

SOP Template: Timeline and Escalation Structure for Unresolved Complaints

This SOP details the **timeline and escalation structure for unresolved complaints**, outlining the step-by-step process for timely complaint resolution, defined response timeframes, roles and responsibilities at each escalation level, communication protocols, and measures for monitoring and documenting complaint progress. The goal is to ensure efficient handling of complaints, enhance customer satisfaction, and maintain organizational accountability through a clear escalation hierarchy.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized process for managing, resolving, and escalating unresolved complaints within set timelines, ensuring clear communication, accountability, and continuous improvement.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff and management involved in the complaint resolution process and covers all received complaints that require resolution and/or escalation.

3. Complaint Resolution Workflow

- Complaint Receipt:** Log all complaints in the complaint management system upon receipt.
- Acknowledgment:** Send acknowledgment to the complainant within **1 business day**.
- Initial Assessment & Resolution:** Responsible staff investigates and attempts to resolve the complaint within **3 business days**.
- Escalation (if unresolved):** If response is not satisfactory or unresolved within initial timeframe, escalate as per escalation matrix below.
- Final Resolution & Closure:** Notify the complainant of the resolution, update records, and close the complaint.

4. Timeline and Escalation Matrix

Level	Role/Position	Action	Timeframe	Communication Protocol
Level 1	Frontline Staff/Team Leader	Investigate and attempt resolution	Within 3 business days	Email/phone to complainant & log in system
Level 2	Department Manager/Supervisor	Review, provide solution/decision	Within 2 business days after escalation	Email/phone follow-up, update CRM/system
Level 3	Senior Management/Complaints Committee	Final review and resolution	Within 3 business days after Level 2 escalation	Formal written response, record all actions

5. Roles & Responsibilities

- Frontline Staff:** Initial investigation, resolution, and communication.
- Department Managers:** Escalation review, decision making, and customer liaison.
- Senior Management/Committee:** Oversight, final decision, process improvement analysis.
- All Staff:** Timely documentation and transparent communication at each stage.

6. Communication Protocols

- Acknowledge all complaints within 1 business day.
- Update complainants at every escalation or resolution step.
- Record all interactions and resolutions in the complaint management system.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism in all communications.

7. Monitoring & Documentation

- Track all complaints and escalation steps via a centralized system (e.g., CRM or complaint log).
- Supervisors to review unresolved complaints daily.
- Monthly reviews by management for trends, overdue cases, and improvement opportunities.
- Archive all documentation for a minimum of **2 years**.

8. Review & Continuous Improvement

- Review SOP annually or when process changes are implemented.
- Solicit feedback from staff and customers to refine process.
- Incorporate lessons learned from complaint handling into staff training and SOP updates.

9. References

- Company Customer Service Policy
- Complaint Management System User Guide
- Related Regulatory Standards

10. Appendix

- Sample Complaint Log Template
- Escalation Contact List
- Customer Complaint Form