

SOP Template: Investigation and Evidence-Gathering Steps

This SOP details the **investigation and evidence-gathering steps** essential for conducting thorough and systematic inquiries. It covers the initial assessment, securing the scene, identifying and collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses, maintaining chain of custody, and documentation procedures to ensure integrity and reliability of information throughout the investigative process.

1. Purpose

To outline the standardized procedures for investigation and evidence gathering, ensuring all relevant information is collected lawfully, securely, and systematically.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in investigations, including but not limited to security teams, compliance officers, and designated investigators.

3. Responsibilities

- **Lead Investigator:** Oversee the investigation and ensure adherence to this SOP.
- **Team Members:** Assist in evidence collection, documentation, and other assigned tasks.
- **Custodian:** Maintain and document the chain of custody for all evidence.

4. Investigation and Evidence-Gathering Steps

- Initial Assessment**
 - Receive and review the complaint or incident report.
 - Determine the scope and urgency of the investigation.
 - Assign roles and responsibilities.
- Securing the Scene**
 - Establish perimeter to prevent unauthorized access.
 - Document current conditions via photographs and notes.
 - Preserve evidence and prevent contamination.
- Identifying and Collecting Evidence**
 - Identify relevant evidence (physical, digital, testimonial).
 - Collect evidence using appropriate techniques and protective equipment.
 - Label, seal, and log all collected evidence.
- Interviewing Witnesses**
 - Identify and locate potential witnesses.
 - Conduct interviews using open-ended questions.
 - Record and document statements accurately, securing necessary sign-offs.
- Maintaining Chain of Custody**
 - Document every transfer of evidence using a standardized log.
 - Ensure evidence is stored securely and access is restricted.
 - Audit chain of custody records periodically for accuracy.
- Documentation Procedures**
 - Maintain detailed records for all actions, observations, and evidence.
 - Use standardized forms and checklists to ensure completeness.
 - Prepare investigation report summarizing findings and recommendations.

5. Chain of Custody Log Example

Evidence Item	Date/Time Collected	Collected By	Transferred To	Date/Time Transferred	Purpose of Transfer	Signature
USB Drive #01	2024-07-01 10:15	A. Smith	B. Jones	2024-07-01 12:00	For Analysis	

6. References

- Applicable laws and regulations
- Company investigation policies
- Chain of custody guidelines

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	2024-07-01	Initial release