

Standard Operating Procedure: Lost and Found Property Management Guidelines

Purpose: This SOP provides comprehensive **lost and found property management guidelines**, detailing procedures for reporting, documenting, storing, and reclaiming lost items. It ensures effective handling and secure storage of found property, promotes timely return to rightful owners, and establishes clear responsibilities for staff. The goal is to maintain accountability, prevent loss or theft, and enhance customer trust through organized and transparent management of lost and found items.

1. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff involved in the handling, documentation, storage, and retrieval of lost and found property within the organization's premises.

2. Definitions

- **Lost Property:** Any item reported to be missing by its owner while on the premises.
- **Found Property:** Any item discovered unattended and handed over to staff or placed in the lost and found collection point.

3. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Staff	Immediate reporting, documentation, and secure storage of found property.
Supervisor/Manager	Periodic review of records, oversight of compliance, and authorization of item release to verified owners.
Security	Assistance with handling of valuable or sensitive items. Investigation of missing property incidents.

4. Procedure

4.1 Reporting

- All found items must be reported immediately to the supervisor or designated lost and found officer.
- Individuals reporting a lost item must provide a detailed description and, if possible, proof of ownership.

4.2 Documentation

- Record each item in the Lost and Found Logbook/system, including:
 - Date and time found
 - Description of the item
 - Finder's name and contact information
 - Location where item was found
 - Assigned reference number
- Capture photographs for high-value or uniquely identifiable property.

4.3 Storage

- Store all found property in the designated lost and found area, secured and separate from public access.
- Valuables (cash, electronics, jewelry) must be locked in restricted-access storage with supervisor oversight.
- Perishable items should be disposed of according to local health and safety guidelines after 48 hours.

4.4 Reclaiming Property

- Owners must provide clear identification and adequately describe the item to reclaim property.
- Staff must verify the documentation, record claimant's details, and obtain a signature upon return of the item.
- Update the Lost and Found Logbook to reflect the return date and recipient.

4.5 Unclaimed Property

- Items unclaimed after **90 days** (or organization-defined period) become property of the organization, are donated, or disposed of in compliance with local regulations.
- Records of final disposition must be maintained.

5. Security and Confidentiality

- Staff handling lost and found property must ensure confidentiality regarding all reported and found items.
- Access to records and stored property is limited to authorized personnel only.

6. Training and Review

- All relevant staff must be trained annually on lost and found procedures.
- The SOP is reviewed and updated annually or as required based on operational changes or incident review findings.

7. Documentation

Maintain complete records of all reports, claims, returns, and disposals of property for audit and review purposes for at least **2 years** or in accordance with organization policy.

Note: For urgent or sensitive lost property (e.g., IDs, credit cards), follow additional protocols for handling and, if necessary, notify appropriate authorities.