

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Shift Swapping and Time-off Request Guidelines

This SOP details **shift swapping and time-off request guidelines**, covering the procedures for requesting shift changes, eligibility criteria for swaps, approval processes, communication protocols between employees and supervisors, documentation requirements, and managing coverage to ensure operational continuity. The aim is to facilitate fair and efficient scheduling adjustments while maintaining workforce productivity and compliance with company policies.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for requesting shift swaps and time off, ensuring equitable treatment, operational effectiveness, and adherence to company policy.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees and supervisors involved in scheduling and shift management.

3. Definitions

- **Shift Swap:** An arrangement where two eligible employees mutually agree to exchange scheduled work periods, subject to supervisor approval.
- **Time-off Request:** A formal request by an employee to be absent from scheduled work for a specified period.

4. Procedures

4.1 Shift Swap Requests

1. **Eligibility:**
 - Both employees must be trained and qualified for the duties of the swap shift.
 - No performance or disciplinary issues that would prohibit participation in swaps.
2. **Initiating a Swap:**
 - The employee seeking a swap must find an eligible colleague willing to exchange shifts.
 - Both parties must complete the *Shift Swap Request Form* (see section 6).
3. **Submission and Approval:**
 - Submit the signed Swap Request Form to the direct supervisor at least **72 hours** prior to the scheduled shift.
 - The supervisor reviews the request for qualifications, compliance, and operational needs.
 - Approval or denial is communicated within **24 hours** of submission.
4. **Documentation:**
 - Approved swap forms are filed with the scheduling department for record-keeping.
 - Both employees are notified of the outcome in writing (e.g., email).

4.2 Time-off Requests

1. **Eligibility:**
 - Employees must have completed their training/probationary period (unless otherwise approved).
 - Requests subject to leave balances and departmental policies.
2. **Submitting a Request:**
 - Complete the *Time-off Request Form* and submit to the supervisor at least **2 weeks** in advance.
3. **Approval Process:**
 - Supervisor reviews staffing schedules and approves or denies the request based on operational needs.
 - The decision is communicated within **5 business days**.
4. **Documentation:**
 - Approved requests are logged in the HR system and scheduling calendar.

5. Communication Protocols

- All communication regarding swaps and time-off must be documented (e.g., via email or official forms).
- Employees are responsible for confirming approval before assuming any changes are final.
- Supervisors will promptly notify the team of any approved adjustments to the schedule.

6. Documentation Requirements

- Shift Swap Request Form
- Time-off Request Form
- Supervisor Approval Email/Signature
- System Records of Schedule Changes

7. Managing Coverage and Operational Continuity

- Supervisors must ensure adequate coverage is maintained before approving any shift swaps or time-off.
- All changes must be reflected in the master schedule and communicated to all affected employees.
- Unfilled shifts due to denied swaps/time-off must be addressed promptly to avoid disruptions.

8. Compliance and Exceptions

- All procedures are subject to company HR policies, labor laws, and union agreements.
- Exceptions require department manager and HR approval, and must be documented with justification.

9. Revision History

Date	Version	Description of Change	Approved By
2024-06-10	1.0	Initial creation	HR Manager