

SOP: Guest Greeting and Seating Protocol

This SOP details the **guest greeting and seating protocol**, including procedures for warmly welcoming guests upon arrival, confirming reservations, managing waiting areas, guiding guests to their tables efficiently, and ensuring comfort and satisfaction from the moment they enter. The goal is to create a positive first impression, streamline the seating process, and enhance overall guest experience in a professional and courteous manner.

1. Purpose

To ensure all guests are welcomed and seated in a prompt, professional, and friendly manner to deliver an outstanding first impression and guest experience.

2. Scope

This protocol applies to all front-of-house staff responsible for greeting, seating, and managing guest arrivals at the establishment.

3. Responsibilities

- Host/Hostess: Primary responsibility for guest greeting and seating procedures.
- Front-of-house Supervisor: Oversight and support.
- Servers: Assist as needed and take over once guests are seated.

4. Procedures

1. Preparation:

- Ensure host stand is clean, organized, and stocked with reservation lists, menus, and waiting list materials.
- Review reservation and seating chart at the start of the shift.

2. Arrival & Greeting:

- Greet guests within 10 seconds of arrival with a warm smile and eye contact.
- Use a standard greeting (e.g., "Good evening, welcome to [Restaurant Name]!").

3. Reservation Confirmation:

- Ask if guests have a reservation. Politely request the name and party size.
- Confirm details and locate reservation in system or list.
- If no reservation, check table availability or add to waiting list if needed.

4. Managing Waiting Area:

- If waitlist applies, provide estimated wait time.
- Offer seats or refreshments in the waiting area, if available.
- Update guests regularly about their status.

5. Guiding & Seating:

- Once table is ready, address the lead guest by name.
- Lead guests to table at comfortable pace, maintaining friendly conversation.
- Offer assistance with seating, if needed (e.g., coats, chairs for children).
- Present menus and introduce their server.

6. Ensuring Comfort:

- Ensure the table is clean and properly set.
- Confirm guest satisfaction with seating arrangements.
- Respond promptly to any immediate requests.

7. Closing the Greeting:

- Thank guests and wish them an enjoyable dining experience.

5. Documentation

All reservations and waitlists must be accurately recorded, updated, and communicated to relevant staff during service.

6. Troubleshooting

Situation	Action
No available tables on arrival	Offer estimated wait time, offer waiting area, apologize for the delay, and provide regular updates.
Reservation not found	Politely apologize, verify spelling/party size, check alternate spellings or times, and do best to accommodate.
Guest dissatisfaction with seating	Listen to concern, apologize, and make reasonable efforts to relocate or resolve the issue promptly.

7. Review & Continuous Improvement

- Feedback from guests and staff should be regularly reviewed to improve the greeting and seating processes.
- Regular training sessions and refreshers should be conducted.

8. Acknowledgement

All staff members must review and sign off their understanding and agreement to follow this protocol.