

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Change Management and Issue Escalation Process

This SOP defines the **change management and issue escalation process**, detailing the procedures for identifying, documenting, assessing, and implementing changes within an organization. It outlines the steps for effective issue reporting, prioritization, and escalation to ensure timely resolution and minimize operational disruption. The SOP emphasizes clear communication channels, roles and responsibilities, and approval workflows to manage risks and maintain system integrity during changes and issue handling.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized process for managing changes and escalating issues, ensuring operational continuity and minimizing risk.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees, stakeholders, and external partners involved in changes to systems, processes, or infrastructure, and issue management.

3. Definitions

- **Change:** Any modification to existing systems, processes, or infrastructure.
- **Issue:** Any event or problem affecting normal operations.
- **Escalation:** The process of raising an issue to higher authority levels for resolution.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Change Requester	Identifies and documents proposed changes.
Change Advisory Board (CAB)	Reviews, assesses, and approves changes.
Change Owner	Implements and coordinates approved changes.
IT Support/Helpdesk	Receives, logs, and categorizes reported issues.
Escalation Manager	Monitors issues and escalates as needed.
All Staff	Report issues and follow change protocols.

5. Change Management Process

1. **Initiation:** Submit a Change Request Form detailing the proposed change, risk assessment, and impact analysis.
2. **Review:** CAB reviews the request for completeness, impact, and urgency.
3. **Approval:** CAB approves, rejects, or requests modifications.
4. **Planning:** Develop implementation, communication, and rollback plans.
5. **Implementation:** Change Owner executes change as per the approved plan.
6. **Validation:** Test and validate the change; document results.
7. **Closure:** Update change records and communicate completion to stakeholders.

6. Issue Escalation Process

1. **Issue Identification:** Any employee detects and reports an issue via the designated channel (ticketing system/email).
2. **Logging and Categorization:** IT Support/Helpdesk logs the issue, categorizes by severity and impact.
3. **Initial Assessment:** Attempt resolution at the first level.
4. **Escalation Criteria:** If unresolved within the defined timeframe or if risk increases, escalate to the next support tier or management.
5. **Communication:** Update all stakeholders on status and actions taken.
6. **Resolution and Closure:** Once resolved, document the solution and formally close the issue.

7. Communication Channels

- Email notifications
- Ticketing system updates
- Change management meetings
- Incident logs and dashboards

8. Approval Workflow

1. Change Requester submits request
2. CAB or designated approver reviews
3. Approval/rejection communicated to all stakeholders

9. Document Control

- All change and escalation records must be maintained and auditable for a minimum of 24 months.
- SOP review frequency: Annually, or after significant incidents/changes.

Note: Non-compliance with this SOP may result in disciplinary action and/or increased risk to organizational operations.

10. References

- ITIL Change Management Guidelines
- ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018 Service Management

11. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	2024-06-01	Initial version	[Your Name]