



# Charlotte Douglas International Airport

## Seamless Janitorial Transition During Covid-19



"The best proposal and best value [are] with ABM."

- Brent Cagle  
General Manager  
Charlotte Douglas  
International Airport

Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) is one of the nation's fastest growing airports, serving 50.2M passengers in 2019. To meet this growth, CLT recently completed Phase I of the "Destination CLT" project expanding and updating their facilities; a self-funded, ongoing process with plans reaching to 2035. In their efforts to become an airport of the future, they needed a state-of-the art airport service program and scalable cleaning solution focused on quality service, cost-efficiency, and safety.

### CHALLENGE

ABM was awarded the CLT Janitorial Services contract which began April 1, 2020. CLT had several key goals in mind:

- **Increase Business Inclusivity** – CLT sought to increase contracting with small minority and women-owned firms and promote economic growth and development in the City of Charlotte through the Charlotte Business INClusion (CBI) Program. The previous janitorial service provider maintained less than 10% minority or women-owned business participation.
- **Achieve Low Operating Costs** – CLT's mission includes providing the highest quality product for the lowest possible cost. The airport is operated financially on a fully self-sustaining basis, without appropriation of general fund revenues, and so great importance is placed on obtaining high-value contracts at competitive rates.
- **Retain Incumbent Janitorial Staff** – CLT wished to retain their experienced janitorial staff from the previous service contractor to guarantee stability. Further importance was placed on ensuring resilient employee retention.



## THE COVID-19 CHALLENGE

During the second half of our transition process in March, a new challenge emerged, affecting the original scope of work. COVID-19 had begun impacting American life, certainly the way we travel and our expectations around safety. According to the latest report from the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), air passenger traffic decreased by an estimated 60% in 2020 compared to 2019 (its lowest in April at 94.3%)\*, as safety concerns increased among the traveling public.

Uncertainty and necessity inspired innovation, and ABM was able to meet newly imposed goals for CLT – providing an enhanced cleaning solution to improve upon public safety measures, while also increasing awareness of these solutions among passengers and tenants.

With these challenges in mind, ABM completed a smooth transition for the second largest airport in the Southeast.

## SOLUTION

Upon contract, we implemented our Transformation Plan. A series of meetings were held with CLT to determine specific needs surrounding the scope of work and conversations with the previous operator to ease the changeover. Transformation Team Meetings were then held to assign and follow up on tasks. This team, available throughout the transition period, worked to finalize subcontractor agreements and operational logistics, determine and procure supplies and equipment, complete the HR processes, set up technology, establish schedules and train team members, among other tasks. The Transformation Plan concluded with a thorough evaluation of the startup and commencement of inspections.

- **Our COVID-19 Response:** ABM leveraged specialized disinfection experience from our healthcare and education divisions to inform and implement a robust cleaning program to meet the needs of our new normal. We executed our EnhancedClean™ solution in addition to the original scope of work. This included the immediate revision and updating of standard operating procedures, comprehensive training for our cleaning team members, and development of marketing materials to inform and reassure CLT passengers and tenants that every effort is made to ensure their safety, all day, each and every day.
- **Business Inclusion:** ABM is dedicated to contributing to the development of the economies in which we serve, and so we are driven to help CLT increase small minority and women-owned business participation. In response to CLT's like-minded goal, we increased required SMWBE subcontractor roles by 200% (from 10% to 30% of the total contract), which included the introduction of five diverse business partners. Utilizing ABM's Education and Commercial market experience in the Charlotte area, we were able to locate verified SMWBE resources to help meet our janitorial scope of work, and also engaged a long trusted aviation partner for assistance with training customer service, and mystery shopping services.





- **Low Operating Costs:** ABM was able to provide janitorial services to CLT because we offered the greatest value for the cost. Our buying power through our BuySMART purchasing program allowed us to centralize CLT's procurement needs, reducing operating expenses.
- **Staffing Solutions:** ABM transition process maintains primary focus on the preservation of quality, experienced staff. Communication was key in the effort to retain all incumbent staff for CLT. Upon contract, we scheduled group sessions with the incumbent service provider and their staff to introduce our organization, alleviate any concerns over the transition and to communicate the hiring and onboarding process. ABM successfully transitioned 100% of the incumbent janitorial staff, providing pay increases and expanded employee benefits. Additionally, we provided opportunity for promotion within the ABM structure. To encourage employee retention, in addition to competitive wages we offered an employee-focused benefit package, including access to 401K, PPO Medical/Dental/Vision, Employee Stock Purchase, a variety of recognition programs, merit increases, nurturing and mentoring, ongoing training and more.

## BENEFITS

- CLT achieved a seamless transition of their janitorial services program during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which surpassed their expectations. With the addition of ABM's EnhancedClean™ solution with first-rate disinfection processes, and communication of those processes, CLT ensured the safety and peace of mind of their travelers.
- CLT accomplished a 30% SMWBE inclusion rate, improving upon their initial goal of 10%.
- CLT was able to obtain the lowest prices on supplies and equipment and streamlined janitorial management technology, allowing for low operating costs. This costefficiency made it possible to meet other goals, like increasing team member payrates and providing superior benefits, which allowed for the retention and transition of more than 260 incumbent janitorial team members.



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