

## Creating Positive Customer Experiences

### Human Services Spotlight Series #24

Consumer Protection had been using legacy databases and software systems for maintaining the various assigned licensing programs. It had been determined a new system which would increase application efficiencies was needed. At the same time, this office was also in need of a new complaint management system. After considerable planning and research, a new software platform called **Accela** was implemented in December of 2021. Accela states that they are an industry leader in designing and delivering government software to improve efficiency and increase citizen engagement. Where previous Consumer Protection processes were paper-oriented, Accela offers a wide range of online services to the public, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, such as filing consumer complaints or applying for regulatory licenses & accepting payments. Major changes to any business practice can often bring challenges to staff and the citizens we serve and implementing Accela has been no exception. However, these challenges can turn into opportunities to better showcase our customer service. A recent example of this is when a senior citizen with limited computer experience attempted to register an account in the Pinellas County Accela Citizen Access Portal in order to renew online his organizations bingo license. After several attempts, the citizen called regulatory staff and asked for help with the registration. After unsuccessfully assisting him over the telephone, staff met the citizen at his charitable organization and helped him with registering for an

account as well as completing the online license renewal process. The citizen was very happy with the personal service he received and is now better prepared for the next online renewal.

Another example of turning a challenge into an opportunity is leveraging technology to assist our customers. After a lengthy telephone call with staff, another licensee was still unable to register for a portal account. By utilizing Microsoft Teams, staff was able to view the licensee's computer screen real-time resulting in easily resolving his issue.

Finally, what is one person's challenge may be another person's opportunity. Consumer Protection recently received an email from a licensee that said, "2 thumbs up on the new renewal system!". We need to always try to look for ways to turn challenges into opportunities to better serve the public. Consumer Protection hopes that most licensees will have a better customer service experience moving forward with their annual licenses we assist them with acquiring.

**Protect**  
**Regulate**  
**Investigate**  
**Educate**

The [Pinellas County Access Portal](https://www.pinellascounty.org/ConsumerProtection/AccessPortal/) provides residents, businesses, and visitors online access to permitting, inspection scheduling, fee payment, complaint submission and other services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information, please contact Consumer Protection (727) 464-6200. [consumer@pinellascounty.org](mailto:consumer@pinellascounty.org)

