Policy/Procedure List

1. Reservations/Check in/Check out/
2. Rate Negotiation
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5. Adjustments/Corrections/Refunds
6. Damages/Missing Items
7. Early Departure
8. Pet Policy
9. Tips for Handling Unhappy Guests

This is a Front Desk and Reservation “policies and procedures” training list. There is a lot of content that is important, but it is your personality and special abilities -- along with those of your teammates -- that will create unexpected, delightful experiences for the many thousands of unique guests that we have the honor to serve. With all the details that we want to think about, it is the core elements that matter most:

***Our genuine, irrepressible enthusiasm for people! - Enthusiasm for our guests and for each other.***

***Through our friendly greeting to each guest followed by listening and offering a a caring connection; we create a warm sense of comfort, safety, relaxation and fun.***

***If we bring those things to our guests and each other, our guests will be delighted and will love our hotel and have memorable experiences.***

In sum, we are fortunate to have this very nice hotel and restaurant in a truly beautiful setting, but they are nothing without your stewardship of it.

Reservations

A friendly welcome, and make it your own! The important thing is that the person on the other end of the phone senses a smile and your genuine friendliness. That will put them at ease and set the stage for your conversation.

***“Thanks for calling the Independence Hotel, this is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, how may I help you?”***

***“This is\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the Independence Hotel, how may I help you?”***

Both of these examples are great, but is all in how you say it… use these words, or a similar version, but focus on being genuinely friendly, the intention is what is most important.

Good questions, information and tips:

* ***“Have you stayed with us before?”* –** Is a great entrée - this meets people where they are, and allows us to immediately pivot to “we look forward to seeing you again, Ms. Jones!” (an indication we don’t need to repeat the long list of amenities as if they’ve never stayed) or, you will know that they haven’t stayed before, so more details about the property may be appreciated.
* For those that say they have not stayed with us before, ***“What brings you to Independence?”*** Is a great way to get key information that can build the reservation conversation efficiently.
  + “I’m just in town for one night while I do some work for ACPI”
  + “I’m coming to a wedding next June, and we’ll be there for three days for that, but we’re thinking about staying a week and checking out the coast and Portland too.
* These answers will help you better understand potential guest needs.
  + Often the first-time, one-night business guest on the phone wants to invest much less time on the phone than a person who is coming for the wedding. So, the list of amenities we mention can be much shorter:
    - “we’re a brand-new hotel in a beautiful, riverfront setting,
    - “we have a complimentary hot buffet breakfast that comes with the room”
    - “free highspeed internet
    - “Our restaurant serves great food for lunch and dinner every day”

For those on the other end of the spectrum, like the wedding guest who wants to hear it all, you can go into more detail:

* ***“Our brand-new hotel is in a beautiful, riverfront location right in downtown Independence, with lovely, serene pathways just outside our door.***
* ***Just two-and-a-half miles from your wedding events at Green Villa.***
* ***We have a roof-top deck with a fantastic view of Riverview Park and downtown,***
* ***And a fun restaurant with a riverfront patio that will serve you a complimentary hot breakfast buffet each morning, and serves great food for lunch and dinner every day.***
* ***We have a variety of Deluxe rooms and Suites with either 1 King or 2 Queen-size beds, and many of our Suites have balconies.***
* ***And all of our rooms have microwaves, refrigerators, coffee makers, complimentary high-speed internet, and feature great views of the park.***
* ***Most guestrooms have a river view as well off to one side, as well as several suites with full-on river views above our restaurant patio.***
* ***We’re just 1 hour from the spectacular Oregon coast, and just 1-and-a-half hours from Portland: and there lots of great day trips from here, built around hanging out at the beach, wine-tasting at world-class wineries right nearby, great hiking, including walking behind a sequence of dramatic waterfalls at Silver Falls, bicycle adventures on road bikes and mountain bikes, kayaking and more…”***

You will be surprised at how many people will ask for a lot more information!

We can also plan customized itineraries for guests! Just take down their request, if it is not in your wheelhouse, depending on the request, you can ask your managers for support in completing the itinerary.

Don’t hesitate to spend as much time as the guest would like. If you are on shift alone and get busy, you can always give them the choice to call them back, or put them on hold. They will understand, and be thankful you are being responsive to their needs, whether they want a lot of information, or very little. Ending the call with “there is lots of information on our website, TheIndependenceHotel.com, and don’t hesitate to call us once you take a look. We’re here for you anytime to help you plan your visit at (503) 837-0200”.

* Before ending the call confirm the check in and check out dates- This helps clarify for the guest and assure them, that their reservation is for the right dates
* Often guests will say: “I’ll be staying July 15th through the 16th” And we need to always slow down and clarify. Many of them will mean their check-out date is the 17th, ***and many others who say the exact same thing***will mean they are checking out on the 16th. To make them not feel talked down to, say something like: “great, so checking in on July 15th for 2 nights and checking out on the 17th? And then there will be no miscommunication.
* This also is important because if we have the wrong check out date and it isn’t caught until check in by this time the additional date needed could end up being sold out.
* Confirm the contact info (email and phone number)
* Always get the name of the guest(s) registered for each room, not the name of the person paying for the room. Guests (especially with weddings or groups) they will often ask for multiple rooms under their one name. In this situation, politely ask them for the specific names for each room. They think they are saving you time; ***but, in fact disaster can ensue***. For weddings especially, a person talking with you will suddenly think “I better make a reservation for my two adult children and their families, as well as Uncle Joe” and then forget about it, and often most of those people will make their own reservations. ***It is incredibly common at most hotels, for 5 relatives and their families to check in, and realize that there are 8 or 9 rooms set aside for them instead of 5, and often this is very late at night, given how far people travel for weddings... Everyone is embarrassed, and we may not be able to sell those rooms, resulting in a loss of hundreds of dollars of income… More importantly, it starts the stay for them with a bad feeling, no matter how gracious we are,*** *and the irony is that the situation arose from the best of intentions on their part.*

Rate Negotiation:

Rate Negotiation Tips:

1. When somebody asks the rate, always start with the BAR rate. Our properties BAR is on par with Salem area hotels and we have nothing to be embarrassed about in terms of value. With the guest we don’t say “best available rate” because that can be confusing….. it isn’t.

A common answer to what is your rate?

“Our winter rate for a King or Two Queen Deluxe room that comes with a hot buffet breakfast is $149.00”.

Depending on their receptiveness and what you’ve already shared about the property, you might also share the amenities in the rooms and nearby. It’s also a big asset to let them know that we are a brand-new property.

1. If the customer gives rate resistance…… “are there any discounts available?” “That seems high”

You can ask them why they are in town – if they reply for WOU related, or for business, we can offer special rates.

If they don’t qualify for either of those, we can ask if they are AAA, of NAARP.

If they still don’t qualify, we can offer them rooms on the ground or second floor, still with very nice views at a discounted rate (up to your discretion AAA or WOU Parent rate).

1. If they are still rate resistant, or they ask if you can match the rate of a competitor……$99 is our lowest negotiated rate. You can tell them yes, to matching another properties rate, as long as it is $99 or higher.

You can tell them that you can give them the lowest negotiated rate, a rate we reserve for our most regular guests and a local’s special of $99.

If we give them the $99 rate, it is important to let them know it is a limited special that won’t always be available.

Winter Rates – Cheat Sheet

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | BAR | WOU | Corporate | AAA/AARP | Veteran | Government |
| King, KADA | 149.00 | 129.00 | 139.00 | 139.00 | 129.00 | 96.00 (GSA per diem) |
| QQ, QQ T | 149.00 | 129.00 | 139.00 | 139.00 | 129.00 | 96.00 (GSA per diem) |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | BAR | WOU | Corporate | AAA/AARP | Veteran | Government |
| 2Q LG, K Bal | 189.00 | 169.00 | 179.00 | 179.00 | 169.00 | 96.00 |
| Suite 2 Q | 199.00 | 179.00 | 189.00 | 189.00 | 179.00 | 96.00 |
| Ex Suite and Ex Suite ADA | 279.00 | 259.00 | 269.00 | 269.00 | 259.00 | 96.00 |
| Suite Mstr | 309.00 | 289.00 | 299.00 | 299.00 | 289.00 | 96.00 |
| Ex Suite BAL | 259.00 | 239.00 | 249.00 | 249.00 | 239.00 | 96.00 |
| Suite Park | 249.00 | 229.00 | 239.00 | 239.00 | 229.00 | 96.00 |

Promotional Codes:

Promotional codes are temporary discounts that are available with a code for a limited period of time. Guests may enter these codes online themselves, or they may ask you to honor a code during a reservation. These codes are generally good for one use! Per Availability. If over 85% occupied (64 rooms), check with management.

Credit Card Fax Authorization

Non-guaranteed reservations

* While taking down the reservation the reservation agent should inform the guest / booker about the standard reservation holding time or release period as per the hotels policy.
* Explain to booker or guest the following applicable reservation holding time.
* A non-Guaranteed reservation with no arrival or flight timing or bookings which are not re-confirmed shall be released by 1600hrs.
* Reservation status will not be carried forward to the next day for a non-guaranteed booking; Such bookings will be cancelled on the same day.
* A non-Guaranteed reservation with late night arrival or late night flight timing shall be released 4 hours after stated arrival/flight time on date of arrival.
* For Guaranteed reservation with credit-card details, Room will be blocked and checked in, or may be amended to the next day after reconfirming with the guest as per the availability.
* For guaranteed reservation no-show’s the room will be checked in to charge retention charges and the same will be billed to the guest credit card.
* In case there is no pickup details or flight details giving by the guest, then request the Guest to call back once these details are available.
* For Guaranteed bookings (non – credit card) request the guest to make a deposit before arrival, As per hotel policy you can also give a cut off date in case guests fail to make the deposit on or before the cut-off date the tentative reservation will be released.
* Check with Booker / guest if any additional information or further assistance is required.
* Note down the agreed reservation status (Guaranteed, non-guaranteed, credit card confirmed, deposit etc.)  on the reservation form.
* Information obtained must be repeated to ensure accuracy.

Request for “unregistered guest”

Protecting room numbers and guest identity

Check-Ins

* Ask if they’ve stayed with us before?
* What brings you to town?
* Where are you coming from today? (if they are not in a hurry)
* Complimentary Breakfast Buffet in the morning 7:00 am -10:00 am
* The Restaurant is open until 9:00 pm tonight
* We have a roof-top deck, 24-hour fitness center and hot-tub open until 11 PM, and then again at 7 in the morning.
* Wi Fi is free and no code required (for now)
* There is a riverfront walking trail right outside the hotel and we are just a couple blocks from downtown.
* Check out time is 11:00 am
* If they have a dog, mention the dog park nearby
* If they are attending a conference at the Civic Center, reference how close it is
* Here for wine, reference nearby vineyards
* Traveling with a bike, note bike work room and in-room storage.
* Are they wearing an Audubon Society Hat? Let them now about Ollie and Olga

Check-Outs

* Ask them “how was your stay with us” with a smile. This will often start a great conversation as they share highlights of their trip, compliments for one or more of your teammates, and friendly suggestions or observations, like “the lightbulb is out on the light at the end of the couch”; all of which are very valuable for us to hear. Additionally, this often sparks the idea for them to leave us a nice review on TripAdvisor or Yelp, as they have now verbalized their enjoyment, and felt genuine satisfaction by generously sharing it with us. If they have a complaint: listen, empathize, apologize if necessary, thank them for their observations and share any follow up action etc… It is especially helpful to hear their complaints, as they will feel listened to, and appreciated the fact that you cared enough to ask, and to write those things down to begin the process of correcting them. This gives them the satisfaction of knowing that the information they shared can directly help the next guest. It also prevents a large percentage of potentially less than fully enthusiastic reviews – which is also incredibly important.
* Provide a summary of the bill verbally, I have two room nights and a restaurant charge, would you like a printed receipt?
* help with transportation, luggage storage, etc.
* Thank them for staying with us and invite them to stay again.
* Follow up and report any complaints and suggestions to management, maintenance, housekeeping, restaurant management etc...

Cash Payments/Deposit

We will take cash payment at check-in but additional authorization is required to keep on file for incidentals. For this reason, a credit card will be required at check in and must be able to be authorized for the full amount of your stay plus our incidental deposit.

For a guest to be placed on the list the guest must be approved by Courtney, Mark, or Sondra. This list is available on the desktop of the front desk computers. The exception for this is if a guest comes in intoxicated or becomes too intoxicated to drive. In this case, use your common sense as to whether you think they will likely be OK in our rooms. We will stand behind your decision!! Feel free to involve Courtney, Mark, or Sondra in the situation, and definitely call, if you feel unsure of what to do. ***You can always call police at 911 if you sense danger at any time.***

When collecting a cash deposit:

* Put the deposit in an envelope labeled with the date, name of the guest, room number and “cash deposit”. Make sure the cash deposit form is filled out and put in the envelop with the cash.
* Fill out the cash deposit log
* Before returning a cash deposit the room needs to be checked. At the time of checkout use the radio or phone, or send up another front desk agent to walk through the room and check for any significant damage to the room.
* Once cleared, provide the deposit to the guest and get their signature on the cash deposit form, ensure the cash deposit form is filled out.

Room Moves

When a guest requests a room move after check-in first find out why so we can meet the needs of the guest. Once you have moved the guest to the new room make sure the previous room is marked dirty in the system, that the correct rate is in place in the computer for the new room, notes are in place in both the reservation in the computer as well as the read book, and that the room that they left shows as vacant and dirty. If the guest didn’t use the room, but they went into it and looked at it, the room should be fully inspected before the status is changed to clean.

Adjustments/Corrections/Refunds/Making things right with the guests

Every Front Desk Agent has full permission to make adjustments and corrections to reservations. We will stand behind you! Often, even if they start out frustrated, they will be fine once you go through the process outlined below “Tips for resolving situations with initially unhappy guests”, and you may be surprised that they won’t even want your offered discount and room move. But even in situations that they accept a discount, they will be surprised that you cared, and even more surprised that you took the initiative to correct the situation, or move them to another room etc… Make a decision on every situation on the spot if you can, or, at worst, call Courtney, Mark or Sondra.

Damaged/Missing Items

If items are found damaged or missing in the rooms, Front Desk and Housekeeping should be alerting:

* 1. Sam, Courtney, Mark (GM) or Sondra:

Sam and Courtney should let the (GM) know in terms of handling and charges with the guest

* 1. Staff should also alert Tim with a maintenance request if there is maintenance work needed to bring the room back online.

Early Departure:

An early departure occurs when a guest has reserved a room for multiple nights and decides to leave the property one or more nights early.

To ensure we have the best information about the guest’s length of stay, Front Desk Agents, should always:

**When making a reservation:**

Confirm the date of check in and check out and the number of nights. “Mr. or Ms. Smith, I have you checking in August 12th, staying with us 3 nights, checking out August 15th.”

**When checking-in:**

Confirm with the guest the number of nights they are staying and their check-out date. “I see you are staying with us 3 nights, checking out August 15th.”

**Early Departure Scenarios and Fee:**

If a guest lets us know either at check-in or any time during their stay that they will be departing early, one of the following scenarios apply:

1. Most often we will not charge for an early departure.
2. if a guest checks-in and decides they need to leave that night, we will charge for 1 night. However, there are emergency situations, or other unique experiences, where we may not charge, or we charge a ½ day rate. A manager should be consulted on this decision.
3. If a guest leaves early because they are unhappy with the property, service, or we were unable to accommodate them for some other reason, we will not charge an early departure fee, unless they have been disruptive, or they have damaged the property. In this case, front desk agents should contact the manager on duty to determine appropriate charges to apply.

Group Sales or Event Inquiries

“walking a guest”

**When a walk situation occurs, the following procedure is to be followed:**

* We do not overbook, so having to walk a guest should be very rare.
* The Front Office Manager, Reservation Manager, Director of Hotel Sales should review all arrivals and decide which guests should be protected from a potential walk situation (i.e., Frequent Guests, VVIP guests, meeting planners and Secretaries' Club reservations).
* All Group / conference guest arrivals should be reviewed. Many groups guarantee payment. In addition, individuals attending group meetings being held at the hotel, as well as those transient guests representing major corporate producers and group guests who have called to confirm their reservation should also be given preferential treatment.
* Review room availability at competitors
* Ensure that a manger is aware of the situation and readily available to personally handle relations with all guests, it may make sense to call the guest in advance.
* The situation and the alternate arrangement should be carefully explained. As the situation is explained, the guest should receive a sincere apology on behalf of the hotel.
* Once the guest understands the situation, they should be asked if they have a preference in alternate hotels in that area. If so, make arrangements for the guest at that hotel, if available.
* If the guest has no preference, secure a reservation at the nearest hotel of similar standard.
* The Hotel will pay for room and tax at the alternate hotel and transportation if necessary.
* The front office staff should be briefed about the details of the ‘walked guest’ and the hotel where these guest has been relocated this will later be helpful in case any calls or messages received for the guest.
* If the guest had planned to stay for more than one night, we should offer to bring the guest back the next day regardless of hotel occupancy. If the guest elects to stay at the alternate hotel, it must be understood that we are responsible only for the first night's room and tax and the same to be briefed to the guest.
* Upon the return of the guest, they should be pre-registered and upgraded to the best accommodations available. A gift or VIP package should be sent to the guest with a note of apology from the General Manager / Hotel Manager .
* The Rooms Director/Director of Operations or Front Office Manager must contact the guest and extend every possible courtesy.
* A guest who has been walked must have their reservation cancelled with the appropriate cancellation code ‘Walked’ and also a notation made in his/her guest history in order to prevent a second occurrence.
* If the guest was booked for only one night or elects not to return to our hotel after the first night, the General Manager is to send a letter of apology the next day.
* When walking a guest whose reservation is commissionable to a travel agent, full payment of the commission must be made as if the guest had stayed at our hotel.
* A "Walked Guest Log" should be maintained, including the guest's name, where they were walked to, and the guest's attitude to be updated on to the guest profile.
* All walked guests should be also marked as a  "VIP Guest" with auto-popup remarks to ensure acknowledgement and apology for the previous walk situation and  this will also ensure VIP treatment on the next stay.

Do not rent to policy

In rare circumstances, management may determine that we will not rent to a guest again, the reasons for this may include, the guest: engaged in illegal activity at the hotel, was abusive or inappropriate with staff, or did significant damage to the hotel. In these circumstances, a Manager will let the guest no that we will not rent

Pet Policy

**Pet Fee**. A Pet Fee of $50 per stay will be charged to your guest room. If your stay is more than four days, an additional $50 fee will be added for each additional 4-day period.

**Unattended Pets**. Housekeeping services will not be provided if your pet is in the room. This is for the safety of your pet and our staff. Please contact the front desk to schedule a convenient time for servicing.

**Damage and Soiling**. As the guest, you accept full responsibility for any and all damages and/or soiling caused by your pet during your stay, including replacement of items and cleaning/labor expenses.

**Potential Disturbance.** Should your pet bark or disturb other hotel guests, the hotel will contact you and may require that you stay with your pet. In the unlikely event that your pet is disturbing other guests, we reserve the right to discontinue accommodating your pet.

**No Pet Areas**. Only human guests are allowed in the restaurant, hot tub, or fitness center, no pets allowed in these areas of the hotel.

When a guest is checking in with a dog, be sure to welcome the dog and let the guest now we love hosting dogs

Guests with dogs need to sign acknowledgement of the pet policy (

Delivery for guest

**Guest incoming Item Standard Procedure:**

**1. Check off items.**

Always check the items to avoid breakage and proper checking for security.

Upon receiving items for guest check with the sender for fragile or valuable items or perishable things, also check the sender’s information.

**2. Check guest details in the system.**

Check the [hotel software](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/property-management-system.html)/system to see if the guest is listed or holds a [reservation](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/book.html).

Receive items from sender after verification of the guest details in the system.

Ensure the guest is the correct receiver.

**3. Indication for guest in the hotel system.**

Leave a message or traces on the guest reservation.

Also, write down the item information on “daily incoming item record”.

**4. If the guest is in the room.**

Ensure the guest is not be disturbed and to avoid any disputes from guest and staff.

Call guest and get permission before GSA delivers the item to room.

Obtain incoming item record in the Concierge daily file folder.

If the guest wants to pick up item later at the desk, store the item temporarily at the concierge.

**5. The item for expected arrival guest.**

For the safety of the item.

If the guest has not checked in yet, leave the message or traces to a guest reservation in the system.

So the reception can let the guest know upon their arrivals.

**6. If the guest is not in the room.**

To show respect on guest the items to be handled carefully.

Store the item accordingly and properly.

**7. After the item is released.**

For the easy of future reference, the details of the item delivery need to properly recorded.

After the item is released, the staff who releases the item must write down the name and the releasing time both on the daily incoming item record.

Idle Time Policy

Entering a guest room

Master Keys

Tips for Resolving Situations with Initially Unhappy Guests (LEAP – FU)

**LISTEN**

* Listening is the first and most important step in dealing with anger. It calms the customer down and shows your concern.
* Sometimes what customers really want is for someone to hear them out and see their point of view. We can always give them that.
* Hear them out – do not interrupt, talk over, or hurry them.
* Avoid the tendency to think of your rebuttal while the customer is speaking.
* Remain calm. Don't take the complaint personally. If you did nothing wrong, the customer has no reason to be upset at you personally. You just embody the company in the customer's mind.
* Practice “sorting” - isolate the problem by ignoring sarcasm, exaggeration, and personal attacks.
* Give your undivided attention. Customers know when you’re just pretending to listen - they're on to "listening" tricks.
* Ask questions to get the facts.
* Paraphrase what the customer tells you.
* Take notes, and recap your notes. Ask the customer if you missed anything.

**EMPATHIZE**

* Empathy is the ability to know how another feels, as if you were in their place.
* Empathy does not necessarily mean that you agree with the customer’s feelings or behavior, but that you do understand them.
* Be considerate of the customer’s feelings.
* Be courteous.
* Show interest and willingness to help.
* People can tell if you are trying to understand, or just pretending to understand.
* Empathy begins with self-awareness and self-control, understanding your own emotions and reactions, and managing them appropriately towards a resolution.

**APOLOGIZE**

* One customer normally has more than one complaint, some valid, some not. Recognize what we could have done better.
* Apologize for our mistakes.
* Do not blame others or make excuses.
* Take ownership of the problem, even if it's not your fault. To the customer, you are the company.
* Thank the customer for bringing the problem to our attention, and for giving us the opportunity to make good on a mistake.
* If the customer is wrong, it does no good to say so. If demands are unreasonable, and you have no acceptable solution, you may need to get your manager involved.

**PROBLEM-SOLVE**

* Be the customer’s advocate.
* Take charge. Take responsibility and initiative to do whatever you can to solve the problem as quickly as possible.
* Focus on what you can, not cannot do.
* Look for common ground, work towards a solution together. Discuss a range of solutions, including what the customer thinks is a reasonable resolution.
* Propose a solution and get their support.
* Determine what you plan to do, why, how you plan to do it, who else needs to be involved, when this will happen, next steps.

**FOLLOW - UP**

* Follow up. The customer’s principal expectation is that you will do what you say you are going to do.
* Learn. What did we learn from this? How can we prevent it from recurring?