

Custody of master keys in hotels

PROCEDURE VALIDATION

Approved by		Approval date
Operations (Process Owner)	SVP Operations	January 2019
HQ Legal Department	SVP Compliance	
HQ Organization Department	Organization Director	

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OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

This document contains a series of guidelines to take into account when handling the hotel master keys.

Keep in mind that the door of a room is not only opened by the key that the guest has, but that the staff of several departments also has access to the room (bellboys, housekeeping staff, maintenance, etc.).

The hotel has to keep a strict control of the master keys, not only of the room keys, but also of those that allow access to different areas of the hotel such as meeting rooms, swimming pool, garage etc.

This procedure applies to all hotels in all Business Units.

CREATION, DAILY USE AND CONTROL OF MASTER KEYS

KEY TASKS

- **As a general rule, the Maintenance Manager will be the person in charge of recording or duplicating master keys.** According to the operational needs of each hotel, other Heads of Department may be able to record or duplicate master keys (usually the General Manager, the Front Office Manager and his/her assistant).
- **The user data and passwords** that may be necessary to create the master keys in the software or key recorder **is private and should only be known by the person or persons responsible for this task.**
- **Master keys will be enabled for a limited time (never more than one month) and should not be taken out of the hotel.**
- **If someone loses a master key, it is important to immediately notify the responsible person** (General Manager, Front Office Manager...), who will give the order to inactivate the lost key and proceed to make a new one.
- **It is mandatory to have an “emergency pack” of master keys** in case the key system or recorder does not work or is really needed for an emergency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Additional controls may be carried out internally at the hotel if the General Manager deems it necessary as a security measure.

PROCESS TASKS

- Usually, every Head of Department is given one master key and there is an extra one for Front Office staff daily use (normally the porter/bellboy). These keys must be stored in a key cabinet at Reception and it is Front Office responsibility to hand them out.
- The Housekeeping Department, due to the nature of its work, usually has assigned more than one master key (it can be one per floor or one per person that opens all the rooms) and can be stored in a key cabinet separated from the rest, which will be responsibility of the Housekeeping Manager.
- **The hotel must have strict manual control of the master keys using the templates created for this purpose** (available in the *Business Processes* section of the NH Digital Knowledge Workplace).

Number or name the keys and fill in the control sheet, where the employee who picks up the key must write the pick-up time, the name and surname, and sign. When they return the key, they have to write down the drop off time and sign in.

4 TEMPLATES AND FILE PERIODS

Document or template	Responsible	File period
Master keys control sheet	Front Office Housekeeping F&B	See Templates and File periods per BU