STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Security Shift Change SOP

Document no.	SOP-SEC-004
Revision	1.0
Owner	Security Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To make sure no post is left uncovered and no open issue, key or piece of equipment is lost or forgotten when one guard's shift ends and the next begins.

2. Scope

Applies to every shift change between security guards at a staffed post, including the control room and any post using shared equipment or keys.

Definitions

Shift log	The written or electronic record of events, issues and handover notes for a shift, signed by both outgoing and incoming guards.
Equipment inventory	The list of keys, radios, access cards and patrol devices assigned to a post that must be counted and transferred at handover.

3. Responsibilities

Outgoing Guard	Briefs the incoming guard on open issues, transfers equipment and keys, and signs the shift log before leaving.
Incoming Guard	Reviews the handover, verifies equipment received, and signs the shift log acknowledging the handover.
Shift Supervisor	Spot-checks handover quality and resolves any discrepancy found during the transfer.

RACI matrix

Activity	Outgoing Guard	Incoming Guard	Shift Supervisor
Brief incoming guard on open issues	R/A	I	I
Count and transfer keys and equipment	R	R/A	I
Walk the post or checkpoints together	R	R/A	I
Sign the shift log	R	R/A	I
Spot-check the handover	I	I	R/A

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

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Shift log book or electronic logging system
- Equipment inventory checklist
- Key and access card register
- Visitor log for the current day
- Radio and patrol device chargers

Personal protective equipment

- Uniform and identification badge

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Arrive early for handover** The incoming guard arrives before the scheduled start time so there is enough time to complete a full handover before the outgoing guard leaves.	Incoming Guard	☐
5.2	**Review outstanding issues in the log** The outgoing guard reviews the shift log with the incoming guard, covering any open incident, pending task or unusual event from the shift.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.3	**Walk the post or checkpoints together** Walk the post, gate or assigned checkpoints together so the incoming guard can see current conditions firsthand before taking over.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.4	**Check CCTV and alarm system status** Confirm the CCTV cameras and alarm system show normal status, and note any camera outage or alarm zone currently bypassed or under maintenance.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.5	**Review the visitor log** Review who is currently signed in on site, including contractors and after-hours visitors, so the incoming guard knows who should still be present.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.6	**Brief on ongoing issues** Brief the incoming guard on anything ongoing, such as a broken lock, a blocked exit, scheduled maintenance, or an expected VIP visit. **Warning:** An unresolved security issue must be clearly flagged, not left for the next guard to discover on their own.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.7	**Count and transfer keys and equipment** Count keys, radios, access cards and patrol devices against the equipment inventory checklist, and hand them over item by item with the incoming guard confirming each one. **Checkpoint:** Every item on the equipment inventory checklist is counted and confirmed present before handover is complete.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.8	**Verify equipment condition** Check that radios are charged, keys are the correct set, and patrol scanners or devices are functioning before accepting the handover.	Incoming Guard	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.9	**Sign the shift log** Both guards sign the shift log entry confirming the handover time, equipment count and any open issues discussed. **Checkpoint:** Both the outgoing and incoming guard's signatures appear on the shift log before the outgoing guard leaves.	Incoming Guard	☐
5.10	**Confirm the outgoing guard's departure** The outgoing guard leaves the post only after the incoming guard confirms they are ready to take over and has signed the log.	Outgoing Guard	☐
5.11	**Spot-check the handover** Periodically review completed shift logs and equipment counts to confirm handovers are thorough and issues are being carried forward correctly.	Shift Supervisor	☐
5.12	**Log the shift change time** Record the confirmed shift change time in the control room system so coverage records stay accurate.	Incoming Guard	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every shift change has a shift log entry signed by both outgoing and incoming guards.
- Equipment inventory counts match at every handover with no unexplained shortage.
- Open issues from the previous shift are documented and carried forward, not lost.
- No post is left uncovered during the handover window.

7. Records

- Signed shift log entries
- Equipment inventory checklist
- Key and access card register

8. KPIs

- Percentage of shift changes with a fully signed handover log
- Number of equipment discrepancies found at handover
- Average handover duration

9. Common mistakes

- Leaving before the incoming guard has signed the shift log.
- Skipping the equipment count because everything usually matches.
- Not mentioning a broken lock or blocked exit because it seems minor.
- Handing over verbally without updating the written shift log.

10. Revision history

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

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

This is a template. Adapt it to your organization, equipment and local regulations before use.

Scan for the latest version

Opens this template online, where you can download it again in Word, PDF, Excel or CSV — free, no sign-up.

Or add it to Perfect Wiki so your team can find it and ask questions about it in Microsoft Teams, Slack, kChat or Mattermost.