SOP Template: Initial Assessment and Triage of Complaints

This SOP details the **initial assessment and triage of complaints**, outlining procedures for promptly receiving, evaluating, and categorizing complaints based on urgency and severity. It includes steps for gathering relevant information, prioritizing cases for response, ensuring timely communication with stakeholders, and maintaining accurate records to facilitate efficient resolution and follow-up. The goal is to standardize the complaint handling process to improve customer satisfaction and organizational responsiveness.

1. Purpose

To provide a standardized process for receiving, assessing, and triaging complaints, ensuring timely, effective, and consistent response and resolution.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all complaints received by the organization via any channel (email, phone, in-person, web portal, etc.) from customers, partners, or stakeholders.

3. Definitions

- **Complaint:** Any formal or informal communication expressing dissatisfaction with products, services, or conduct.
- **Triage:** The process of evaluating and categorizing complaints based on urgency and severity.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Complaint Receiver	Receives complaints, logs details, and initiates assessment.
Assessment Team	Evaluates severity, urgency, and gathers relevant information.
Management	Oversees process, reviews escalated cases, and ensures follow-up.

5. Procedure

1. **Complaint Receipt**
   - Receive complaint via designated channels.
   - Acknowledge receipt to the complainant within 1 business day.
   - Record complaint details in the complaints management system.
2. **Information Gathering**
   - Collect all relevant data: complainant's contact, description, evidence, impacted products/services, etc.
   - Seek clarification if information is incomplete or unclear.
3. **Initial Assessment & Triage**
   - Assess complaint based on severity (minor, moderate, critical) and urgency (immediate, prompt, routine).
   - Categorize each complaint for prioritization.
4. **Prioritization**
   - Assign priority levels for response and resource allocation.
   - Refer time-critical or high-risk cases for immediate escalation.
5. **Stakeholder Communication**
   - Inform relevant departments and management of significant or escalated complaints.
   - Provide regular updates to complainant regarding progress.
6. **Documentation**
   - Maintain accurate and detailed records of all actions taken, correspondence, and decisions.
   - Log outcome of assessment and triage for quality assurance and reporting.

6. Categorization & Prioritization Criteria

Severity	Description	Response Time

Critical	Risk to safety, legal implications, major service disruption	Immediate
Moderate	Noticeable impact, no immediate risk, requires prompt attention	Within 2 business days
Minor	Low impact, routine issues, minimal disruption	Within 5 business days

7. Records & Documentation

- All steps, communications, and decisions are to be logged in the complaint management system.
- Records are retained as per organizational policy for auditing and improvement purposes.

8. Related Documents

- Complaint Handling Policy
- Escalation Procedure
- Customer Communication Guidelines

9. Revision & Review

- This SOP is reviewed annually or as required by changes in procedure or regulation.