

CHAPTER 5: Contact with the County

Somewhat less than half (43.8%) of Spotsylvania County residents reported contacting the County for any reason during the 12 months prior to the survey. Of those who did, most were satisfied with the service they received when contacting a County department. Citizens more likely to have had contact with the County in the past year include homeowners, males, those aged 26 or older, and those with higher levels of education and income.

Helpfulness, Efficiency and Knowledge of County Employees

Spotsylvania County residents that reported having contacted a County department during the past 12 months were asked how satisfied they were with the courtesy and helpfulness of the County employees that they encountered. Most indicated they were quite satisfied with the level of courtesy and helpfulness, with 83.6 percent reporting that they were either somewhat satisfied or very satisfied.

When asked to rate the efficiency and promptness of County employees, over three-fourths (77.6%) said that they were satisfied with their experience. Notably, African-Americans were significantly more likely to be satisfied with the efficiency compared to Caucasian respondents (85.7 percent vs. 77.5%).

In addition, slightly more than 80 percent (80.7%) said they felt satisfied with County employees' level of knowledge pertaining to their job. These findings suggest that the County of Spotsylvania is doing a good job in maintaining the excellence of customer service by its employees. Table 5.1 illustrates this information.

Table 5.1: Satisfaction with Helpfulness of County Employees

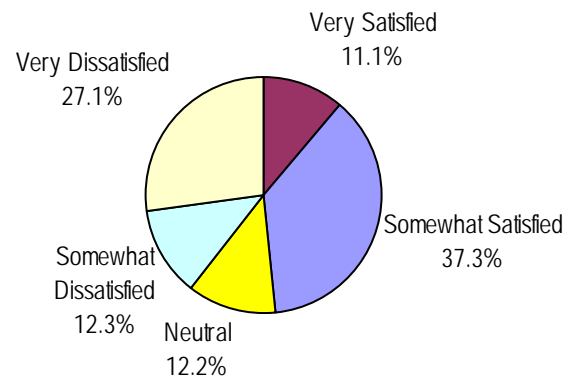
Item	% Satisfied (Very & Somewhat)	% Very Satisfied Only
Courtesy and helpfulness	83.6	58.3
Efficiency and promptness	77.6	51.9
Knowledge	80.7	54.8

Satisfaction with the County's Automated Phone System

Whereas respondents to this survey indicated overall satisfaction with employee contact at County offices, significantly fewer reported satisfaction with the County's automated phone system. Overall, less than half (48.4%) of those who have used the automated phone service felt satisfied with the experience, with only 11.1 percent indicating they were very satisfied (see Figure 5.1).

Interestingly, satisfaction with the automated phone system varied significantly across voting districts. The highest ratings were from those living in Lee Hill and Livingston, with two-thirds of those who have used the phone service reporting satisfaction with the experience compared to only a third of those in the Berkeley and Salem districts. The majority of those in the Courtland district (60%) also felt satisfied with the phone system whereas less than half of those in Chancellor (48.1%) and only 42.1 percent of Battlefield residents reported any satisfaction. There were no differences in satisfaction with the automated phone system based on other demographic variables.

Figure 5.1: Satisfaction with County's Automated Phone System



Experience with the Treasurer's Office and the Commissioner of Revenue

A substantial amount of the contact that occurred with the County was either with the Treasurer's Office or the Commissioner of Revenue's office. Satisfaction levels with the contact with both of these constitutional offices were quite high.

Of those respondents that reported having contacted the County during the past 12 months, more than two-thirds of them (67.9%), or 27.3 percent of all respondents, have either called or visited the Treasurer’s office in the past twelve months and the vast majority of those (90.6%) were satisfied with their experience, as Tables 5.2 and 5.3 indicate. Notably, satisfaction with experience at the Treasurer’s office was higher among those with children in public school versus private school, those who are or have been married versus those who have never been married, and those whose household income is less than \$75,000.

Table 5.2: Experience with Treasurer’s Office and Commissioner of Revenue

Item	% Contacting in Past 12 Months
Treasurer’s Office	67.9
Commissioner of Revenue	37.3

Significantly fewer residents of Spotsylvania have called or visited the Commissioner of Revenue office. Only 37.3 percent of those respondents who have contacted the County during the past 12 months (15.0% of all respondents) said they called or visited the Commissioner of Revenue office, but like those who had contact with the Treasurer’s office, over ninety percent (92.8%) had a positive experience. Interestingly, 100 percent of those with household incomes less than \$50,000 reported being satisfied with their experience with the Commissioner of Revenue, whereas 95 percent

of those with incomes of \$75,000 to \$100,000 reported satisfaction and fewer (82.4%) of those in the highest income category (\$100,000+) said they had a positive experience.

Table 5.3: Satisfaction with Treasurer’s Office and Commissioner of Revenue

Item	% Satisfied (Very & Somewhat)	% Very Satisfied Only
Assistance you received when you called or visited the Treasurer’s Office	90.6	66.8
Assistance you received when you called or visited the Commissioner of Revenue	92.8	66.2

Summary

In summary, citizens of Spotsylvania County are very pleased with their contact with County departments, except when it comes to using the automated phone system. They reported high levels of satisfaction with the courtesy and helpfulness, efficiency and promptness, and knowledge of County employees. The majority of respondents with contact with the County report having called or visited the Treasurer’s Office and slightly more than a third visited the Commissioner of Revenue office, with the vast majority expressing satisfaction with the service received at both offices.