**Difficult Customers**

* **Angry and Accusatory**

When customers are angry and want to assign personal blame to you as a representative of the newspaper, it can be difficult to deal with your own emotions. In the moment, remember that they are not truly angry at you, but are upset about some aspect of their subscription, be it service, cost or something else. Try to steer the conversation toward solutions. If the customer is yelling, politely ask them to let you help them with the issue rather than continuing in a similar vein. If the customer continues to yell or will not listen, say, “Let me put you on hold for a moment while I check on this issue,” then place them on hold. Take a moment to calm yourself; ask for assistance if necessary. Then return to the call and again try to steer the conversation toward a solution for the customer.

* **Abusive Language and Swearing**

Our staff and employees should not have to deal with abusive language. If a customer is personally attacking you or repeatedly using swear words, respectfully ask that they stop so you can address the problem and find a solution for them. If they do not, then place them on hold as above and talk to your supervisor for further help.

* **Remain Calm**

It can be difficult to remain calm when a customer is being aggressive during an interaction. Normal “fight or flight” reactions can easily be triggered during such an interaction, but responding in kind to difficult customers escalates the interaction and is unprofessional. If you find yourself having difficulty dealing professionally with a customer, place the call on hold and ask a supervisor for help. In no case should you show anger or frustration toward the customer. If you cannot work through the situation, then politely inform the customer that you will research the issue and return their call shortly. **IMPORTANT: If you say this to a customer, you must return the call or have another employee or supervisor return the call.**

* **Take a Break**

If you have had an emotionally difficult call or customer interaction, ask your supervisor if you can take a short break to calm yourself. Leave your desk and take a short walk around the building or take a few minutes outside to recover. It is normal to be emotionally impacted by a negative customer interaction and taking some time away will help restore calm. If you are having more difficulty dealing with the effects of a customer interaction, talk to your supervisor about additional resources for help.