COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

County of San Diego Strengthens Emergency Response and Everyday CX with NiCE CXone Mpower

The County of San Diego's Access Customer Service Center is a vital resource for people seeking crucial health and human services that promote wellness, self-sufficiency, and a better quality of life. In 2024, the team was faced with two significant challenges: delivering rapid, reliable support following a historic flood and resolving inefficiencies in its callback process that caused thousands of missed connections each month. By expanding its use of the NiCE CXone Mpower platform, the county improved its agility in a crisis and raised the bar for day-to-day customer experience.

10,000+
Disaster CalFresh calls handled and 6,000+ applications processed in three weeks

Scaled from 10-100+
Agents in response to demand

40% reduction
In missed agent callbacks

Nearly zero
Wait time, down from two minutes

40% drop
In callback volume

$5.7 Million+
In relief benefits issued to residents affected by flooding

200,000+
SMS messages sent to raise awareness about disaster-related assistance

10% drop
In call abandonments; answer rate rose above 93%

Increased
Staff engagement through improved training capacity

Customer Profile

About
The County of San Diego's Access Customer Service Center delivers health and human services to over 3 million residents, including programs such as Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and disaster relief benefits.

INDUSTRY
Government / Health & Human Services

WEBSITE
www.sandiegocounty.gov

LOCATION
San Diego County, California

AGENTS
2500+ using NiCE solutions

PRODUCTS
• NiCE CXone Mpower platform
• Studio
• ACD
• Reporting & Dashboards

GOALS
• Improve speed and scalability of emergency benefits delivery

• Reduce missed callbacks and repeat dialers
• Provide consistent, proactive communication during high demand periods
• Enable flexible staffing with cloud-based tools

FEATURES
• IVR customization and queue creation
• Telephonic application support and call recording
• SMS reminders and outreach campaigns
• Real-time performance insights and scheduling agility

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01 Before

Reactive systems for emergency and routine service needs

More than 4,850 structures across the county were damaged in the record-breaking 2024 storm, which brought 3.15 inches of rain in two hours, and caused devastating flooding. Before the flood, the county's contact center had no dedicated IVR routing or queue structure to support disaster relief inquiries. When the county needed to quickly launch the federally approved Disaster CalFresh program in response to the storm, there was no infrastructure in place.

Unrelated to the storm, everyday operations had revealed another pain point: The contact center's callback feature often failed to connect with residents. Agents reported more than 4,000 missed callbacks each month, many of which resulted in voicemail messages and second calls from frustrated residents. These inefficiencies led to higher wait times, heavier workloads, and lower agent productivity.

02 Desire to change

Empathy and efficiency at scale

The flood response highlighted just how important it was to have scalable, resilient infrastructure in place. Residents were displaced, and agents were working remotely. Federal relief had to be delivered on a tight timeline. That urgency underscored the need to react with agility, without having to use an outside vendor or requiring a long project build to add features and make changes to technology.

The callback challenge also prompted the contact center to look to NiCE solutions for an answer. During certain times of the month, such as the first 10 days when benefits are issued or days after holiday closures, wait times can increase, and customers increasingly request a call back rather than wait on the phone to speak to an agent. At that time, agents on average were reporting that approximately 4,000 callback requests per month were going unanswered. This led to more calls, higher wait times, and an inefficient use of county time. For both efforts, the focus was the same: serve more people, more effectively, without adding strain.

03 NiCE solution

Rapid deployment and proactive outreach through NiCE CXone Mpower

To support the Disaster CalFresh program, the team created a new IVR prompt, queue, and application process using the CXone Mpower platform in less than 48 hours. CXone Mpower enabled telephonic signature capture, call recording for federal audit purposes, and realtime reporting. Cloud-based routing allowed displaced agents to work from wherever they had internet access. Dashboards and performance metrics helped supervisors shift resources quickly as volume fluctuated.

To address missed callbacks, the county launched a text reminder system built with Studio, a routing workflow builder, and ACD, both on CXone Mpower. Customers received SMS alerts shortly before their scheduled callback, prompting them to be available and allowing them to cancel the request if help was no longer needed.

The functionality was configured internally and delivered immediate value. Short-code messaging, real-time call deflection, and custom logic helped streamline follow-through and reduce unnecessary dials.

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04 Results

Tangible gains across emergency and routine operations

The county's response to both initiatives demonstrates its ability to adapt quickly and deliver tangible improvements.

Within three weeks of the disaster relief period, more than 10,000 calls were handled and over 6,000 Disaster CalFresh applications were processed, resulting in $5.7 million in aid distributed to residents. The County readily scaled up its support team from 10 to over 100 agents and reached 200,000 residents with targeted SMS outreach— all while maintaining service continuity through remote operations.

The callback SMS initiative also yielded strong results. Missed agent callbacks were reduced by 40%, abandonment rates fell by 10%, and overall callback volume dropped by 40%. Average wait times fell from two minutes to near zero. These improvements allowed agents to dedicate more time to training and proactive service, strengthening engagement and efficiency.

"The average wait time in California counties is 55 minutes," said Manager of Health & Human Services Agency, County of San Diego. "We brought ours under one minute, and a lot of that is because of what we've built with NiCE."

05 Future

Turning fast wins into lasting improvements

The flood response and callback initiative were both launched quickly, but the lessons learned are now shaping longer-term strategy. Dashboards, IVR updates, and SMS campaigns are part of standard operations. The team is also exploring new use cases for CXone Mpower tools, from AI-powered AutoSummary to expanded customer surveys and outbound scheduling.

By building in-house expertise and leveraging intuitive tools like Studio, the county's contact center team can now respond faster, adjust queues on the fly, and support multiple departments in times of need.

"We're not running this like a government office," they said. "We're running it like a modern contact center, and NiCE is what makes that possible."

> **We stand out because the work we do is so important for our community. NiCE has helped us connect with our customers in the quickest, most efficient way, especially in emergencies.**

Manager
Health & Human Services Agency
County of San Diego

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