

Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson

nominates

The Service-Driven DMV Operating Model

led by

Melissa Smiley, Chief of Staff, Michigan Department of State

and submitted in the category of

DMV Operations

The Service-Driven operating model transformed the Michigan DMV over the course of just three years to be one of the most convenient, efficient and customer-friendly DMVs in the nation. Following a decade of increasing public frustration with Michigan's DMVs due to hours-long office wait times, broken technology, and insufficient staff to meet demand for service, Michigan's DMVs now serve most residents in the comfort of their own homes, and offices operate largely without any wait times at all. This was accomplished without adding any staff or offices, and instead by rethinking our operational model, upgrading our technology and establishing a public-private partnership that cost the state nothing. The result is that staff overtime costs have declined while morale, customer service, and resident reviews have all skyrocketed to historic highs.

Executive Summary

History:

Development of the Service-Driven DMV operating model began in January of 2019, when Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson visited all 130 of the state's DMV offices in her first 100 days in office. She found them in awful condition, following decades of disinvestment and neglect that had resulted in nearly half the offices and staff being cut while the state's population and number of vehicles increased. The result was a severe supply and demand disconnect whereby there was overwhelming public need for in-person service thrust upon insufficient state resources. Decades old technology, which stalled and broke down constantly, further fueled the frustration of residents who waited for service for hours, often sitting on the floors of packed offices. Indeed, in the prior eight years average wait times had tripled, and some offices saw wait times stretch up to seven hours, forcing residents to take a day off work or pay for child care just to renew their driver's license. To make matters worse, overtime costs were constant, as staff stayed past closing time every day in many offices to serve the sometimes hundreds of people still waiting in line. Morale among these staff was at rock-bottom, as they could never expect to leave work in time to pick up their children or even count on participating in family dinners. Their morale, paired with high frustration among residents who waited hours for service, resulted in lackluster customer service and terrible resident reviews.

Secretary Benson set the goal of rehauling the system entirely – and doing so without adding staff or offices at additional taxpayer expense – so that all office visitors could get in and out of offices in 30 minutes or less. She sought ideas from staff to fix the system, and found even among a depleted and at times despondent workforce there were plenty of strong ideas to provide better service. Through pilot programs she tried many of the ideas and ultimately implemented a set of solutions that have completely turned the system around. Those solutions include:

1. Jettisoning the decades old server systems that underpinned all operations. This was accomplished by replacing it in two massive installments, one in 2019 and one in 2021.
2. Utilizing the new technology to double the number of services available online and at self-service stations so that more residents could conduct their business without visiting offices at all.
3. Replacing all the existing self-service stations through a public-private partnership with a company that installs, monitors and repairs them at no cost to the state. Of the more than 150 machines that were installed (compared to 93 of the old machines), the majority are also located in grocery stores, making them more convenient for residents and accessible on evenings and weekends.
4. Simplifying the renewal mailers that are sent to all Michigan vehicle owners and driver's license and state ID holders. All superfluous language and material was cut from the forms and clear instructions were added to direct residents to take advantage of the opportunity to renew their credentials by mail, online, and at machines in lieu of waiting in line at offices.
5. Expanding the opportunity to schedule visits at all 130 offices and implementing it by placing greeters at the busiest offices to check-in residents who schedule ahead and determine whether those who arrive without a scheduled visit can be seen immediately or assisted to schedule a time to be served at their convenience, usually for the same or next day.

Results:

After implementing the solutions listed above, and enduring a transaction backlog caused by the pandemic, the new system has been fully functioning for six months, and the results are tremendous. They include:

1. Sixty percent of all transactions are now completed without the resident having to visit an office at all. That's up from just 28% in 2018.
2. When residents do visit offices, they are served in an average of 20 minutes or less. That is not a wait time for service. It is the total amount of time residents spend in our offices on average.

3. Staff morale has increased dramatically. Because staff recommended many of the solutions, they feel heard and valued, and because the solutions ensure they have reasonable and predictable working hours, they are now able to lead balanced family lives. This, coupled with the fact that the residents they serve are not frustrated by hours-long wait times, has resulted in far better interactions and customer service between residents and staff.
4. Overtime costs have decreased, now that offices close at closing time, rather than staying open to serve dozens if not hundreds of people still in line.
5. Customer reviews have skyrocketed to the highest point in the department's history. Of the more than 9,200 reviews submitted online in 2021, the average score is 4 out of 5. And that average has increased throughout the year as the transaction backlog caused by the pandemic waned and the new system took full effect. In the first two weeks of December the average resident review of our DMV was 4.4 out of 5.

Significance:

DMVs serve as the primary, if not only, direct interaction that many Americans have with their state government. When they provide inconvenient, inefficient and ineffective service, they bring down the reputation of state government as a whole. However, when DMVs provide modern, friendly, cost-effective and efficient customer service, they buoy public faith in government overall. And in the current era of misinformation, when politics often gridlock and public opinion of government is historically low, it is even more critical that government deliver basic, nonpartisan services effectively and efficiently. The service-driven operating model for DMVs does just that.

It is innovative in that it turns away from the archaic and expensive business model of providing in-person service for all transactions. Further, it does so by increasing convenience and efficiency for residents who would rather conduct their business with the DMV from home online or in two minutes at a grocery store kiosk. Indeed, the model is focused around improving customer experience, which is in fact what taxpayers want from their government.

Yet the model also meets the goals of the department and improves work-life balance for staff. Reduced overtime costs help our department manage our bottom line, and the predictability of overtime bolsters staff morale which ultimately leads to improved customer service.

In conclusion, the significance of the service-driven operating model cannot be overstated. It has proved revolutionary for the DMV in Michigan, and if replicated could boost public faith in state governments nationwide.

Supporting Materials

1. Detroit News coverage
2. Customer Service Update 5
3. Customer Service Update 4, focused on expanded online services
4. Customer Service Update 3
5. Customer Service Update 2, focused on self-service stations
6. Customer Service Update 1

DETROIT

Benson says 60% of SOS transactions are done without visiting branch offices

Sarah Rahal The Detroit News

Published 12:42 p.m. ET Dec. 14, 2021 | Updated 10:24 a.m. ET Dec. 15, 2021

Detroit — Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson on Tuesday touted an expansion of online service offerings as her office recovers from a pandemic-induced appointment backlog.

Benson, during a Tuesday news briefing, said Michigan residents can now conduct more than half of all transactions without visiting a branch office. Overall, she said, about 60% of transactions are being done virtually. That's an increase from 28% in 2018, she said.

Of the 65 services offered at SOS offices, 32 are available online. Residents make about 30,000 SOS transactions each day and about 60% of those are done without visiting SOS locations. The most popular services are now available online, at machines and by mail, officials said.

"We've doubled the number of services available online and most of you rarely need to visit our offices and instead you can conduct business with us in the comfort of your own home or while grabbing groceries at the local grocery store," said Benson, while touring a branch on West Grand Boulevard in Detroit. "To save you time and make interacting with our office easier, we have focused on improving three key components of our operations: convenience, efficiency, and customer service."

The shift follows technology upgrades Benson's administration implemented in 2019 and this year. More than 150 new self-service stations have been installed — many at grocery stores open nights and weekends — through a public-private partnership.

By removing the "take-a-ticket-and-wait" system that had hour-long wait times, office visits take just 20 minutes or less. The old system, Benson said, was "clearly failing people in Michigan."

"That's not a wait time, 20 minutes is the total amount of time people spend in our office," she said. "This is a dramatic turnaround compared to 2018 when many offices routinely had

wait times that lasted several hours before service was even seen."

Benson stressed Tuesday that it's "taken us time to turn things around after decades of neglect" and "we're not done" with improvements.

The department, she said, is looking to fill more than 50 vacancies across the state and she urged residents with strong customer service skills to apply.

Benson is also seeking a state appropriation to fund six additional mobile offices that will bring Secretary of State services directly to seniors, rural residents and to those who have internet and mobility limitations.

The state launched its first mobile office in southeast Michigan in October. It has helped about 400 residents obtain state identification, renew disability placards and replace wellness vehicle titles, she said.

Benson said her office continues to recover from a backlog of appointments due in part to the state legislature's expiration of extensions for renewals of driver's licenses, state ID cards, temporary instruction permits, and vehicle registrations that expired on or after March 1, 2020.

"Those (backlogs) are mostly now finished and there's no way to say definitively if the backlog itself is finished, especially as the pandemic continues because we don't know if residents still want to conduct transactions they skipped due to the pandemic," she said.

"Some of you had frustrating experiences this spring and summer when the backlog was at its worst," she said, "or in the years after I inherited a truly broken operating system."

For those visiting branch offices, Benson added, the department's system upgrades have enabled about 2,500 people each day who visit offices without a scheduled appointment to be served immediately.

"The few who arrive when offices are busy are assisted in scheduling a return visit convenient for them, usually for the same day or next day," she said.

Online services, a self-service-station locator, and more details are available at Michigan.gov/SOS. Office visits can be scheduled at the same site or by calling 888-SOS-MICH during business hours.

srahal@detroitnews.com

Rollow, Jake (MDOS)

From: Michigan Secretary of State <MISOS@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 10, 2021 10:09 AM
To: Rollow, Jake (MDOS)
Subject: Customer Service Update - 10 Dec 2021



This is the fifth bimonthly update on the status and impact of the Michigan Department of State's work to modernize customer service operations

"I was able to make an appt right away with several dates and times to choose from. I arrived a few minutes prior to my appt, checked in, and was called right away. I was waited on by a nice lady who provided excellent customer service and I was back in my car with a new license tabs and title transfer within 10 mins of showing up."

– Heidi, Holland office



Average customer service rating

(of the 456 online ratings received in November 2021)

Hour-long wait times are gone



November 2018



November 2021

In November 2018, there were 24 offices where average wait times were more than an hour, and many where it was longer than 90 minutes. Today, there are none. Now, visitors statewide are in and out of our offices in an average of 20 minutes or less.

Most-needed services now online

- Vehicle renewals, license renewals and changes of address – three of the department's most frequently used services – can be done online. In fact, thanks to technology upgrades in 2019 and 2021, now 10 of the department's top 15 services are online.

Office visits in 20 minutes or less

- While most Michiganders conduct their business with us from home or at a local grocery store, those who need to come to our offices are often surprised by the speed of our new service. Most visitors are served immediately, finished with their business, and out the door in 20 minutes or less.

Easy office visit scheduling

- Office visits are now available nearly every day in every area of the state all the time. You can reserve them online at Michigan.gov/SOS or by calling 888-SOS-MICH.

Resident review:



DETROIT - W. GRAND BLVD OFFICE

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Rollow, Jake (MDOS)

From: Michigan Secretary of State <MISOS@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2021 11:32 AM
To: Rollow, Jake (MDOS)
Subject: Customer Service Update - 18 Nov 2021



This update focuses on how the expansion of online services has reduced the number of people who need to visit our offices, enabling those who do to be in and out in an average of just 20 minutes.

“Fastest I've ever gotten in and out of the secretary of state! Great set up, kind workers! Take notes because this is how you do it. 🙌”

— Branden, Ann Arbor office

What a difference!

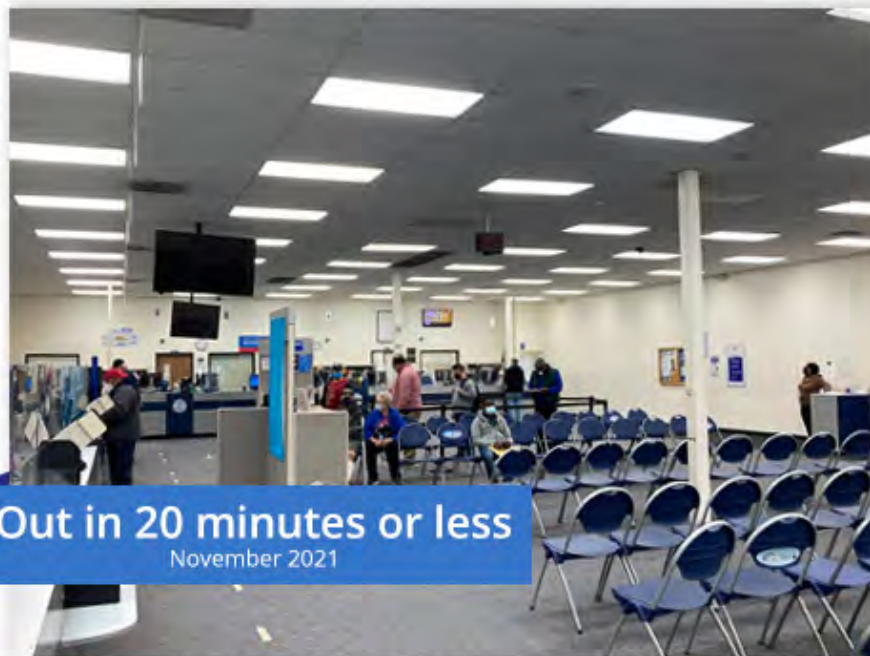
Secretary Benson visited every office in the state when she took office in 2019 and found residents forced to wait hours in crowded lobbies. She's since expanded and upgraded online services, and now offices are calm and efficient. See below how the Livonia office looked at the end of 2018, followed by how it looks today:

Livonia Secretary of State Office



Hours-long wait times

December 2018



Out in 20 minutes or less

November 2021

Double the online services

- The department doubled the number of services available online with major technology upgrades completed in February 2019 and March 2021. Since the March update, more than 100,000 Michigan residents completed a license or ID renewal online at Michigan.gov/SOS that would have previously required an office visit.

2 million people online

- Michiganders completed 4 million transactions with us online through October of this year, compared to 1.8 million through October in 2018. Since most people complete more than one transaction at a time, we estimate that, this year alone, more than 2 million people used our convenient online services.

More people online = more efficient offices

- People who must visit an office get in and out in an average of 20 minutes in part because more people are completing transactions online. Office visits are available for the same day, next day, next week and further out nearly all the time.

Resident review:



MUSKEGON OFFICE

Rollow, Jake (MDOS)

From: Michigan Secretary of State <MISOS@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 11:05 AM
To: Rollow, Jake (MDOS)
Subject: Customer Service Update - 3 Nov 2021



This is the third bimonthly update on the status and impact of the Michigan Department of State's work to modernize customer service operations

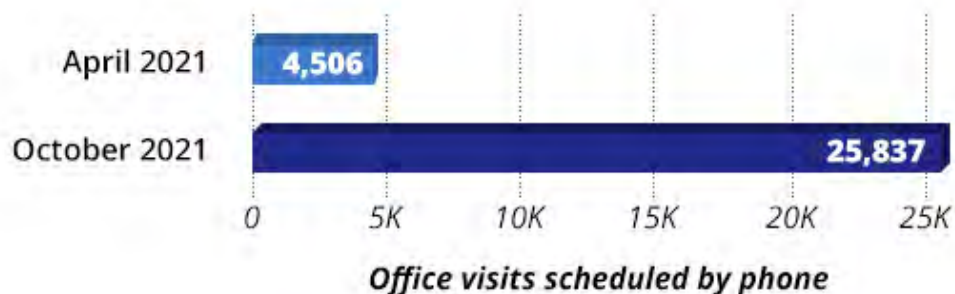
"This trip was absolutely flawless! I had an appointment scheduled for 9:30 and I was back to my car with a new title at 9:33. Everyone inside was very friendly and helpful, the building was clean, and even the music was perfect. Well done!"

– S C, Kalamazoo Office



Average customer service rating
(of the 503 online ratings received in October 2021)

Increased call-center capacity



Abundant office availability

- It's easy to book a visit at our offices and get in and out in just 20 minutes total. We have openings for the same day, next day, next week and further in advance available in every area nearly all the time. Just visit Michigan.gov/SOS or call 888-SOS-MICH.

Evening office hours

- Offices are now open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesdays to provide flexible office service to residents who cannot visit us during standard business hours. The four offices in the Central Time Zone are open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

We are hiring

- We are looking for customer-service oriented employees at dozens of our offices statewide. Visit GovernmentJobs.com/Careers/Michigan and search "MDOSjobs" to see all our openings, which are posted multiple times each month.

Resident review:



MUSKEGON OFFICE

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Rollow, Jake (MDOS)

From: Michigan Secretary of State <MISOS@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 3:08 PM
To: Rollow, Jake (MDOS)
Subject: Customer Service Update - 18 Oct 2021

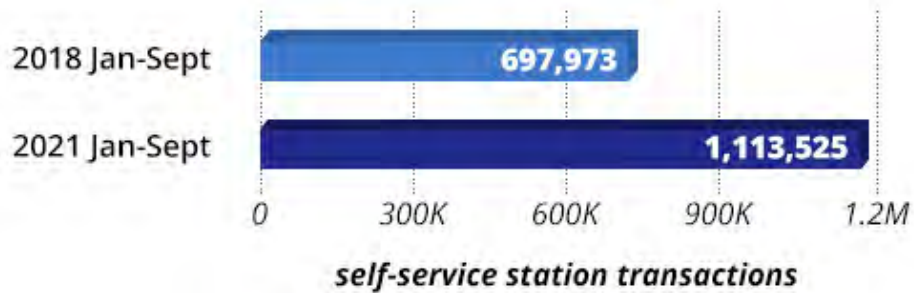


This update focuses on the state's more than 150 new self-service stations. Use of the machines has increased dramatically, which is one of the reasons residents who do need to visit an office are in and out in an average of just 20 minutes.

“Using the self-service machine to renew my tabs was extremely easy, no waiting – it took seriously 2 minutes!”

– Marvey, visited Mason self-service station

Trend: Use of self-service stations rising dramatically



Average time on the machines is less than 2 minutes



1:51 average transaction time



2:00 estimated time to eat a doughnut

Many stations are in grocery stores for added convenience



114 in grocery stores & other locations
43 in Secretary of State offices

Self-service stations print tabs, temporary IDs immediately

Self-service stations make getting your license plate tabs and temporary ID incredibly easy and fast. Every machine has the documents loaded inside and can custom print them for you on the spot.

All self-service stations are new

By the end of 2018, most of the state's self-service stations were broken. Through a public-private partnership, they have now all been replaced and more have been added without spending any taxpayer dollars.

Many transactions available

Residents can complete many key transactions on more than 150 self-service stations statewide:

- Renew vehicle or motorcycle registration and get tab instantly
- Renew watercraft registration and decal will be mailed to you
- Renew standard or enhanced driver's license or ID (if new photo not required)
- Request replacement standard or enhanced driver's license or ID and print a temporary
- Add motorcycle endorsement to an eligible driver's license
- Add name to the state's organ donor registry
- Register to vote

The most flexible machines

All self-service stations accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express. Many accept cash. All are multilingual and can be accessed in English, Arabic, Bengali, Mandarin, Spanish and Vietnamese. Find the closest one to you at Michigan.gov/SOS.

Resident review



LANSING - MICHIGAN AVE. OFFICE

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Rollow, Jake (MDOS)

From: Michigan Secretary of State <MISOS@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 9:31 AM
To: Rollow, Jake (MDOS)
Subject: Customer Service Update - 6 Oct 2021



This is the initial edition of the Michigan Department of State's new bimonthly update on the status and impact of the department's work to modernize customer service operations

“Best and quickest visit I’ve ever had there! And I didn’t have an appointment!”

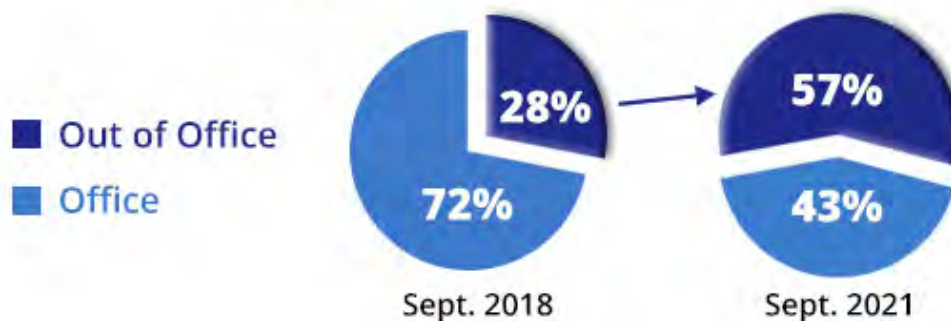
– Holly, Adrian Office



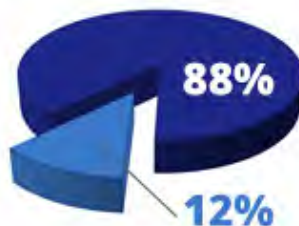
Average customer service rating

(of the 587 online ratings received in September 2021)

Trend: Share of Michiganders conducting transaction without an in-person visit has doubled since 2018



Trend: Vast majority of in-person office visits scheduled ahead of time



88% of residents scheduled their visits

12% of residents walked up without scheduled visits and were served immediately

Speedy office service

- More than 2,000 people walk up to our offices each day without scheduling ahead and are served immediately. All office visits, scheduled or not, take on average just 20 minutes total.

Easy scheduling

- It's easier than ever to schedule office visits, with next-day visits available much of every weekday on our website or by phone. Visit Michigan.gov/SOS or call 888-SOS-MICH.

Added convenience

- Thanks to a technology upgrade in March, more than 140,000 people have renewed their driver's license or state ID at a [self-service station](#), or renewed their enhanced license [online](#). Prior to March, these convenient service options were not available.

Resident review:



LANSING - MICHIGAN AVE. OFFICE

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