

MSP Backup Verification SOP

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Revision	1.0
Owner	Backup Engineer
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Review cycle	Every 6 months

1. Purpose

To prove, not assume, that every managed client can recover its systems and data, by checking backup jobs every day, closing coverage gaps and restoring from backups on a regular schedule.

2. Scope

Applies to backups of servers, virtual machines, cloud workloads and SaaS data that the MSP manages for clients. Backup configuration and retention design are agreed separately with each client and recorded in the client documentation.

Definitions

Test restore	Restoring a sample of files, a mailbox or a whole system into an isolated location to prove the backup can be recovered.
Coverage gap	A server, workload or data set that should be backed up but is not included in any backup job.
RPO	Recovery point objective: the maximum amount of data, measured in time, the client can afford to lose.
RTO	Recovery time objective: how quickly a system must be back in service after a failure.
Immutable copy	A backup copy that cannot be changed or deleted until its retention period ends, protecting it from ransomware.

3. Responsibilities

NOC Technician	Reviews backup status for every client each day, raises tickets for failures and checks for coverage gaps.
Backup Engineer	Fixes failed jobs, verifies offsite and immutable copies, runs test restores and disaster recovery tests.
Service Manager	Handles escalations for repeated failures and makes sure verification happens on schedule across all clients.
Technical Account Manager	Reports backup health and test results to the client and agrees RPO and RTO targets.

RACI matrix

Activity	NOC Technician	Backup Engineer	Service Manager	Technical Account Manager
Review daily backup status	R	A	I	-
Fix failed backup jobs	C	R/A	I	I
Run test restores and DR tests	I	R	A	C
Report backup health to the client	-	C	I	R/A

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

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Backup platform consoles and dashboards
- Backup coverage list per client
- RMM device inventory
- Isolated restore environment
- PSA ticketing system
- Test restore log

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	Keep the coverage list current The Backup Engineer maintains a coverage list for each client showing which systems and data are protected, how often, how long copies are kept and where the offsite copy goes.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.2	Review the daily backup dashboard Each morning the NOC Technician reviews last night's job results for every client, including warnings and jobs that did not run at all.	NOC Technician	☐
5.3	Raise a ticket for each failed job The NOC Technician opens a PSA ticket for every failed, missed or partial job, with the client, system, error and last successful backup time. Checkpoint: No failed or missed job is left without a ticket by mid-morning.	NOC Technician	☐
5.4	Resolve failed jobs The Backup Engineer investigates each failed job, fixes the cause and runs a manual backup if the next scheduled run would breach the client's RPO.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.5	Escalate repeated failures The Backup Engineer escalates to the Service Manager any system that misses two consecutive backups or has no successful backup within its RPO.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.6	Check new devices for coverage Every week the NOC Technician compares the RMM device inventory with the coverage list and raises a ticket for any server or workload that is not protected.	NOC Technician	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.7	Verify offsite and immutable copies The Backup Engineer confirms that offsite replication completed and that immutable copies exist and match the agreed retention period.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.8	Run monthly test restores Every month the Backup Engineer restores a sample for each client, rotating between files, mailboxes, databases and whole virtual machines, into an isolated environment. Warning: Never restore over production data for a test. Use an isolated location so a bad restore cannot affect the client.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.9	Verify the restored data The Backup Engineer checks that restored files open, databases mount and systems boot, and records how long the restore took against the client's RTO. Checkpoint: Each test restore is recorded with what was restored, the result and the time taken.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.10	Run the annual disaster recovery test Once a year the Backup Engineer recovers the client's critical systems end to end with the Technical Account Manager and compares the results with the agreed RPO and RTO.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.11	Record results in the client documentation The Backup Engineer updates the client's backup documentation with test results, recovery steps that worked and any problems found.	Backup Engineer	☐
5.12	Report backup health to the client The Technical Account Manager reports job success rate, test restore results and open risks to the client at each business review.	Technical Account Manager	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every client's backup jobs were reviewed on every business day.
- Every failed or missed job has a ticket and a recorded resolution.
- Every client had at least one successful test restore this month.
- No server in the RMM inventory is missing from the coverage list.
- Offsite and immutable copies match the agreed retention.

7. Records

- Backup coverage list per client
- Daily backup review log and tickets
- Test restore log with results and restore times
- Annual disaster recovery test report

8. KPIs

- Backup job success rate per client
- Percentage of clients with a successful test restore this month
- Number of coverage gaps found and closed
- Test restore time compared with the client's RTO

9. Common mistakes

- Treating a green dashboard as proof that data can be restored.
- Only checking failed jobs and missing jobs that never ran.
- Adding a new server without adding it to a backup job.
- Testing restores only for files and never for whole systems.

10. Revision history

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

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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