Customer Complaints Handling and Resolution

1.0 Objective & Scope

The objective of this procedure is to standardize the process for receiving, documenting, investigating, resolving, and closing customer complaints in a timely, professional, and compliant manner. This SOP applies to all Customer Success Representatives, Team Leads, and Department Managers who handle customer complaints across all communication channels (phone, email, chat, in-person).

2.0 Required Systems & Software

- SwitchDesk Administration Portal (ticketing and workflow management)
- Corporate CRM (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot) for customer records
- Email client (Outlook or Gmail) for formal correspondence
- Internal knowledge base or SOP repository for reference
- Phone system with call recording (for verbal complaints)

3.0 Core Guidelines & Compliance

- All customer complaints must be acknowledged in writing within 24 business hours of receipt.
- Complaints involving potential legal liability, safety, or discrimination must be escalated to the Department Manager within 2 hours.
- No complaint resolution may be finalized without documented root cause analysis and customer confirmation of satisfaction.
- All communications must be professional, empathetic, and free of blame or defensive language.
- Complaint records must be retained for a minimum of 2 years per corporate record-keeping policy.

4.0 Step-by-Step Execution Procedure

1. Receive the complaint via any channel (phone, email, chat, in-person) and immediately log it as a new ticket in SwitchDesk with the category 'Customer Complaint'.
2. Assign the ticket a priority level based on severity: Critical (legal/safety risk), High (service failure), Medium (process inconvenience), Low (general feedback).
3. Within 1 hour of logging, send an automated or manual acknowledgment to the customer confirming receipt, providing the ticket number, and stating the expected response timeframe.
4. Gather all relevant information: customer account details, order/service history, previous interactions, and any supporting documentation (screenshots, call recordings, emails).
5. Conduct a root cause investigation by reviewing internal processes, speaking with involved staff, and checking system logs. Document findings in the ticket notes.
6. Develop a proposed resolution that addresses the root cause and meets the customer's reasonable expectations. For Critical or High priority, obtain manager approval before communicating.

7. Contact the customer via their preferred channel to present the resolution, apologize for the inconvenience, and confirm their acceptance. If the customer rejects, escalate to the Team Lead for further negotiation.

8. Once the customer accepts, implement the resolution (e.g., refund, replacement, service credit, process change) and update the ticket with all actions taken.

9. Send a formal closure email to the customer summarizing the complaint, resolution, and any preventive measures. Request a satisfaction survey response.

10. Close the ticket in SwitchDesk and attach all related correspondence and investigation notes to the customer's master file in the CRM.

5.0 Verification & Reporting

1. At the end of each week, generate a Complaint Resolution Report from SwitchDesk showing ticket volume, average resolution time, and escalation rate.

2. Review any tickets that exceeded the 24-hour acknowledgment window or 5-business-day resolution target and document the reason for delay.

3. Submit the weekly report to the Customer Service Manager for review and identification of recurring issues requiring process improvement.

4. Archive closed complaint tickets in the CRM and ensure all records are retained per corporate retention policy.