STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Hotel Front Desk SOP

Document no.	SOP-HTL-002
Revision	1.0
Owner	Front Office Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To keep front desk operations consistent across shifts so guests receive the same standard of service no matter who is on duty.

2. Scope

Applies to front desk agents on all shifts at the property. Guest check-in, check-out and night audit have their own dedicated SOPs.

Definitions

PMS	Property management system. The software used to manage reservations, room status and guest folios.
Shift handover	The exchange of information between an outgoing and incoming front desk agent covering open issues and pending tasks.
House bank	The fixed amount of cash assigned to a front desk agent's drawer at the start of a shift.

3. Responsibilities

Front Desk Agent	Handles phones, guest requests and cash transactions, and completes shift handover notes.
Front Office Manager	Oversees front desk staffing, approves cash variances, and resolves escalated guest issues.
Housekeeping Supervisor	Shares room status updates and responds to front desk requests for room checks.

RACI matrix

Activity	Front Desk Agent	Front Office Manager	Housekeeping Supervisor
Count and secure the house bank	R	A	-
Handle phone and email inquiries	R/A	I	-
Complete shift handover	R	A	I
Coordinate room status with housekeeping	R	A	R

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

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- PMS terminal
- House bank cash drawer
- Shift handover log or app
- Property phone system
- Guest request tracking sheet
- Front desk procedure binder

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Sign in and collect the house bank** Log into the PMS at the start of the shift, collect and count the house bank against the recorded amount, and report any discrepancy to the front office manager immediately. **Checkpoint:** The house bank count matches the recorded starting amount before the shift begins.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.2	**Read the shift handover log** Read the handover notes from the previous shift for open guest issues, pending requests and anything flagged for follow-up.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.3	**Review the day's arrivals and departures** Check the PMS for expected arrivals, departures, VIP guests and any special requests noted on reservations for the day.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.4	**Answer phone calls promptly** Answer incoming calls within three rings using the standard greeting, and transfer or take a message for calls that need another department.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.5	**Respond to email and online inquiries** Check the shared inbox regularly through the shift and respond to guest inquiries and booking questions within the property's target response time.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.6	**Log guest requests** Record every guest request, such as extra towels or a wake-up call, in the request tracking sheet with the room number and time, and notify the department responsible. **Checkpoint:** Every logged request shows which department it was sent to and whether it was completed.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.7	**Coordinate room status with housekeeping** Confirm room status updates with the housekeeping supervisor throughout the day, especially for early arrivals or rooms needing priority cleaning.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.8	**Process cash and card transactions** Process incidental payments and folio adjustments in the PMS, counting cash back to the guest clearly and printing a receipt for every transaction. **Warning:** Never leave the house bank drawer open or unattended, even briefly.	Front Desk Agent	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.9	**Handle general guest questions** Answer questions about property amenities, local directions and policies, using the front desk procedure binder for anything outside personal knowledge.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.10	**Balance and secure the house bank** Count the house bank at the end of the shift, record the closing amount, and secure it in the designated safe or drawer. **Checkpoint:** The house bank balances to the expected amount within the property's allowed variance before the shift ends.	Front Desk Agent	☐
5.11	**Write the shift handover notes** Summarize open issues, pending guest requests and anything the next shift needs to follow up on in the handover log before leaving.	Front Desk Agent	☐

6. Quality checks

- House bank balances to the expected amount at the start and end of every shift.
- Every guest request logged during the shift shows a completion status.
- Handover notes are completed before the agent leaves the desk.
- Phone calls are answered within the property's target ring count on spot checks.

7. Records

- Shift handover log
- Guest request tracking sheet
- House bank count sheet
- Cash variance reports

8. KPIs

- Average phone answer time
- Guest request completion time
- Cash variance incidents per month
- Guest satisfaction score for front desk service

9. Common mistakes

- Leaving the house bank drawer unattended.
- Forgetting to log a guest request, so it never reaches the right department.
- Skipping the shift handover notes when the desk is busy.
- Not confirming room status with housekeeping before promising an early check-in.

10. Revision history

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

Approval

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