

Order Discrepancy Resolution

A practical SOP for investigating missing, incorrect or damaged items and preparing an evidence-backed resolution for approval.

Sample only. This document is built from the simulated walkthrough on page 3. All orders, products, people, timestamps and records in that walkthrough are fictional. It does not describe a real client engagement or measured client results.

Purpose and scope

Use this process when a customer reports that a delivered order differs from the order record. The output is a traceable case with a verified discrepancy, a proposed remedy, an approval record and documented closure. Adapt the process to the client's actual systems, policies and authority limits before use.

Ownership and authority

Role	Responsibility
Case coordinator	Owns the case, gathers evidence, reconciles records and prepares the recommendation.
Fulfillment owner	Checks picking, packing, shipment and inventory records; executes approved fulfillment actions.
Authorized approver	Decides the remedy and any policy exception. Finance or support executes approved credits or refunds.

Minimum case record

Record: case ID; order ID; intake time and channel; assigned owner; reported issue; item or SKU; ordered, shipped and received quantities; current status; evidence links; next action and review date; decision and approval references.

Evidence to collect

Order: line items, quantities and any approved amendments.

Fulfillment: packing record, shipment IDs, delivery status and split-shipment details.

Customer: a factual description and relevant photos or item counts, when available.

Decision: applicable policy, approver identity, approved action and execution proof.

Keep facts separate from reports or assumptions. Store evidence in the approved case system. Do not copy full payment details; redact unrelated personal information from photos and notes.

Investigate and resolve

Status flow: Open > Investigating > Awaiting evidence or approval > Resolution in progress > Closed. Use Escalated whenever a decision sits outside the assigned owner's authority.

1 Open and assign the case

Check for an existing case or remedy for the same order and issue. Link duplicates to the active case; do not create a second remedy. Assign one owner and record the next review date.

2 Capture the reported difference

Record what was ordered and what the customer says arrived. Request only the evidence needed to compare them. **If key details are missing:** set Awaiting evidence and record who will supply them.

3 Reconcile the records

Compare order lines, packing records, shipment status and customer evidence item by item. Check for split shipments and backorders before labeling a shortage. **If another shipment is still due:** verify its status and expected next update.

4 Classify the finding

Record confirmed facts, unresolved conflicts and the likely discrepancy type. **If records conflict or the cause is unclear:** ask the fulfillment owner to investigate. Do not assign blame or mark the cause as proven.

5 Prepare and approve the remedy

Summarize evidence, the relevant policy and the proposed correction. Route to the authorized approver. **If a policy limit or remedy is unclear:** escalate for a decision; do not infer permission from past cases.

6 Track the approved action

The authorized team executes the correction. Log approval, action reference, owner and expected completion. Any customer update must reflect the verified status; do not promise an unconfirmed refund or delivery date.

7 Verify and close

Check execution proof and the agreed closure condition. Confirm the customer was updated and record the outcome. **If proof is missing, the customer disputes the outcome or work remains:** keep the case open with an owner and review date.

Stop and escalate

Refunds, credits, replacements, order edits and inventory adjustments require documented authority. Escalate suspected fraud, personal-data exposure, safety concerns, threats or legal disputes to the designated client lead immediately. Pause routine handling until that lead directs the next step.

Simulated case walkthrough

Fictional scenario: a customer receives 8 of the 10 blue storage bins ordered. This filled-out example shows the evidence trail and decision points, not a real outcome.

Case	SIM-014 Order DEMO-1048 SKU BIN-BLUE
People and status	Case owner: Coordinator A Approver: Operations Lead B Final status: Closed in this simulation
Difference	Ordered: 10 Packed: 8 Reported received: 8 One shipment; no remaining shipment or backorder.

Decision and activity log

Simulated time	Action and evidence
Day 1 09:10	Opened SIM-014. Checked for duplicate cases and prior remedies; none in the simulated record. E1: customer report and packing-slip photo.
Day 1 09:35	Compared E2: order for 10 with E3: packing record for 8. E4: shipment record shows delivered and no second shipment. Confirmed a 2-unit fulfillment shortage; root cause remains unconfirmed.
Day 1 10:00	Proposed shipping the 2 missing units. E5: written approval from Operations Lead B under the fictional replacement policy. No refund or inventory adjustment requested.
Day 1 11:20	Fulfillment owner created replacement DEMO-R1048 for 2 units. E6: replacement record and dispatch confirmation. Status changed to Resolution in progress.
Day 3 14:15	E7: simulated delivery confirmation; E8: customer confirmation that both missing units arrived. Case owner sent the closure update and recorded the outcome.

Closure checklist completed for this example

Checked Discrepancy and supporting records reconciled; cause not overstated.

Checked Approval linked; executed remedy matches the approved 2-unit replacement.

Checked Delivery and customer confirmation recorded; no unresolved case action.

Checked Customer updated; owner, closure time and resolution code recorded.

Checked Original records retained; no duplicate remedy created.

Sample closure note

Closed SIM-014 on Day 3 at 14:15. The approved 2-unit replacement was delivered and receipt confirmed (E7-E8). Resolution code: Missing units replaced. Packing-process cause is unconfirmed; no preventive-action result is claimed.