Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
Order Labeling and Shipping Carrier Selection

This SOP details the process for **order labeling and shipping carrier selection**, including guidelines for accurate label creation, packaging standards, carrier evaluation criteria, cost and delivery time considerations, compliance with shipping regulations, and procedures for tracking and documenting shipments. The aim is to ensure timely and accurate order fulfillment, minimize shipping errors, and optimize carrier choice for cost-effectiveness and reliability.

1. Purpose

To outline standardized procedures for generating order shipping labels and selecting appropriate carriers, ensuring efficient, compliant, and cost-effective shipment of orders.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in order processing, labeling, packaging, and shipping operations.

3. Definitions

- **Shipping Label:** Documentation attached to a shipment containing vital delivery and tracking information.
- **Carrier:** A service provider responsible for the transportation of goods (e.g., FedEx, UPS, USPS).

4. Responsibilities

- Warehouse/Shipping staff: Accurate order labeling, packaging, and carrier hand-off.
- Order processing team: Ensuring order details are accurate in the system.
- Shipping coordinator: Carrier evaluation and selection, compliance review, and documentation.

5. Procedures

1. **Order Label Creation**
   - Retrieve order and shipping data from the order management system.
   - Verify all recipient information for accuracy (name, address, contact number).
   - Generate label using approved shipping software, ensuring inclusion of tracking barcode and order number.
   - Print and affix the label securely to the correct package.
2. **Packaging Standards**
   - Package items securely according to product guidelines to prevent damage.
   - Use appropriate packaging material to comply with carrier and regulatory guidelines.
   - Include necessary documentation (invoice, customs forms if international).
3. **Shipping Carrier Evaluation & Selection**
   - Review carrier options based on destination, weight, dimensions, and service level required.
   - Compare cost estimates, delivery timeframes, and carrier reliability.
   - Confirm the carrier meets any specific customer requirements or preferences.
   - Document the selected carrier in the order management system.
4. **Compliance Verification**
   - Ensure shipment complies with carrier regulations (hazardous goods, restricted items, etc.).
   - Confirm required declarations and documentation are included.
5. **Tracking and Documentation**
   - Record tracking number and carrier details in the order management system.
   - Send shipment confirmation and tracking information to the customer.
   - Retain copies of shipping labels and related documentation for audit purposes.

6. Records

- Shipping labels (digital or paper copy)
- Carrier invoices or receipts
- Order and shipment log entries

7. Revision & Review

This SOP should be reviewed annually, or upon significant process or regulatory changes.

8. References

- Carrier shipping guidelines (FedEx, UPS, USPS, etc.)
- Company packaging policies
- Relevant export/import regulations