

SOP Template: Investigation and Fact-Finding Procedures

This SOP details the **investigation and fact-finding procedures** essential for conducting thorough, unbiased inquiries into incidents, complaints, or discrepancies. It covers the steps for gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses, documenting findings, analyzing data, and reporting results to ensure transparency, accuracy, and accountability in organizational processes.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized process for investigating incidents, complaints, or discrepancies, ensuring all inquiries are conducted fairly, consistently, and in compliance with organizational policy.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees and management involved in investigations regarding any incident, complaint, or discrepancy within the organization.

3. Responsibilities

- **Investigator:** Leads the investigation, gathers evidence, conducts interviews, and prepares reports.
- **Management:** Assigns investigators and reviews final reports.
- **Witnesses/Respondents:** Provide truthful and accurate information when requested.
- **HR/Compliance Team:** Oversees adherence to procedures and ensures privacy and confidentiality.

4. Procedure

- 1. Initiation**
 - Receive and log the incident, complaint, or discrepancy.
 - Assign a qualified investigator.
 - Define the scope and objectives of the investigation.
- 2. Planning**
 - Identify information sources (documents, people, systems).
 - Develop an investigation plan including timelines and resources required.
- 3. Evidence Gathering**
 - Collect physical, electronic, and documentary evidence.
 - Ensure integrity and proper chain of custody for all evidence.
- 4. Interviews**
 - Identify and schedule interviews with witnesses or involved parties.
 - Prepare structured interview questions.
 - Record interviews (with consent) and document responses thoroughly.
- 5. Documentation**
 - Document all findings, evidence, and actions taken during investigation.
 - Use standardized forms/checklists where applicable.
- 6. Data Analysis**
 - Review and analyze all gathered information objectively.
 - Identify causes, contributing factors, and any policy violations.
- 7. Reporting**
 - Prepare a comprehensive investigation report summarizing methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
 - Submit the report to management/HR/compliance as appropriate.
- 8. Closure and Follow-Up**
 - Obtain management approval for closure.
 - Implement corrective/preventive actions if necessary.
 - Maintain records for future reference and audits.

5. Documentation and Records

Document	Storage Location	Retention Period
Investigation Log	Secure digital repository	5 years

Interview Notes/Recordings	Confidential folder (restricted access)	5 years
Investigation Report	Compliance archive	7 years

6. Confidentiality

All information related to investigations must be kept confidential and only shared with individuals directly involved or with a legitimate business need.

7. Review and Update

This SOP shall be reviewed annually or as needed following changes in regulations or organizational policy.

8. References

- Organizational Code of Conduct
- Relevant local/national regulations