STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

IT Change Management SOP

Document no.	SOP-IT-005
Revision	1.0
Owner	IT Change Manager
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Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To make sure changes to production systems are assessed for risk, approved by the right people, tested, communicated in advance, and can be rolled back safely if something goes wrong.

2. Scope

Applies to standard, normal and emergency changes to production systems, networks and applications. Incident fixes that do not alter production configuration and routine access provisioning are covered by separate procedures.

Definitions

Standard change	A low-risk, pre-approved, repeatable change that follows a documented procedure.
Normal change	A change that requires risk assessment and approval before implementation.
Emergency change	A change needed urgently to resolve a critical issue, approved through an expedited path.
Change Advisory Board (CAB)	The group that reviews and approves normal changes based on risk and business impact.
Rollback plan	The documented steps to reverse a change if it fails or causes unexpected problems.

3. Responsibilities

Change Requester	Submits the change request, prepares the test and rollback plans, and implements or coordinates the change.
Change Manager	Classifies changes, schedules CAB review, and coordinates the change calendar.
CAB Member	Reviews and approves or rejects normal changes based on risk and impact.
System Administrator	Implements the change, tests it against success criteria, and executes rollback if needed.

RACI matrix

Activity	Change Requester	Change Manager	CAB Member	System Administrator
Submit and classify the change request	R	A	I	I
Review and approve normal changes	I	R	R/A	I

Activity	Change Requester	Change Manager	CAB Member	System Administrator
Implement the change	C	I	I	R/A
Test against success criteria	C	I	I	R/A
Close the change and report the outcome	I	R/A	I	C

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

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Change request form or ticketing system
- Change calendar and maintenance window schedule
- CAB meeting agenda and minutes
- Rollback plan template
- Test environment

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Submit the change request** The Change Requester submits a request describing the change, the systems affected and the business justification, using the change request form.	Change Requester	☐
5.2	**Classify the change type** The Change Manager classifies the request as a standard, normal or emergency change, which determines the approval path it follows. **Checkpoint:** The classification matches the actual risk level of the change rather than the requester's preferred approval path.	Change Manager	☐
5.3	**Assess risk and impact** The Change Requester, with input from the Change Manager, documents the systems, users and dependencies affected by the change and the likely impact if it fails.	Change Requester	☐
5.4	**Prepare test and rollback plans** The Change Requester writes a test plan describing how success will be confirmed and a rollback plan describing exactly how to reverse the change. **Warning:** No change proceeds to implementation without a documented rollback plan, even for changes that seem simple.	Change Requester	☐
5.5	**Submit normal changes to the CAB** The Change Manager schedules the change for review at the next Change Advisory Board meeting and distributes the request in advance.	Change Manager	☐
5.6	**Obtain CAB approval** The CAB reviews the risk assessment, test plan and rollback plan, then approves, rejects or requests more information on the change. **Checkpoint:** Approval is recorded in the change record before any implementation work begins on a normal change.	CAB Member	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.7	**Schedule the maintenance window** The Change Manager schedules the approved change into an agreed maintenance window on the change calendar.	Change Manager	☐
5.8	**Notify affected users** The Change Manager notifies affected users and stakeholders of the scheduled change and expected impact ahead of the maintenance window.	Change Manager	☐
5.9	**Implement the change** The System Administrator implements the change during the scheduled window, following the documented plan step by step.	System Administrator	☐
5.10	**Test against success criteria** The System Administrator tests the change against the success criteria defined in the request to confirm it works as intended. **Checkpoint:** The change is not marked successful until it passes every success criterion defined in the request.	System Administrator	☐
5.11	**Execute rollback if needed** If the change fails to meet its success criteria or causes unexpected problems, the System Administrator executes the documented rollback plan immediately.	System Administrator	☐
5.12	**Document the outcome** The Change Requester updates the change record with the outcome, any issues encountered, and whether a rollback was needed.	Change Requester	☐
5.13	**Close the change** The Change Manager closes the change record and reports the outcome back to the CAB, including emergency changes reviewed after the fact.	Change Manager	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every normal change has CAB approval recorded before implementation begins.
- Every change request includes a documented rollback plan.
- Emergency changes receive after-the-fact CAB review at the next scheduled meeting.
- Affected users are notified ahead of the scheduled maintenance window.

7. Records

- Change request record
- CAB meeting minutes and approval decision
- Test results
- Post-implementation review notes

8. KPIs

- Percentage of changes implemented without causing an incident
- Change success rate
- Percentage of changes with a documented rollback plan
- Average time from submission to approval

9. Common mistakes

- Implementing a change before CAB approval is recorded.

- Skipping the rollback plan for a change that seems simple.
- Not notifying affected users ahead of a maintenance window.
- Classifying a risky change as standard to avoid the CAB review.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Ilia Pirozhenko

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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