

FIXED POSTS

While not patrol in the strict sense of the word, fixed or stationary posts manned by security personnel are a part of almost every facility. These may be designated structures that are manufactured by commercial suppliers such as a guard house or booth or it may consist of manning a desk in the lobby during evening hours. Some situations might call for temporary fixed posts such as the main entrance to a public event, at traffic control points, or at specific points on the client's premises during a labor strike. Fixed post duties should always be performed in a professional manner, keeping in mind the following:

1. The objective of the post must be clearly understood. The reason for the post's existence should be specified in the site post orders. These orders should be readily available to the officers manning the post.
2. It is always a good idea to make a thorough review of the site post orders, memos, or written instructions. Generally, the post orders will not change significantly from one day to the next, but a review is essential if there has been a change in procedures.
3. Post-specific duties as mandated by the post orders must be read and understood.
4. Post orders should be kept neat, orderly, and secure. Persons without a need to know should not be told what the orders for the post are.
5. All equipment should be checked at the start of each shift to ensure that they are in working order. Tests should include detection equipment (e.g. X-ray, metal detectors, etc.) and especially communications equipment such as two-way radios and security cell phones. Equipment manuals should be readily available. Security officers are held responsible for the presence and condition of all equipment.
6. Officers being relieved on post should provide the relieving officer with a briefing that includes what happened during their shift. A pass-down log is often used to provide subsequent shifts with a list of important things that need to be completed or to be aware of.

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7. In high-threat situations such as strikes, civil disturbances, or crowds, an escape route should always be open to the security officer manning the post. Whatever the situation, safety of the officer is most important.
8. Security officers should not leave the post until properly relieved.

COMPANY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is important for security officers to know the site post orders specific to the location or post that they are assigned. Your security company will review these procedures with you as part of your training. If you ever have any questions, ask your supervisor! Your supervisor will provide you with additional on-the-job training at your post and review the post orders with you.

REPORTING FOR DUTY

Every security company has a specific on-duty reporting protocol for the security officer to follow. The following are examples:

1. Signing an attendance sheet or timesheet that indicates the time one arrived and departed from the security post.
2. Placing a telephone call into the security company main or branch office from a specified phone number. Sometimes, this information is recorded by a secretary with the company or a security dispatcher.
3. Using an automated, post confirmation system in which the security officer calls a toll-free number and is asked to provide their employee identification number. The time is automatically entered into a computerized database. The same procedure may be required when the officer reports off-duty at the end of the shift. This is especially common with "cold start" posts where the officer isn't relieved by another officer.

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4. Using a two-way radio to communicate with a dispatcher or supervisor to report on and off-duty.

The objective of these systems is to prove coverage. The contract security company is contractually required to prove and document that security personnel reported on-duty in a timely fashion and the security post was never left unattended. Security officers, when reporting on-duty, should be in a clean and wrinkle-free uniform, ready to begin work.

PASSDOWN WITH RELIEF OFFICER

The arriving officer should meet with the officer to be relieved so that he can be briefed on any event or incident that occurred during the previous shifts. Such events as a power failure, false alarm, maintenance issue, or water leak are relevant events to be shared. Communication between security officers is essential. Whenever one security officer is unaware of a situation or event that, to the client, all officers should be aware of, the credibility of the entire security officer operation is called into question. Most significant events should be documented in writing. As mentioned previously, officers on different shifts will use a “pass-down log” to ensure that appropriate information is passed from one officer to another, shift to shift.

Some examples of incidents or occurrences that should be communicated from officer to officer:

1. A message is conveyed to the on-duty officer that a group of visitors is expected to arrive at the facility the following day. Failure to properly note such a change in the normal routine could turn out to be an embarrassing situation for the officer who wasn't informed to prepare for their arrival.
2. Lights are left on in a specific section of the facility for a reason and therefore should not be turned off.
3. A special delivery is expected for a part that the maintenance department is anxious to receive.
4. Human Resources has just suspended an employee who has not yet left the premises. Once they have left the property, they are not to return.

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5. No matter the situation, all communication that is considered essential or important needs to be communicated to the officers arriving for work. This information should be documented in writing.

THE DAILY ACTIVITY REPORT

The Daily Activity Report (DAR) is the written documentation that security personnel have performed their duties during the course of their shift. Most security companies utilize an electronic report system rather than written reports.

Information provided in the DAR include:

1. Actual time on duty
2. Name of officer relieved
3. Equipment or keys received
4. Time of all patrols
5. Notation of any unusual observations after first patrol
6. Number of personnel / vehicles on site
7. Doors/windows open or unlocked
8. Coffee pots operating
9. Equipment that is out of service
10. Pickup and delivery times of parcels/shipments
11. Condition of security equipment
12. Time of officers' breaks
13. Unusual or noteworthy phone calls
14. Alarm notifications (type of alarm and time)
15. Notation of any incidents
16. Off-duty time
17. Name of relieving officer
18. Notation of equipment and keys given to arriving officer
19. The DAR should not be completed in advance

SECURITY EQUIPMENT

Inspecting security equipment at the start of each shift is important. Most reviews and checks that are required are routine but it is important that every officer conduct his own inspection of the equipment which is entrusted to them for their shift. Sooner or later, a problem will occur with equipment as they age from use. Without consistent documentation of these equipment inspections, it will be difficult to determine the officer who was on-duty at the time the equipment malfunctioned.

Reviewing and inspecting communication devices such as two-way radios and cell phones is important. At the beginning of each shift, the on-duty officer should ensure the radio works properly and a fully-charged battery is readily available. A radio check will determine if the signal is loud and clear. Cell phones should be charged and signal strong. If an officer discovers any problem with the communication equipment, he should immediately notify a supervisor so that proper communication ability remains uninterrupted.

SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT

Not every security post uses closed-circuit television (CCTV) equipment, but most sites have some sort of surveillance system. Older, more traditional CCTV systems consisted of a group of cameras that could be viewed simultaneously from multiple camera monitors. They often used a time-lapse videocassette recorder (VCR) capable of storing up to 168 hours of video. A security officer might have been required to rewind a tape, change out a tape, or simply ensure the recorder is properly operating. For the most part, these older systems have been replaced with digital recording devices eliminating the need for officers to change tapes.