

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Escalation Protocols for Unresolved Technical Problems

This SOP defines **escalation protocols for unresolved technical problems**, including initial problem identification, troubleshooting steps, criteria for escalation, communication channels, roles and responsibilities of technical teams, priority levels, documentation requirements, and follow-up procedures. The objective is to ensure timely resolution of technical issues by systematically escalating unresolved problems to higher levels of expertise and management to minimize downtime and maintain operational efficiency.

### 1. Initial Problem Identification

1. User reports technical problem via designated channel (e.g., helpdesk ticket, email, or phone).
2. Service Desk logs the issue, assigns a ticket number, and acknowledges receipt to the user.

### 2. Troubleshooting Steps

1. Collect all relevant information (error messages, screenshots, environment, steps to reproduce).
2. Perform standard troubleshooting as per knowledge base or troubleshooting guides.
3. Attempt to resolve the issue according to documented procedures.
4. Document each troubleshooting step and observed results in the ticket.

### 3. Criteria for Escalation

- Issue remains unresolved after predefined time or number of troubleshooting steps.
- Impact and severity require a higher level of expertise (see priority levels table below).
- Resources or authorization required to proceed are unavailable at the current support level.
- SLA (Service Level Agreement) thresholds are at risk of being breached.

### 4. Priority Levels

Priority	Definition	Escalation Timeframe
Critical (P1)	System-wide outage, business-critical function impacted	Immediate escalation after 30 minutes if unresolved
High (P2)	Significant impact, department or key user affected	Escalate after 1 hour if unresolved
Medium (P3)	Limited impact, single user or minor function affected	Escalate after 4 hours if unresolved
Low (P4)	Minor inconvenience, workaround available	Escalate after 1 business day if unresolved

### 5. Escalation Process

1. Identify escalation criteria have been met.
2. Update ticket with summary of all actions taken and current status.
3. Notify next level (e.g., Tier 2/3 support, technical lead, or management) via defined communication channel (see below).
4. Provide all supporting documentation and relevant information with escalation.

### 6. Communication Channels

- Internal ticketing system (mandatory for tracking and documentation)
- Email notifications (for formal escalation and updates)
- Phone or instant messaging (for urgent/critical issues)
- Scheduled escalation meetings (if required for persistent problems)

### 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Service Desk / Tier 1 Support:** Initial issue logging, troubleshooting, documentation, and first escalation.

- **Tier 2/3 Support:** Advanced troubleshooting, resolution, or further escalation if required.
- **Technical Lead / Manager:** Final escalation point, decision making, stakeholder communication.

## 8. Documentation Requirements

1. All troubleshooting actions, communications, and updates must be logged in the ticket.
2. Escalation must include a clear summary and all previous documentation.
3. Resolution and closure comments must be added once resolved.

## 9. Follow-up Procedures

- Verify with the user that the issue is resolved and satisfactory.
- Close the ticket with resolution notes.
- Conduct root cause analysis for major incidents.
- Update knowledge base if relevant new steps or solutions are identified.
- Review escalation patterns periodically for continuous improvement.