

# Case Study



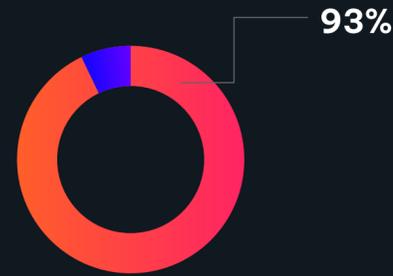
## County's Most Vulnerable Citizens Gain Improved Advocacy Powered by NICE Solutions

The contact center for a large county health and human services agency (HHSA) department supports 1.4 million Self-Sufficiency Services recipients. The county's agents, or human services specialists, provide a critical link between citizens in need and the highly complicated self-sufficiency benefits system, which includes 10+ family resource centers and nearly 200 community-based organizations. Agents are called upon not only to be professional and efficient, but to deescalate crises and to emphatically advocate for high-risk service recipients. It is the contact center that must continuously shift to address new federal, state, and county regulations, HHSA offerings, and public needs. In this high stress, high-stakes environment, the county turned to NICE to improve the agent experience and empower enhanced advocacy for their most vulnerable population.



### 19% REDUCTION

In negative customer satisfaction rate



### 7:03

Time shaved off average speed of answer



### 5:32 REDUCTION

in average handle time (AHT)



### 4.7 INCREASE

In average calls per hour



### 12,515

Gamification coins rewarded monthly



## CUSTOMER PROFILE

### ABOUT

The contact center for the county's HHSA department supports 1.4 million recipients of county services designed to promote wellness, self-sufficiency, and a better quality of life for individuals and families.

### INDUSTRY

Public Sector

### LOCATION

western United States

### AGENTS

Approximately 2,000 agents

### GOALS

- Increase system functionality and system update speeds
- Improve customer satisfaction, average speed of answer, calls per hour, and AHT
- Improve automation and produce timely data to keep staff motivated and productive
- Boost customer engagement and empowerment

### PRODUCTS

- [CXone Recording](#)
- [Interaction Analytics](#)
- [CXone Omnichannel Routing](#)
- [NICE Performance Management](#)
- [NICE Quality Management](#)
- [NICE Workforce Management](#)

### FEATURES

- Real-time and historical dashboards
- Wallboards
- Drillable data hierarchies
- Prebuilt data integration
- Employee surveys
- Interactive gamification
- Real-time screen monitoring
- Sentiment monitoring
- Auto-score interactions
- Virtual Marketplace

## 01 THE BEFORE

### “Manual and hard to manage”

The HHS contact center supports the personal crises of the county’s most vulnerable population by providing everything from housing and healthcare assistance to veteran and refugee support. Approximately 2,000 human services specialists serve as a gateway to a social safety net, promoting wellness, self-sufficiency, and a better quality of life for over one-third of the county’s residents. The contact center is the first point of contact for citizens impacted by policy shifts at the federal, state, and county levels. These change-induced influxes taxed agents and its slow, cumbersome system.

Human services specialists made this critical, challenging work possible and recognized the importance of excellent employee engagement to succeed in this type of environment. Unfortunately, employee engagement and satisfaction measurement were hampered by an old contact center management system. “We simply didn’t have the insights to motivate and recognize our staff in the way we knew they should be recognized,” said the county’s chief of self-sufficiency services. “We were working off spreadsheets and reports that were manual and hard to manage. They took too much time to produce, and it took too much time for them to be processed and acted on by our managers.”

## 02 DESIRE TO CHANGE

### Working at the speed of risk and change

“Workforce empowerment” was one of the county’s strategic initiatives and KPIs. The HHS contact center knew that by leveling up its workforce engagement it could also indirectly impact progress to improve quality of life, housing and health equity, and even innovation. “In other counties, at places like the DMV, for example, there is a notion that the public sector can’t use the same tools the private sector uses,” said the chief. “But our director had the vision to bring government operations to the next level. He thought outside the box and pushed the county to keep up with—or even take a step further—with the best technology out there.”



After scoping several options and soliciting recommendations from other county business units and external contacts, the HHS contact center selected NICE CXone based on its robust functionality, ease of use for agents, and improved controls for managers and supervisors. Implementation started in late 2018 and for nearly six months the contact center management worked with its staff to build excitement and drive adoption for CXone’s functionality through entertaining videos and question-and-answer sessions. A mock go-live allowed staff to test the new tool and play with its gamification features. This thoughtfully staged training and roll-out process allowed contact center staff to learn the new system and avoid burnout.

“This job is already so challenging, and training on the old system added to that stress. It was desk-based on a phone with about 5,000 buttons, and it took forever,” said the service chief. “With this roll-out, we were able to train up our staff so easily.”

## 03 THE SOLUTION

### COVID made it necessary, NICE made it work

On December 13, 2019, more than 2,000 HHS contact center specialists, managers, supervisors, and office assistants—along with 13 family resource centers—went live with NICE Interaction Analytics. The county immediately gained real-time, robust insights into staff engagement, allowing supervisors to begin developing

data-driven strategies to improve performance, engagement, and the citizen experience.

During the pandemic in March 2020, HHS contact center employees transitioned home to continue their critical work supporting the community’s most vulnerable citizens—who were growing in number and risk factors—all while managing their own COVID-related challenges. The county saw an influx of support requests and a flurry of policy changes, all of which they had to absorb and implement across a newly virtual workforce. It was all hands on deck, and in what could have been a sinking ship of busy signals and maxed-out specialists, NICE helped keep them afloat.

“Call centers are already notorious for high worker burnout and attrition, but our community couldn’t afford that from us at the height of the pandemic,” said the service chief. “NICE Interaction Analytics gave us the insights to support and motivate our staff, even virtually, that simply wouldn’t have been possible a few months prior.”

## 04 THE RESULTS

### Game changer

Thanks to data-driven performance management and engagement, The HHS contact center maintained its high service standards through the COVID response. In August 2020, the HHS contact center tapped into the gamification features in NICE Performance Management, starting with a few daily games rewarding reduced AHT and call volumes of 21 or greater. As momentum built, the contact center rolled out several weekly games with coins issued to redeem prizes.



This empowered supervisors to develop game metrics that targeted department-specific opportunities to improve. Armed with real-time dashboards and robust reporting functions, supervisors obtained initiative and agility and could now easily identify and target the most critical opportunities for improvement.

As gamification evolved, the contact center was ran a dynamic pool of competitions customized to improve engagement and performance within individual lines and units. Then, as the gaming expanded, so did the prizes. In December 2021 NICE's Virtual Marketplace was activated for staff to redeem their hard-earned coins for real swag, including branded sweatshirts, hats, and tote bags. Importantly, all those prizes helped fuel performance gains the contact center didn't previously think were possible. The average speed of answer dropped from 8:11 to 1.08 seconds in the fiscal year 2021-22 and AHT dropped from 11:40 to 6:08. Agent call volumes increased from 5.17 per hour to 7.44 in November 2021, representing a monthly gain by agent of 140 calls per month.

But increased call volume and AHT didn't come at the cost of the customer experience. In fact, the contact center was able to achieve these efficiency gains while reducing its negative customer satisfaction rate by 93%, going from negative rates of 6.4% in November 2019 to 0.43% two years later. "Our employees want to feel connected and heard, and they're more willing to take that extra step if they feel valued," said the service chief. "NICE allowed us to do that at scale, improving the employee experience and the experience of our internal and external customers in very little time."

## 05 THE FUTURE

### Co-creating the future

"We're excited to see how we can take it further with NICE," said the service chief, who reports that the contact center is currently exploring chat functionality. The HHSA contact center already leads the county in its ability to quickly activate targeted SMS and robocall campaigns in response to county needs and opportunities.

Fueled by increased transparency and insights, contact center employees of all levels are advocating for data-driven performance improvements in forums like the employee advisory committee, a monthly meet-up that connects line staff with director-level leadership. "Our frontline staff knows the numbers—we formally issue them weekly, and they have access via real-time dashboards—and they're using them to justify the positive change," said the service cheif. "With this top-down/bottom-up activation of our people we know we can keep improving our performance, and in turn, improve the quality of life for the citizens of the county."



"The County believes that happier specialists generate higher-quality care. **The heart of the call center is our employees, and CXone made their work lives 100% better.**"

CHIEF OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY SERVICES  
COUNTY HHSA



## About NICE

With NICE (Nasdaq: NICE), it's never been easier for organizations of all sizes around the globe to create extraordinary customer experiences while meeting key business metrics. Featuring the world's #1 cloud native customer experience platform, CXone, NICE is a worldwide leader in AI-powered self-service and agent-assisted CX software for the contact center—and beyond. Over 25,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 85 of the Fortune 100 companies, partner with NICE to transform—and elevate—every customer interaction.

[www.nice.com](http://www.nice.com)

For the list of NICE trademarks, visit <http://www.nice.com/nice-trademarks>