SOP Template: Initial Communication Protocols

This SOP defines **initial communication protocols** to ensure clear, efficient, and timely information exchange during the early stages of any incident or project. It covers the correct channels for reporting, the roles and responsibilities of communicators, message prioritization, escalation procedures, and documentation of all communications. The goal is to facilitate rapid response, minimize misunderstandings, and maintain transparent communication among all stakeholders involved.

1. Purpose

To provide a standardized approach for conducting initial communications at the onset of incidents or projects, ensuring all stakeholders are informed and aligned.

2. Scope

This protocol applies to all team members, leaders, and external stakeholders involved in or impacted by any new incident or project.

3. Communication Channels

Channel	Usage	Owner/Responsible
Email	Formal notifications, documentation, follow-ups	Project Manager / Incident Lead
Instant Messaging (e.g., Slack, Teams)	Quick updates, questions, confirmations	All relevant team members
Phone/Conference Call	Urgent notifications, escalations, critical discussions	Incident/Project Coordinator
Incident/Project Management System	Logging incidents, tracking communication history	All users involved

4. Roles & Responsibilities

- **Incident/Project Lead:** Initiates communication, assigns roles, ensures protocol adherence.
- **Communicators:** Relay information accurately and in a timely manner to assigned contacts.
- **Record-Keeper:** Documents all communications and updates records in management systems.
- **Stakeholders:** Acknowledge receipt, provide necessary responses, and escalate when required.

5. Message Prioritization

- **Critical/Urgent:** Immediate notification via phone/conference call, instant messaging, then followed up by email.
- **High:** Immediate notification via instant messaging, followed by email within 30 minutes.
- **Medium/Low:** Use email or system notifications as per workflow schedules.

6. Escalation Procedures

1. Identify incident/project severity and urgency.
2. If initial responder cannot resolve or confirm receipt, escalate to the next management level within 15 minutes.
3. Document all escalation steps and decisions.
4. Inform all relevant stakeholders promptly.

7. Communication Documentation

- Record all initial communications in the relevant management system.
- Keep logs of messages, calls, decisions, and responses.
- File and organize documentation for future review and audit.

8. Review & Continuous Improvement

- Conduct post-incident/project reviews on communication efficiency.
- Update this SOP as required based on feedback and identified improvements.

9. References

- Related SOPs (Incident Management, Project Kickoff)
- Communication Policies
- Management Systems User Guides