

Hotel Lost and Found SOP

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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

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

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 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 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 Hand over items such as cash, jewelry, passports and electronics to the front desk within 30 minutes rather than holding them on the floor. 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 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 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 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 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. 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 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 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 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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