# A3 Problem Solving | Strategic Objective 5.3- Decrease Forced-Disconnect Rate

Lean!

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ESA/ April 2014

## Clarify the Problem

The Community Services Division (CSD) Customer Service Contact Center (CSCC) is the main point of phone contact for clients receiving assistance with basic food, childcare, cash and medical benefits. Clients telephone the CSCC to report changes, complete applications and reviews, and to ask general questions.

When a client reaches the CSCC, their call is placed in a queue depending on information they provided. Each queue has a set number of lines. If all of the lines are at capacity, the client receives a recorded message and is then disconnected. This is known as a forced-disconnect.

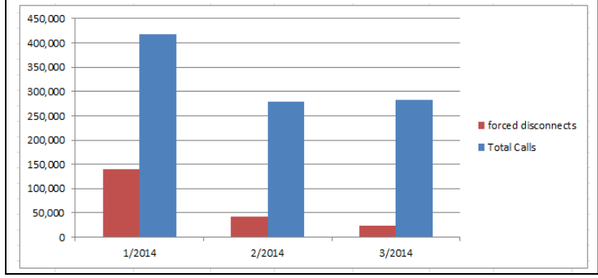
The forced-disconnect rate is impacted by several internal factors including; system production schedules, date benefits are deposited, back office work, holidays, available resources (number of agents/systems/lines), and external events. Some external events outside of the control of CSD that impact the forced-disconnect rate include system and program issues, Federal and State legislative changes and natural disasters.

## Breakdown the Problem

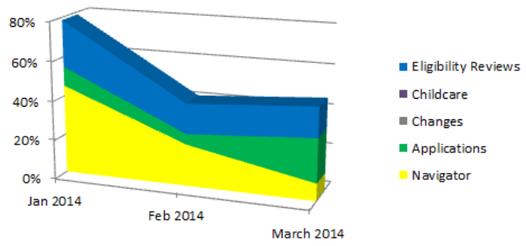
The reduction in the forced disconnect rate over the three months profiled can be most significantly attributed to: a) reduction in batch workload resulting in fewer incoming calls; and b) adjustments to the number of staff assigned to individual queues.

| | January 2014 | | | February 2014 | | | March 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Queue | Total Calls | Forced Disconnect Calls | Forced Disconnect Percentage | Total Calls | Forced Disconnect Calls | Forced Disconnect Percentage | Total Calls | Forced Disconnect Calls | Forced Disconnect Percentage |
| Eligibility Reviews | 47420 | 11193 | 24% | 35080 | 5381 | 15% | 36312 | 5537 | 15% |
| Applications | 23977 | 2336 | 10% | 17115 | 900 | 5% | 21543 | 4795 | 22% |
| Changes | 42292 | 0 | 0% | 37204 | 0 | 0% | 40634 | 0 | 0% |
| Childcare | 25071 | 0 | 0% | 19709 | 0 | 0% | 23864 | 0 | 0% |
| Navigator | 278437 | 126104 | 45% | 170108 | 35957 | 21% | 159639 | 13963 | 9% |
| Totals | 417197 | 139633 | 33% | 279216 | 42238 | 15% | 281992 | 24295 | 9% |

### Number of Calls



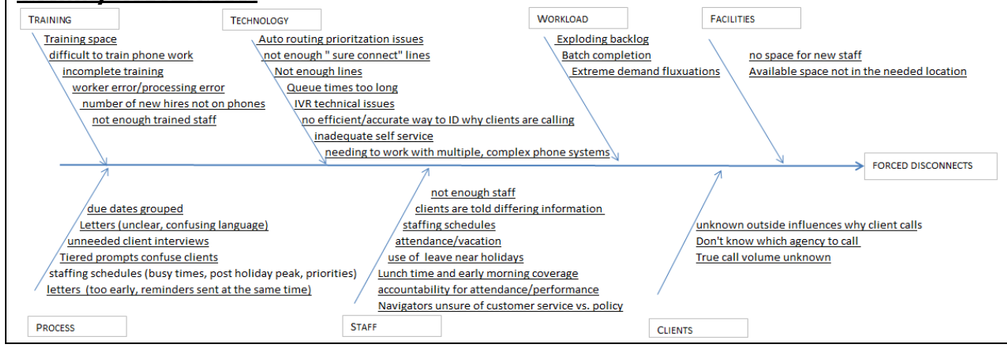

### Forced-disconnect Percentage by Queue




## Target Settings

The CSCC forced-disconnect rate decreases from 58 percent in January 2013 to zero percent by July 2015.

## Identify Root Cause




## Identify Countermeasures

| Root Cause | Proposed Countermeasure | Feasibility | Cost | Risk | Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unclear Letters | Change ACES letters to emphasize actions needed by clients. | Low | High | Low | High |
| Unclear letters | Create reminder to send out to staff to assure clients are informed and have the info they need. | High | Low | Low | Low |
| Unclear letters | Create reminder for staff to explain letters that the client will be receiving. | High | Low | Low | Medium |
| Letters timing | Change 'respond by' date, mail dates. | Low | High | Low | High |
| Auto routing prioritization issues | Create a policy for the call to be worked at first contact resolution (no colored queues). | Medium | Low | High | Low |
| Staffing schedules | Create proposal Fulltime/Part-time/Flex schedules for anticipated call volumes. | Medium | Medium | Low | High |
| Staffing schedules | Create proposal for on-call or unique schedules staffing for peak times. | Medium | Medium | Low | High |
| Staffing schedules | Purchase and deploy a Workforce Optimization Tool. | High | High | Medium | High |
| Staffing schedules | Create plan to share staff between CSCC and CSOs. | Low | Low | Medium | Low |
| Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) issues | Provide recommendations to improve IVR to provide more self-service calls. | Low | Medium | Low | High |
| Inadequate self service | Request waivers and/or change program rules to allow for more self-service. | Low | Low | Medium | Medium |
| Inadequate self service | Create upfront marketing on what to have when calling. | Medium | Medium | Low | Medium |
| Inadequate self service | Add videos and self-help to Washington Connection to promote self-service. | Low | High | Low | High |
| Inadequate space to hire new staff | Expedite building consolidated contact center hub location on second floor at Spokane Valley CSO in accordance with the CSD Facility Strategic Plan. | Low | High | Low | High |
| Training room capacity | Obtain and equip more permanent CSD training rooms. | Low | High | Low | High |
| Not enough trained staff | Create a plan to overstaff for attrition. | High | High | Low | High |
| Not enough trained staff | Assign seasoned staff on harder queues. | High | Low | Low | High |
| Not enough trained staff | Change policy to allow for reduced after call work during peak times (alternate process). | Medium | Low | High | Low |
| Queue times too long | Create a queue for simple questions. | Low | Medium | Medium | Low |
| Incomplete training | Ensure staff get the current training for effective interviewing. | High | Medium | Low | Low |
| Incomplete training | Allow staff to take more ongoing trainings (already available). | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Incomplete training | Create information guide for the CSO/FSS to know these CSCC process. | High | Low | Low | Medium |
| Navigators unsure customer services vs. policy | Revisit 'Navigator' training for priority. | High | Low | Low | Low |
| System Capacity | Evaluate the number of lines. | High | Medium | Low | Low |
| System Capacity | Evaluate current Queues (number and sizes). | High | Medium | Low | Low |
| Clients don't know who to call | Add recorded information for clients to listen to while they are on hold. | Low | Medium | Low | High |

## Action Plan

| ID# | Problem to be solved | Action Item | Lead | Due Date | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | Staffing schedules | Purchase and deploy a Workforce Optimization Tool. | B. Roberts | 7/2014 | In process |
| 2 | Staffing schedules | Create proposal Full-time/Part-time/Flex schedules for anticipated call volumes. | R. Johnson | 12/2014 | Pending |
| 3&4 | Staffing schedules | Create proposal for on-call or unique schedules staffing for peak times. | R. Johnson | 12/2014 | Pending |
| 18 | Number of lines | Evaluate the number of lines. | CSD | 8/2014 | Pending |
| 10 | Not enough trained staff | Create a plan to overstaff for attrition. | CSD | 8/2014 | Pending |
| 11 | Not enough trained staff | Assign seasoned staff on harder queues. | CSD | 7/2014 | Pending |
| added | Inadequate space to hire new staff | Work with Leased Facilities Unit and Office of Financial Management to fund and build consolidated hub location at Spokane Valley CSO. | Shawn Hartline | 9/2014 | Pending |
| added | Training room capacity | Identify and equip additional feasible locations for CSD training rooms. | Shawn Hartline | 12/2014 | Pending |

**Evaluate Results, Standardize, then Repeat**