STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Refund Request SOP

Document no.	SOP-CS-005
Revision	1.0
Owner	Customer Service Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To process customer refund requests consistently, verifying eligibility and identity before issuing a refund, and keeping an accurate financial record of every transaction.

2. Scope

Applies to refund requests for purchases, subscriptions and billing errors received through any support channel. Complaints that do not involve a refund are covered by the complaint handling SOP.

Definitions

Refund window	The period after purchase during which a refund is allowed under policy.
Authority limit	The maximum refund amount an agent can approve without escalation.
Store credit	A non-cash refund alternative applied to the customer's account for future use.
Chargeback	A payment reversal initiated by the customer's bank rather than through the refund process.

3. Responsibilities

Support Agent	Verifies eligibility and identity, and processes refunds within their authority limit.
Team Lead	Approves refund exceptions and amounts above the standard authority limit.
Billing Specialist	Processes approved refunds in the billing system and reconciles them weekly.

RACI matrix

Activity	Support Agent	Team Lead	Billing Specialist
Verify eligibility and identity	R/A	I	-
Approve refund within authority limit	R	A	I
Approve exceptions above authority limit	C	R/A	C
Process the refund	C	I	R/A
Reconcile refunds weekly	-	I	R/A

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Billing or payment processing system
- Refund policy reference
- Order and purchase history system
- Refund approval log

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Receive the refund request** The Support Agent logs the refund request with the order or account details and the customer's stated reason.	Support Agent	☐
5.2	**Verify eligibility** The Support Agent checks the purchase record against the refund policy, including the refund window, product condition and subscription terms. **Checkpoint:** Eligibility is confirmed against the written refund policy before any amount is discussed with the customer.	Support Agent	☐
5.3	**Verify identity and ownership** The Support Agent confirms the requester's identity and that they own the account or order the refund applies to. **Warning:** Never process a refund to an account or payment method that doesn't match the original purchase.	Support Agent	☐
5.4	**Determine the refund amount** The Support Agent determines whether a full refund, partial refund or store credit applies, based on the refund policy and the specific situation.	Support Agent	☐
5.5	**Approve within authority** The Support Agent approves the refund directly if the amount is within their authority limit, or flags it for escalation if it is not.	Support Agent	☐
5.6	**Escalate exceptions** The Team Lead reviews and approves any refund amount above the standard authority limit, or any policy exception, before it proceeds.	Team Lead	☐
5.7	**Process the refund** The Billing Specialist processes the approved refund through the billing system to the original payment method used for the purchase. **Checkpoint:** The processed refund amount and destination match the approved request exactly.	Billing Specialist	☐
5.8	**Update account status** The Support Agent updates the customer's account and order status to reflect the completed refund.	Support Agent	☐
5.9	**Notify the customer** The Support Agent notifies the customer of the refund amount and the expected processing time to their payment method.	Support Agent	☐
5.10	**File the refund record** The Support Agent files the refund request and approval documentation for audit purposes.	Support Agent	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.11	**Reconcile weekly** The Billing Specialist reconciles processed refunds against approval records during the weekly finance review to catch any mismatches.	Billing Specialist	☐
5.12	**Report refund trends** The Billing Specialist reports refund volume and reasons to the Customer Service Manager monthly for trend analysis.	Billing Specialist	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every refund is checked against the eligibility policy before processing.
- Refunds above the authority limit have documented Team Lead approval.
- The refund destination matches the original payment method.
- Weekly reconciliation confirms processed refunds match approvals.

7. Records

- Refund request and approval record
- Processed refund confirmation
- Weekly reconciliation notes
- Monthly refund trend report

8. KPIs

- Average refund processing time
- Percentage of refunds within policy
- Refund approval exception rate
- Refund reason trend distribution

9. Common mistakes

- Refunding to a different payment method than the original purchase.
- Approving a refund above the agent's authority limit without escalation.
- Skipping the eligibility check for a request that seems clearly fine.
- Not documenting the reason for a policy exception.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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