STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

# Hotel Lost and Found SOP

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| **Document no.** | SOP-HTL-007 |
| **Revision** | 1.0 |
| **Owner** | Front Office Manager |
| **Effective date** | September 15, 2026 |
| **Review cycle** | Every 12 months |

## 1. Purpose

To handle guest items found on property consistently, so owners can be reunited with their belongings and unclaimed items are stored and disposed of properly.

## 2. Scope

Applies to all departments that may find guest items, and to the front desk or housekeeping office that logs and stores them. Handling of items reported lost by a guest who has already checked out is included.

### Definitions

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|---|---|
| **Lost and found log** | The record of every found item, including where and when it was found and its current status. |
| **Retention period** | The length of time an unclaimed item is stored before it is donated, disposed of, or handled per local regulations. |
| **Chain of custody** | The record of who has handled a found item from discovery through return, storage or disposal. |

## 3. Responsibilities

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|---|---|
| **Room Attendant** | Reports items found in guest rooms immediately and hands them to the floor supervisor. |
| **Floor Supervisor** | Receives found items from attendants and delivers them to the lost and found office. |
| **Front Desk Agent** | Logs found items, verifies ownership claims, and arranges return shipping. |
| **Front Office Manager** | Oversees the lost and found log, approves disposal of unclaimed items, and resolves disputed claims. |

### RACI matrix

| Activity | Room Attendant | Floor Supervisor | Front Desk Agent | Front Office Manager |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Report and hand over a found item | R | A | I | - |
| Log the item and store it securely | I | R | R/A | I |
| Verify a claim and return the item | - | I | R/A | C |
| Approve disposal of unclaimed | - | I | I | R/A |

| Activity | Room Attendant | Floor Supervisor | Front Desk Agent | Front Office Manager |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| items | | | | |

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

## 4. Materials and PPE

### Materials, tools and systems

- Lost and found log or app
- Labeled storage bins or a locked cabinet
- Property bags and tags
- Shipping supplies and courier account
- Claim verification form

### Personal protective equipment

- Disposable gloves for handling found items

## 5. Procedure

| Step | Task | Owner | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | **Report the item immediately**<br>As soon as an item is found, the employee tells their supervisor and does not leave it unattended or set it aside for later. | Room Attendant | ☐ |
| 5.2 | **Bag and tag the item**<br>Place the item in a property bag and attach a tag noting the room or location found, the date, and the name of the person who found it. | Floor Supervisor | ☐ |
| 5.3 | **Separate valuables immediately**<br>Hand over items such as cash, jewelry, passports and electronics to the front desk within 30 minutes rather than holding them on the floor.<br>**Checkpoint:** Valuables are handed to the front desk within 30 minutes of being found, not left on a cart or in an office overnight. | Floor Supervisor | ☐ |
| 5.4 | **Log the item in the lost and found system**<br>Enter the item description, location found, date, and finder's name into the lost and found log or app, and assign it a reference number. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |
| 5.5 | **Store the item securely**<br>Store the tagged item in the labeled storage bin or locked cabinet matching its reference number, keeping high-value items in a separate secured area. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |
| 5.6 | **Search for the owner**<br>If the item was found in a guest room shortly after departure, check the reservation for contact details and reach out to let the guest know it was found. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |
| 5.7 | **Verify an ownership claim**<br>When a guest calls or visits to claim an item, ask them to describe it in detail before showing it, and record their contact details on the claim verification form.<br>**Checkpoint:** The claimant describes the item accurately before it is shown or returned to them. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |

| Step | Task | Owner | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.8 | **Return or ship the item**<br>Return the item in person if the guest is on property, or arrange shipping at the guest's expense using the courier account, and update the log with the outcome. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |
| 5.9 | **Track the retention period**<br>Note the date the retention period ends for each unclaimed item based on the property's policy, and flag items approaching that date for review. | Front Desk Agent | ☐ |
| 5.10 | **Review and approve disposal**<br>Review the list of items past their retention period and approve donation or disposal, following any local requirements for handling unclaimed property. | Front Office Manager | ☐ |

## 6. Quality checks

- Every found item is logged with a reference number the same day it is received.
- Valuables are handed to the front desk within 30 minutes of being found.
- No item is returned without the claimant describing it first.
- Items past their retention period are reviewed before disposal, not left indefinitely.

## 7. Records

- Lost and found log or app entries
- Claim verification forms
- Shipping receipts for returned items
- Disposal approval records

## 8. KPIs

- Time from an item being found to being logged
- Percentage of found items successfully returned to their owner
- Average retention time before disposal
- Valuables handover compliance rate

## 9. Common mistakes

- Leaving a found item unattended instead of reporting it right away.
- Returning an item without the claimant describing it first.
- Forgetting to update the log once an item is returned or disposed of.
- Letting items sit well past the retention period without review.

## 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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