

# SOP: Tiered Issue Triage and Escalation Process

This SOP defines the **tiered issue triage and escalation process** to efficiently manage and resolve incidents by categorizing issues based on severity and complexity. It includes initial issue identification, prioritization, classification into support tiers, escalation protocols for unresolved or critical issues, communication guidelines between teams, and documentation requirements. The goal is to ensure timely resolution, minimize downtime, and maintain customer satisfaction through a structured and systematic approach to problem management.

## 1. Issue Identification and Logging

1. All incidents are reported via designated communication channels (e.g., ticketing system, email, phone).
2. The receiving agent logs the issue with a unique identifier, timestamp, and initial description.
3. Collect all relevant information: affected users, error messages, time of occurrence, and steps to reproduce if possible.

## 2. Issue Categorization and Prioritization

1. Assess the impact and urgency of the issue based on service disruption, affected customers, and business criticality.
2. Assign a severity level and priority according to the following matrix:

Severity Level	Definition	Response Time
Critical (P1)	System-wide outage or severe impact on key business operations	15 min
High (P2)	Major functionality impaired, workaround available	1 hour
Medium (P3)	Non-critical issue, minor performance degradation	4 hours
Low (P4)	General inquiry or cosmetic issue	1 business day

## 3. Tiered Support Classification

- **Tier 1 (Frontline Support):** Handles basic issues, troubleshooting, and general inquiries based on standard operating procedures.
- **Tier 2 (Technical Support):** Addresses more complex issues requiring technical expertise or investigation.
- **Tier 3 (Expert/Engineering Support):** Resolves critical, unresolved, or product-level defects, system bugs, or severe outages.

## 4. Issue Escalation Process

1. Unresolved issues at one tier must be escalated to the next tier according to the escalation matrix and timelines.
2. Escalation triggers include:
  - Failure to resolve within defined response time
  - Increase in severity/impact
  - Customer or management request
3. Document all escalations in the ticket, notify stakeholders and update relevant teams.

## 5. Communication Guidelines

- Keep all stakeholders informed of current status, next steps, and estimated resolution time.
- Provide updates at regular intervals according to severity.
- Maintain clear documentation for handoffs between tiers and during escalations.

## 6. Resolution and Documentation

1. On resolution, confirm with the affected user(s) and document the solution and root cause.
2. Update the ticket with all relevant resolution details and steps taken.
3. Perform a post-incident review for critical or high-severity issues to identify preventive actions and improvement opportunities.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Frontline Support (Tier 1)	Log and categorize incidents, perform initial troubleshooting, escalate as needed.
Technical Support (Tier 2)	Investigate and resolve advanced issues, communicate with Tier 1 and escalate unresolved problems.
Engineering/Expert Support (Tier 3)	Handle escalated critical issues, apply fixes, develop long-term solutions.
Incident Manager	Oversee critical incidents, coordinate resources, and lead communication with stakeholders.

## 8. Review and Continuous Improvement

1. Review process metrics, resolution times, and customer feedback on a recurring basis.
2. Update SOP as required to reflect improvements and changes in business priorities.

**Document Owner:** [Name & Position]

**Last Review Date:** [Date]