

RECORDS & PROCEDURES

[BELL DESK]

Records and Procedures

1. Left Luggage Procedure

At times guest finds it inconvenient and expensive to carry their luggage to a place where they are going for a few days. Guest is expected to check out by check out time (12 noon) even if their flight is in the evening and they find it too expensive to retain the room for an extra day just to keep the luggage. Most hotels offer the left luggage room facility free of cost but some hotels do charge for it. The left luggage facility may also bring back the guest to stay in your hotel on his next visit. The procedure for receiving luggage is as such: Before accepting the luggage, it is checked whether the guest has settled his bill or not.

1. Check the baggage of the guest if it is properly locked or not. In case the baggage is damaged then the guest must be informed and note for the same must be made in the receipt. Scanty Baggage Procedure
2. Luggage stickers should be pasted on all luggage pieces. A proper receipt must be made, signed by both guest and bell captain, and handed over to the guest.

3. Enter the details in the left luggage register with the expected date the luggage will be picked up by the guest.

4. Keep the luggage in the left luggage room under lock and key.

When the guest comes to pick up his luggage pieces from the left luggage room then the following procedure is carried out. The guest is requested to give the receipt.

In case the guest has lost the receipts then the guest is requested to sign in the left luggage register.

1. Check the receipt and bring out his luggage pieces from the left luggage room.

2. Make an entry in the left luggage register entering the date luggage pieces delivered.

2. Scanty Baggage Procedure

Scanty baggage means no baggage or light luggage consisting of briefcase or airbag. Guest with scanty baggage is normal skippers from the hotel. Skippers are those persons who check out of the hotel without settling their bills. The scanty baggage guests also normally go out with their light baggage and the hotel never knows that if this guest is going out with an intention to come back or not. To save guard the hotel's interest, normally guests with scanty baggage are requested to pay in advance.

There is a set procedure adopted by hotels to keep control of guests, with scanty baggage.

1. The lobby manager and the reception are notified immediately on the guest's arrival about the scanty baggage.
2. Arrival errand card is stamped with scanty baggage.
3. Guest registration card's all copies are stamped with 'scanty baggage'.
4. The scanty baggage register is filled up by the bell desk.
5. Get the guest registration cards and the scanty baggage register signed by the Lobby manager.

3. Message Handling Procedure

1. Receiving messages for in house guests in their absence, recording them, and communicating them to the guest as soon as possible is an important function of the front desk staff. The efficiency and professionalism of the hotel and the attitude of staff are reflected by the way this function is carried out by the staff.
2. The need for receiving a message for in house guests is when the guest is not in the room. Usually, when the guest goes out of his room, he would leave his room key at the counter where the information clerk would put in the appropriate room number in

pigeon holes. Sometimes the guest may leave his whereabouts at the reception counter through a yellow card also called locator or location form whereabouts in the card.

3. In case a phone call comes or a visitor comes to the hotel to see the guest, the receptionist will first confirm through the key and mail rack whether the guest is in the room or not. He/she will look for any location form left by the guest also.

Suppose a visitor comes and the in-house guest has left a location form indicating that he will be in the bar, dining hall, etc, then the paging in that particular area will be done for him either by public address system or through traditional page board system.

4. In case the guest has not left any whereabouts but has left the key at the counter, the visitor will be asked to leave a message for the in-house guest. A special performa called the message slip is prepared and is filled in by the visitor.

Usually, hotels prepare the slip in triplicate on behalf of the visitor. The top one or the original is kept in key and mail rack in an envelope and is delivered to the guest when he/she comes to collect the room key.

5. The first copy of the message is slipped in the room and the second copy remains in the message book as a reference copy.
6. In case the guest has neither left any location form nor has given the key of the room to the reception counter, the same system is followed for recording but in addition, either an “attention card “or “mail and message advise slip “ is put on the knob of the room or message light is activated in those hotels which use electronic systems. The message details may also be fed into the computer and the guest may view it on the screen of the tv in his room.
7. A similar system is followed in case of a telephone message. The important point to be noted here is that whenever the receptionist receives information about guest’s whereabouts (through location form) he /she must immediately pass on the same information to the telephone department so that call may be diverted to the message center without delay.

4. Mail Handling

Mail handling is a very important activity of the front desk and the way mail is handled shows the efficiency and attitude of the hotel staff. Any delay and carelessness shown by the staff may result in great dissatisfaction. The term “mail handling” covers up both incoming and outgoing mail.

Incoming mail

As per the policy of the hotel, the incoming mail may be received at the bell desk or by the information department. The first step involved in the mail is sorted, arranged alphabetically and put separately ie,

1. Mail for the guest
2. Mail for the hotel

Next, the mail is date and time-stamped.

The incoming guest mail

It is sorted into three categories :

1. Mail for the inhouse guest
2. Guest who has already checked out
3. Guest who has not yet arrived.

Mail for the inhouse guest

- In case the key of the room of the in-house guest is in keys mail rack, the in-house guest mail is put in key and mail rack and is delivered to him along with room key when he comes to the counter. In case the guest is in the room, he is intimidated about the mail and if he/she so desires the bellboy takes the mail to the room.
- Sometimes the guest may go out of his room without leaving the key on the counter. In such cases, a **Mail Advice Slip** is put on the key knob of the door so that if the guest goes to the room directly, he/she would know about the mail which the hotel has received in his / her absence.

- These days hotels use message light on the telephone or on the door and computers are used for this purpose in some hotels.

Checked out guest

The mail of the checked-out guest is checked out with the forwarding instructions and mail is forwarded according to the instructions left out by the check-out guest and appropriate entries are made on the mail forwarding address slip.

Awaited arrivals

- Mail of such guest is marked with the date of arrival and kept in the Hold Mail Rack This information is then marked on advance reservation slip/movement list or is fed in the computer.
- On the night before the arrival date, the expected arrival mail along with the reservation record is sent to the front desk. When the guest arrives, the mail is handed over to him at the time of registration. The awaited mail is retained for a period of one month only. After the expiry of the date, it is sent back to the sender.
- At times the hotel may also receive registered, recorded mail such as letters, packages, parcels, etc for the guest. Since there is a record maintained by the hotel of all such staff mails at times of receiving, it is important that it should be delivered urgently to the guest and acknowledgment taken.

Formats And Records Maintained At Bell Desk

1.Bell Desk Log Book:

A logbook has to be maintained by bell boys for all the shifts to keep a record of all activities and instructions that are performed during a particular shift and need to be shared with the next shift.

2.Bell Boy Errand Card:

The bell card is an important format maintained by the bell captain during the shift timings of individual bell boys to control the activities when they leave the desk for any purpose like luggage delivery, newspaper distribution, message delivery, etc. The bell boy errand card is printed on both sides, front side used at the time of arrival and the backside used at the time of departure.

3.Lobby Control Sheet:

This sheet is maintained by bell captain during a particular shift in the hotel. The sheet is a summary of all the activities performed by bell boys during shifts. It even helps in the preparation of individual errand cards of the bell boys. This format is further used by lobby manager to counter check the moment of bell boys for better performance.

4.Guest Location Form:

This form is used to know the location of the guest when they leave the room and inform the location which is kept in key/mail rack. When a guest is expecting any message, he usually informs whether he will be in the hotel or outside and accordingly, gives his location in the hotel or provides a phone number in case he goes out of hotel premises. And intimates to reception once returning back to the room. In the case of a visitor, only after his instructions by the guest about his whereabouts.

5.Inventory Register:

The inventory register keeps a record of all inventory items of the bell desk such as bell trolley, torch, formats, wheelchair, metal detector, paging board, stationery.

6.Message Form:

Message form is used to deliver any received message for an in-house guest in their absence from the hotel. The message is delivered immediately on arrival in the hotel. Two copies of the message are prepared, one copy is taken by bell boy and slotted through under the door of the guest room and the other is kept as a record in key/mail rack. It is done to make the delivery/communication of the message to the guest.

7.Wake-up Call Sheet:

Wake up call sheet is used to wake guests who wish for the same. It is generally requested by guests who want to be waked up early in the morning or want to get a reminder about some important work. This sheet is prepared by the telephone operator or is done by the bell captain.

8.Room Shifting Slip:

In case a room of a guest has to be changed, in that case, the room shifting sheet is used to maintain records of the same. It is done with the approval of the front office manager/lobby manager.