SOP: Call Escalation and Issue Resolution Procedures

This SOP details the **call escalation and issue resolution procedures**, outlining the steps for effectively managing customer or technical support calls, identifying when to escalate issues, assigning responsibilities for escalation, communicating clearly with stakeholders, and ensuring timely resolution of problems. The goal is to enhance customer satisfaction, minimize downtime, and maintain efficient operational workflows through structured escalation paths and resolution protocols.

1. Scope

This procedure applies to all support staff handling customer or technical issues requiring escalation and resolution within the organization.

2. Responsibilities

- **Support Agent:** Initial issue handling, documentation, and determining escalation triggers.
- **Supervisor/Team Lead:** Reviewing escalated issues and managing advanced troubleshooting or assignment to specialized teams.
- **Technical/Subject Matter Expert (SME):** Handling critical or complex issues requiring expert intervention.
- **Escalation Manager:** Overseeing the escalation process, stakeholder communication, and final resolution approval.

3. Procedure

Step 1: Initial Call Handling

1. Receive and document the customer or technical support call.
2. Verify the issue details: description, client information, and urgency/impact level.
3. Attempt first-level resolution based on available resources and documentation.

Step 2: Escalation Criteria

- Issue cannot be resolved within the pre-defined timeframe (e.g., 30 minutes).
- Issue exceeds the agent's access or expertise.
- Issue is critical, affects multiple users, or threatens compliance/security.
- Customer requests escalation.

Step 3: Escalation Process

1. Inform the customer of the escalation, estimated timelines, and the next point of contact.
2. Document all actions taken and relevant information in the case management system.
3. Notify and assign to the appropriate escalation level (see Table 1 below).
4. Monitor ongoing status, provide updates to stakeholders, and ensure documentation is continually updated.

Step 4: Resolution and Closure

1. Escalation owner coordinates resolution and validates the solution.
2. Inform customer of resolution, confirm issue has been resolved to their satisfaction.
3. Close the incident in the system, documenting resolution details, root cause, and actions taken.
4. Conduct post-resolution analysis for continual improvement if necessary.

4. Escalation Matrix

Level	Role	Trigger	Action	Target Response Time
Level 1	Support Agent	Initial call, standard requests	Troubleshoot and resolve	Immediate to 30 mins
Level 2	Supervisor/Lead	Unresolved by Level 1, increased complexity	Advanced troubleshooting, assign to SME if needed	Within 1 hour

Level 3	SME/Technical Lead	Critical, complex, or widespread impact	Expert investigation and resolution	Within 2 hours
Level 4	Escalation Manager	Prolonged or unresolved issues, customer dissatisfaction	Executive intervention, cross-departmental coordination	Within 4 hours

5. Communication Protocol

- Provide clear, timely updates to customers and internal stakeholders at each escalation step.
- Document all communications in the issue tracking system.
- Escalation owner is responsible for stakeholder notifications until resolution.

6. Review and Continual Improvement

1. Review escalation cases monthly for trends and process improvement opportunities.
2. Conduct root cause analysis on major issues.
3. Provide additional training based on findings.

7. References

- Incident Management Policy
- Customer Communication Guidelines
- Knowledge Base Documentation