. The department provides call center representatives with a laptop, monitor, network cord, gigabit adapter, mouse, MiFi device, and headset. All other department staff receive a laptop, one or two monitors, a network cord, and a MiFi device. Certain staff may also receive city cell phones, with approval from a director. We found that separated employees took from 1 to 35 business days to return equipment to the department in 2022 and 2023 and in one instance, a separated employee never returned the issued equipment. ATL311 leadership also informed us that permissions are suspended for separated employees at the time of resignation or termination to decrease the risk of unauthorized access.

The Human Resources' employee separation and clearance form includes a departmental checklist listing examples of electronic equipment, access cards, and communication devices that must be returned, as well as final actions, including completion of the pension clearance form for employees in the pension plan. Human Resources staff confirmed that they will not sign off on the pension clearance form until the employee is in good standing with the city. Human Resources' exit policy defines the offboarding process based on the type of termination, including:

- Resigned or terminated employee - submit written notice at least 14 days in advance of resignation date and schedule date for exit conference and return city properties, and sign and separation and clearance form
- Retired employee - schedule for exit conference, secure and account for city properties, and sign separation and clearance form, before the pension release form is authorized
- Dismissed or discharged employee - secure city properties and network access before the termination meeting, and sign separation and clearance form
- Transferred employee - not defined

Between January 2022 and December 2023, 74 former employees had city equipment to return. Exhibit 24 shows that the return rate was slower for terminated and transferred employees than for those who resigned.

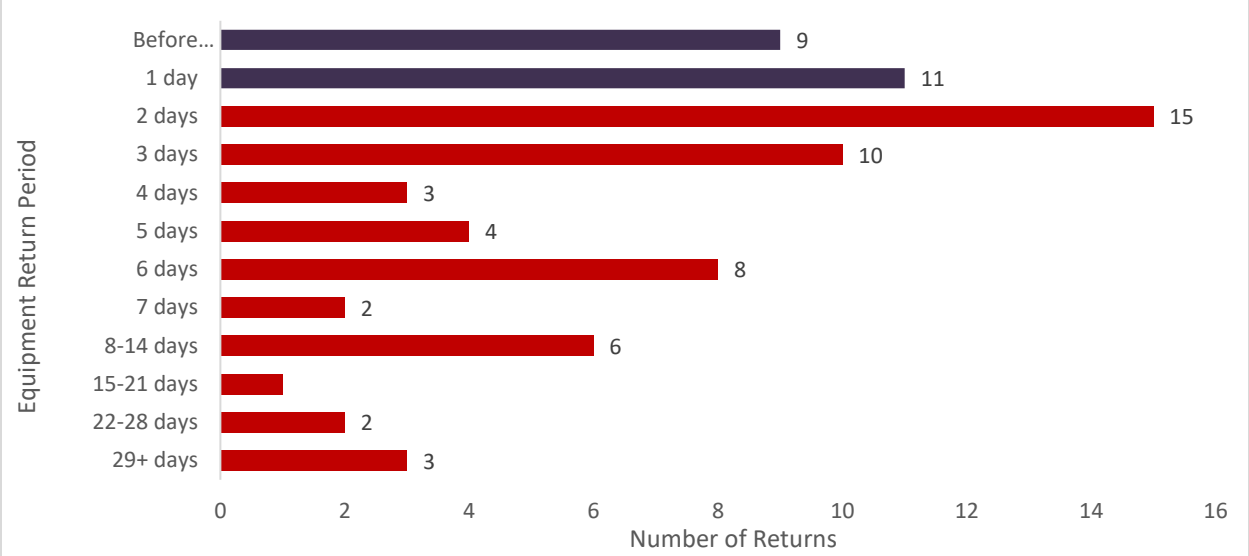
Exhibit 24: Customer Service Did Not Enforce Timely Equipment Return

Separation Type	Returned <=1 Business Day	Returned >1 Business Day
Deceased	0	1
No Show	1	0
Resignation	12	23
Retirement	0	2
Termination	2	14
Transferred	5	14
Total	**20**	**54**

Source: Prepared by auditors based on department attrition data from 2022 and 2023

We found that only about 27% of separated employees returned their equipment before their termination date or on time, with a median return date of three business days. Department staff told us that because employees work remotely, separated employees are not required to come in immediately to return equipment; however, their permissions and access are suspended immediately. According to department leadership, this return process was deemed appropriate by Human Resources. Staff also said that late equipment return does not impact operations because the department has enough equipment to provide new hires. As shown in Exhibit 25, about 73% (54 of 74) of separated employees did not return their equipment within one business day.

Exhibit 25: Majority of Separated Employees Did Not Return Equipment on Time



Source: Prepared by auditors based on ATL311 information and Oracle data from 2022 and 2023

The city's telework agreement establishes parameters for working remotely and each employee must sign and acknowledge that the

policy terms are understood. However, the telework agreement does not include language that addresses equipment return post-employment with the city, which may pose a potential risk to the city's ability to safeguard its assets. Because ATL311 staff work 100% remotely, we recommend that the commissioner enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day. To ensure that all teleworking staff acknowledge the timely equipment return and prevent loss of city-owned equipment, we recommend that the human resources commissioner update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination.

Recommendations

To enhance call center operations and improve the customer experience, the customer service commissioner should

1. at least annually review workload requirements with consideration to calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands to determine the optimal number of staff to meet these requirements without difficulty
2. enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day
3. implement accessibility methods to ensure employees and the public with differing accessibility needs have equitable access to information
4. offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions

To prevent loss of city-owned equipment, the human resources commissioner should:

5. update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination

Appendices

Appendix A: Management Review and Response to Audit Recommendations

Report # 24.02	Report Title: ATL311	Date: October 2024

Recommendation #1:

We recommend that the customer service commissioner at least annually review workload requirements with consideration to calls, cases, and key performance indicator demands to determine the optimal number of staff to meet these requirements without difficulty.

Risk Category:	**Recommendation Priority:**	**Auditee Response:**
Service Delivery	Medium	Agree

Related Finding(s):

1. ATL311 leadership has not completed a recent workload analysis to determine the ideal staffing level needed to handle the workload and meet performance targets without leading to staff burnout. The last workload analysis was completed in 2021.

Proposed Action:

Workforce Management (WFM) to complete workload analysis identifying optimal staffing levels to meet performance goals and create additional opportunities for employee coaching, development, training, and time off. This workload analysis will seek to balance meeting the needs of the business while also meeting the needs of our employee well-being.

WFM to provide a quarterly staffing analysis to align the arrival patterns with staffing requirements. The staffing requirements based on Erlang C calculations, (contact center tools), Erlang C calculator includes the following assumptions:

- Interval Call Arrival Patterns
- Service Level Target
- AHT
- Shrinkage
- Occupancy

Based on the findings, align the agents' shifts to optimize headcount requirements with workload demands.

Current Status:

Partly Implemented

Business Owner:

WFM, Division of Innovation Performance & Accountability

Estimated Implementation Date (M/Y):
01/25

Additional Comments:

Workload analysis staffing to production volume has been started by WFM. Analysis and implementation will be completed by January 2025. Call Center Operations has two customer service representative new hire class scheduled (Sept., Nov.). Additional employee target of 25 customer service representatives in production by January 2025 will aid in balancing the workloads and mitigating the risk of burnout.

We will begin conducting the workload analysis every quarter instead of just once or twice a year.

Recommendation #2:		
We recommend that the customer service commissioner enforce human resources exit policy and ensure separated staff return equipment within one business day.		
Risk Category: Asset Misappropriation	**Recommendation Priority:** Low	**Auditee Response:** Partially Agree
Related Finding(s): 1. We found that ATL311 employee equipment returns ranged from less than one business day to 35 days. Allowing terminated employees to retain city-issued equipment poses the risk of loss and potential unapproved access to city systems.		
Proposed Action: We have drafted an equipment return policy memo and are awaiting approvals from the Departments of Human Resources & Law before sharing with employees.		**Current Status:** Started
Business Owner: Business Manager, Administration Division		**Estimated Implementation Date (M/Y):** 10/24
Additional Comments: ATL311 follows the guidance of DHR in all onboarding and offboarding processes.		

Recommendation #3: We recommend that the customer service commissioner implement accessibility methods to ensure employees and the public with differing accessibility needs have equitable access to information.		
Risk Category: Service Delivery	**Recommendation Priority:** Low	**Auditee Response:** Agree
Related Finding(s): 1. Staff told us that the call center no longer provides a teletypewriter (TTY) or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) service for customer use. TTY/TDD devices allow people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impairments to communicate by text over the phone.		
Proposed Action: In April 2021, ATL311 discontinued TTY service through NexTalk due to low usage, with costs exceeding $7,000 per month at that time. We are currently working with AIM in exploring the option of reactivating TTY through the AWS marketplace for a usage-based fee. In addition, ATL311 is working with AIM and the Mayors Office of Communications to implement assistive technologies in the near future.		**Current Status:** Started
Business Owner: Division of Innovation Performance & Accountability		**Estimated Implementation Date (M/Y):** TBD
Additional Comments: Will keep the Audit Team updated on the rollout dates once determined by AIM.		

Recommendation #4:		
We recommend that the customer service commissioner offer translated communications for various sources including YouTube and the website Frequently Asked Questions.		
Risk Category: Service Delivery	**Recommendation Priority:** Low	**Auditee Response:** Agree
Related Finding(s): 1. We found that not all communications have been translated. ATL311's videos are only offered in English and its frequently asked questions page appears as an image that cannot be interpreted by the Google language feature.		
Proposed Action: For the new website that will launch in October 2024, ATL311 provided a Word document of the FAQs that can be translated when changing the language through Google. ATL311 will receive translation assistance from the Office of Immigrant Affairs for future YouTube content in the future.		**Current Status:** Started
Business Owner: Division of Customer Service Delivery		**Estimated Implementation Date (M/Y):** 10/24
Additional Comments: Once our new ATL311 website is activated our documents will be in Word format which customers will be able to select the Google translate option. We have tested this scenario in our test environment, and it works.		

Recommendation #5:

We recommend that the human resources commissioner update the city's telework agreement to include language concerning equipment return at termination.

Risk Category:	**Recommendation Priority:**	**Auditee Response:**
Asset Misappropriation	Low	Disagree

Related Finding(s):

1. The city's telework agreement establishes parameters for working remotely and each employee must sign and acknowledge that the policy terms are understood. However, the telework agreement does not include language that addresses equipment return post-employment with the city, which may pose a potential risk to the city's ability to safeguard its assets.

Proposed Action:

Human Resources proposes that ATL311 collaborate with AIM to develop an Employee Equipment Acknowledgment Statement, or a similar document, to be signed by employees when they are issued City equipment.

This document would clarify that any City-issued equipment is the property of the City of Atlanta and is provided solely for City business purposes. It would outline the employee's responsibility to maintain the equipment's condition and security, while ensuring compliance with applicable City policies. Additionally, it would specify the employee's obligation to return all equipment upon request or immediately upon termination, with a strict deadline of one business day after their last day of work.

This approach addresses the recommendation and ensures broader coverage and consistency, as it applies to all ATL311 employees who receive City equipment, not just those under the Telework Agreement.

Current Status:

Started

Business Owner:

ATL311

Estimated Implementation Date (M/Y):
10/24

Additional Comments:

Human Resources created a sample document for review, modification, or immediate use. Human Resources is available for further consultation to assist with the implementation of the proposed action.

Appendix B: ATL311 Employee Survey Questions and Results

ATL311 - Employee Satisfaction Survey

78	15:00	Closed
Responses	Average time to complete	Status

1. What is your job role?

Individual contributor	55
Team lead	8
Manager	10
Senior executive	5

2. How long have you been with the City of Atlanta?

Less than 1 year	24
1-2 years	15
3-4 years	7
5+ years	32

3. I am able to manage my workload effectively.

4. Please provide additional feedback.

78
Responses

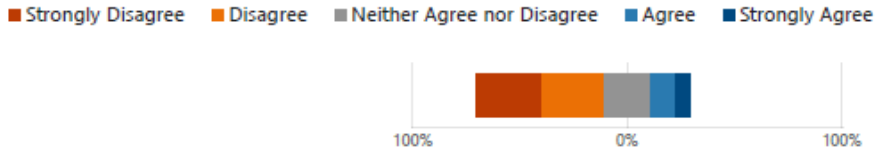
Latest Responses

"none"

"I often feel tasks are assigned to me that are outside of my role, but I co...

"I can effectively handle my workload, but there are days when balancin...

5. Stress in my position is affecting my life outside the workplace.



6. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

22
Responses

Latest Responses

"It was, but I have made changes to reestablish the work-life balance, e.g...

"Achieving work-life balance is definitely feasible during my regular shift...

7. I feel recognized at work.

8. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

24
Responses

Latest Responses
"There is one person in Senior Leadership that recognizes achievement....."

9. I receive recognition and praise at work.

10. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

23
Responses

Latest Responses
"I do not receive praise from my direct supervisor."

11. Company morale is high.

12. Please provide additional feedback.

78
Responses

Latest Responses

"Employees are displeased with management"

"This is difficult to judge because I think it varies from team to team."

"In my observation, new agents generally exhibit high morale, whereas i...

13. I feel respected in the workplace.

14. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

19
Responses

Latest Responses

"I feel that my work is respected among my peers."

"I sense a decline in the level of respect I receive compared to before. Des...

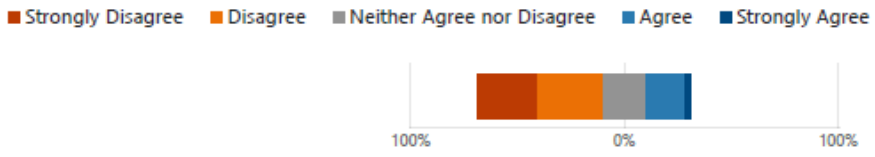
15. I have job security.

16. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

17
Responses

Latest Responses
"I do believe that my job provides adequate job security."

17. I am satisfied with the salary and other benefits provided by City of Atlanta and ATL311.



18. Please provide additional feedback.

78
Responses

Latest Responses
"Employees are asked to complete additional job duties without receivin...
"When I am assigned tasks that are outside of my role, it makes me dissa...
"Based on payroll research, my compensation is more than 30% below t...

19. I understand how my performance is evaluated.

20. (Optional) Please provide additional feedback.

21
Responses

Latest Responses

"During my last evaluation I was told that I needed to do more LinkedIn ...