Standard Operating Procedure
Customer Return and Exchange Request Process

This SOP details the **customer return and exchange request process**, covering the steps for initiating a return or exchange, eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, product inspection, approval procedures, and refund or replacement policies. The goal is to provide a clear and efficient framework that ensures customer satisfaction, consistency in handling returns and exchanges, and compliance with company policies.

1. Purpose

To outline the standardized procedure for handling customer return and exchange requests, ensuring prompt, fair, and consistent resolution in accordance with company policies.

2. Scope

This process applies to all customer purchases eligible for return or exchange, subject to the company's product categories and terms of sale.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Return	Customer-initiated request to return purchased products for a refund.
Exchange	Customer-initiated request to substitute one purchased product with another.
RMA	Return Merchandise Authorization, the approval number assigned during the process.

4. Responsibilities

- **Customer Service Team:** Receives, validates, and processes return/exchange requests.
- **Warehouse/Inspection Team:** Inspects returned products for compliance with policy.
- **Finance Team:** Processes approved refunds.
- **Management:** Reviews escalations and exceptions.

5. Procedure

5.1 Initiation of Request

1. Customer contacts the company via designated channels (e.g., customer portal, email, telephone).
2. Customer Service Team provides return/exchange policy information and Request Form.
3. Customer submits completed form with supporting documentation (proof of purchase, photos, etc.).

5.2 Eligibility Criteria

- Return/exchange request submitted within **30 days** of original purchase (unless otherwise stated).
- Product must be unused, in original packaging, with all accessories/manuals included.
- Non-returnable items (e.g., perishable goods, customized products) are excluded.
- Product defects or shipping errors are covered under warranty/exchange policy.

5.3 Documentation Requirements

- Completed Return/Exchange Request Form.
- Proof of purchase (Invoice/Receipt).
- Photographic evidence of defect or damage (if applicable).

5.4 Product Inspection

1. Upon receipt, Warehouse/Inspection Team logs and inspects the returned product.

2. Inspection results are documented and communicated to Customer Service.

5.5 Approval Process

1. If eligible, Customer Service issues a Return Merchandise Authorization (RMA) number.
2. Product return/exchange is approved or denied based on inspection and policy review.
3. Customer is notified of the decision and next steps.

5.6 Refund or Replacement Policy

- If approved for return:
  - Refund is processed within **7-10 business days** to the original payment method.
  - Applicable restocking fees may be deducted as per policy.
- If approved for exchange:
  - Replacement product is shipped within **5 business days** of approval.
- If denied:
  - Product is returned to customer or disposed according to policy.

6. Records & Documentation

- Maintain records of all return/exchange communications, forms, and inspection reports for a minimum of one year.
- Periodic review of return/exchange data for trend analysis and process improvement.

7. References

- Company Return & Exchange Policy Document
- Warranty Terms & Conditions
- Customer Service Manual

8. Revision History

Date	Version	Description	Author
2024-06-04	1.0	Initial Template Release	[Your Name/Dept]