SOP Template: Processing Refunds and Exchanges

This SOP details the procedures for **processing refunds and exchanges**, including customer eligibility verification, managing return requests, inspecting returned items, updating inventory, issuing refunds or store credits, and maintaining accurate transaction records. The goal is to ensure a consistent, efficient, and customer-friendly process that complies with company policies and enhances customer satisfaction.

> **Note:** All employees involved in refunds and exchanges must review and strictly adhere to this SOP.

1. Scope

This SOP applies to all customer-initiated refund and exchange requests received in-store, online, or through customer support channels.

2. Responsibilities

- Customer Service Representatives (CSRs): Receive and process requests, communicate with customers, and update status.
- Warehouse/Inventory Staff: Inspect returned items and update inventory records.
- Finance/Accounting: Process refunds and maintain accurate records.
- Supervisors/Managers: Oversee compliance and resolve escalated issues.

3. Procedure

1. **Verify Customer Eligibility**
   - Confirm purchase date (within the allowed return window).
   - Review product type (some items may not be returnable).
   - Ensure the item qualifies per company policy.

2. **Manage Return/Exchange Request**
   - Obtain proof of purchase (receipt, order number, etc.).
   - Create a return/exchange ticket in the system.
   - Provide customer with return instructions or shipping label (if required).

3. **Receive and Inspect Returned Items**
   - Confirm the physical return of goods.
   - Inspect the item's condition (unused, with tags, in original packaging, etc.).
   - Document any discrepancies or damages.

4. **Update Inventory System**
   - Log returned items in inventory as resalable, damaged, or to be disposed of.
   - Adjust inventory counts accordingly.

5. **Issue Refund or Store Credit**
   - If eligible, process a refund to the original payment method or provide store credit.
   - Notify customer upon completion with confirmation details.

6. **Maintain Accurate Records**
   - Document the entire process in the transaction system.
   - Archive communications, proof of return, and inspection results.

4. Documentation & Record Keeping

Document	Responsibility	Retention Period
Return/Exchange Forms & Tickets	CSR	1 year
Inspection Reports	Inventory Staff	1 year
Refund/Exchange Receipts	Finance	3 years

5. References

- Company Return & Exchange Policy
- Customer Service Handbook
- Inventory Management Guidelines

6. Revision History

Date	Version	Description	Author
2024-06-12	1.0	Initial SOP release	Admin