

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Product Labeling and Coding Guidelines

This SOP defines **product labeling and coding guidelines** to ensure accurate and consistent identification of products throughout the supply chain. It covers label design, content requirements, barcode and QR code standards, printing methods, placement protocols, and quality control measures. The purpose is to maintain compliance with regulatory standards, enhance traceability, prevent mislabeling, and support efficient inventory management and customer communication.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for labeling and coding products, ensuring accuracy, compliance, traceability, and effective communication along the supply chain.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the labeling, coding, quality control, and handling of product labels within [Company Name]. It covers finished goods, packaging, and any units requiring identification before distribution.

3. Responsibilities

- **Production Department:** Ensure correct application and positioning of labels on all products.
- **Quality Control (QC):** Verify label accuracy, print quality, and code scannability.
- **Warehouse Staff:** Confirm labeled products before storage or dispatch.
- **Label Design Team:** Maintain and update label templates in accordance with latest standards and regulations.

4. Label Design

- Use approved corporate templates and branding elements (e.g., logo, color palette, fonts).
- Ensure legibility and contrast for all text and codes.
- Label size must accommodate all required information without overcrowding.
- Templates must be reviewed and approved by the Compliance Department before use.

5. Label Content Requirements

Required Element	Description
Product Name	Full and clear product description as per official records.
SKU/Item Number	Unique code for inventory management and traceability.
Batch/Lot Number	Production batch for recall and QC tracking.
Manufacture & Expiry Date	As applicable; format: DD/MM/YYYY or YYYY-MM-DD.
Quantity/Net Weight	As required by regulations.
Barcodes/QR Codes	For digital traceability; see section 6.
Regulatory Symbols and Statements	e.g., recycling, hazard, certifications, country of origin.

6. Barcode & QR Code Standards

- **Barcodes:** Use **GS1-compliant** codes (e.g., EAN-13, UPC-A) unless otherwise specified by customer or regulatory body.
- **QR Codes:** Must be 2D and encoded with correct, up-to-date information (e.g., website, product data, traceability link).
- Print size and quality must ensure scannability by standard readers.
- Each code must be linked accurately to the corresponding product/batch in the inventory system.

7. Printing Methods

- Labels should be printed using approved printers and materials to ensure durability under expected storage and transport conditions.
- For direct marking on products (e.g., laser, inkjet), verify permanence and contrast.
- All marketing must be checked for legibility and resistance to smudging, abrasion, and environmental exposure.

8. Label Placement Protocols

- Follow product-specific SOPs for label location (e.g., main panel, cap, bottom).
- Ensure the label is not placed over seams, closures, or areas subject to wear.
- Labels must be applied straight, without folds or bubbles, and securely adhered.
- Secondary and shipping containers must also be labeled per warehouse requirements.

9. Quality Control Measures

- Perform routine inspections for legibility, completeness, and correct placement.
- Randomly scan barcodes and QR codes to verify functionality and data accuracy.
- Maintain records of label verification and corrective actions if errors are identified.

10. Document Control & Review

- This SOP must be reviewed annually or upon significant regulatory, product, or process changes.
- Approved by: *[Name, Title]* Date: *[DD/MM/YYYY]*
- Next Review Due: *[DD/MM/YYYY]*

11. References

- GS1 General Specifications
- Local and international product labeling regulations (FDA, EU, etc.)
- *[Insert additional company or industry-specific standards]*

12. Appendices

- Sample Label Templates
- Barcode/QR Code Example Images
- Label Inspection Checklist