

SOP Template: Assessment and Categorization of Complaint Severity and Type

This SOP details the process for **assessment and categorization of complaint severity and type**, ensuring systematic evaluation, accurate classification, and prioritization of complaints based on their urgency and nature. It includes guidelines for initial complaint intake, criteria for severity levels, categorization methods, documentation protocols, and communication procedures to facilitate effective resolution and continual improvement in complaint management.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized approach for assessing and categorizing complaints to support timely and appropriate resolution, data tracking, and process improvement.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all complaints received by the organization through any channel (e.g., email, phone, web-form, in-person).

3. Definitions

- **Complaint:** Any expression of dissatisfaction related to products, services, or processes.
- **Severity:** The impact level of a complaint on the customer or organization.
- **Type:** The general classification or category of the issue (e.g., product defect, service delay, conduct).

4. Responsibilities

- **Intake Staff:** Gather initial complaint details and perform preliminary classification.
- **Complaint Manager:** Review, confirm severity/type categorization, oversee documentation and communication.
- **Relevant Departments:** Collaborate as needed for complaint investigation and resolution.

5. Procedure

1. **Initial Complaint Intake**
 - Collect all relevant details: complainant's name, contact info, date/time, description of issue, supporting evidence.
 - Acknowledge receipt within 1 business day.

2. **Assessment of Severity**

Severity Level	Description	Examples
Critical	High-impact, safety or legal risk, widespread effect, reputational harm.	Data breach, physical injury, regulatory violations.
Major	Significant impact, but not safety or legal risk. Customer disruption or loss.	Service outage, defective product, major delay.
Minor	Limited impact, minor inconvenience, easily rectifiable.	Minor product defect, billing question, isolated incident.

3. **Categorization of Complaint Type**

- Product Issue
- Service Issue
- Staff Conduct
- Billing/Finance
- Policy/Procedure
- Other (specify)

4. **Documentation Protocols**

- Log complaint details, classification, and all correspondence in the complaint management system.

- Attach supporting materials (photos, emails, documents).

5. **Communication Procedures**

- Notify complainant of receipt and assigned severity/type within 2 business days.
- Provide progress updates and estimated resolution timelines.

6. **Escalation Guidelines**

- If complaint is assessed as Critical, immediately escalate to senior management.

7. **Ongoing Review and Improvement**

- Regularly review complaint trends and categorization accuracy for process improvements.

6. Documentation and Records

- All complaints and assessments must be retained according to company policy.
- Records serve for audits, training, and continual improvement.

7. References

- Company Complaint Management Policy
- Data Protection Guidelines

8. Revision History

Date	Version	Description	Author
2024-06-15	1.0	Initial SOP template creation	Complaints Team