Front Desk Procedures — Standard Operating Guide

Purpose & Scope

This guide standardizes front desk operations for the Office of the Mayor. It covers phones, visitor management, keys and conference rooms, mail handling, emergency procedures, conduct, and coverage scheduling.

1. General Responsibilities

- Greet all visitors promptly and professionally.
- Answer and route phone calls; record accurate messages when needed.
- Handle mail and deliveries; keep the reception area tidy.
- Maintain front desk coverage during business hours (see Coverage & Scheduling).

2. Phones

Call Greeting & Intake

- Use a professional greeting: 'Good morning/afternoon, thank you for calling the Office of the Mayor. How may I help you?'
- Ask if the caller has already contacted any departments or sister agencies.
- Collect callback details: name, phone, and email.
- Email the Mayor's Office liaison using the subject line 'Constituent Assistance' to route inquiries and enable tracking.
- Do not share personal opinions or speak on behalf of the Mayor.

Handling Frustrated Callers

- Acknowledge the concern: 'I understand you're frustrated.'
- Invite context to route correctly: 'If you can share a bit of background, I'll work to get you to the right person.'
- Offer feedback channels when appropriate: letterforthemayor@cityofchicago.org and mailing address to City Hall.

Call Routing & Forwarding

- There is no voicemail. During business hours, calls are answered by the receptionist; after hours, calls are answered by Police.
- If another call comes in, ask to place the current caller on a brief hold, answer the new call, place it on hold, then resume the first call.
- Forward All: press the Forward All button and enter 4-3328. Remove forwarding on arrival each morning.
- Forward the phones to Police during All-Staff and Admin meetings; notify Police in person when forwarding is enabled.

Emergency Speed Dial

- Use the dedicated speed-dial button to contact Police if you ever feel unsafe.

- Typical confirmation: 'Do you want me to come over?' Respond 'Yes'.

Key Numbers

- Front desk (public): 312-744-3300
- Secondary line (forwarded to 509 front desk): 312-744-9500

Do Not (Phones)

- Do not leave the desk unattended for extended periods.
- Do not forward calls to the Mayor, Chief of Staff, or Mayor's Office staff. Take detailed messages and email the appropriate staff member(s).
- Do not provide statements to the press. Route media inquiries to the Press Office.

3. Visitor Management

- All visitors are pre-screened in the lobby by Police and granted access prior to arrival at the front desk.
- Welcome visitors and invite them to be seated.
- Notify the employee and/or Executive Assistant being visited to meet their guest.

4. Keys & Conference Rooms

- Restroom key: [redacted] restrooms).
- Conference Room 1103 key and sign-out sheet: [redacted]
- Use your ID badge on the keypad at the desk to open the door for staff after vetting.

Conference Room 1103 Policies

- Key may be signed out up to 30 minutes prior to the meeting.
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- IT assistance and equipment are not provided; each department uses its own liaison and equipment.
- Do not move furniture unless coordinated with Building Engineers.
- Eating and drinking are not permitted.
- Capacity is limited up to ~80 people (approx. 1,400 sq ft; 35×40 ft).

5. Mail Handling

- Sort incoming mail and separate items for the Mayor and staff.
- Place staff mail in mailboxes located in Room 509 outside the kitchen.
- The mail clerk typically delivers twice daily.
- Mail slots for Rooms 501, 502, 507, and 406 are located in Room 509.

6. Emergency Procedures

- If you feel unsafe, use the emergency speed-dial to contact Police immediately.
- Follow City Hall emergency protocols and instructions from security and building engineers.

- Do not leave the desk unless directed or when relieved; ensure phone coverage is maintained.

7. Professional Conduct

- Project a welcoming, professional demeanor at all times.
- Maintain confidentiality; safeguard sensitive employee information.
- Do not discuss privileged information in public areas.
- De-escalate conflicts calmly; escalate to appropriate staff when necessary.

8. Coverage & Scheduling

- Maintain coverage Monday–Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Per the coverage calendar, primary coverage is designated as Red; backup coverage as Yellow.
- Flag any scheduled days in advance that permit a conflict and confirm appropriate coverage as soon as possible. Use Teams chat communications to coordinate swaps and ensure continuous coverage.
- Adjust lunch times as needed to maintain coverage and avoid cancelling external meetings.

9. Reference Links

- MO Staff Directory (SharePoint): REDACT- INTERNAL FILE https://chicagogov.sharepoint.com[redacted]
- City of Chicago Departments Directory: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts.html#w