

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Document ID	BR_QMS_C&RF_Policy_v1.0	Version	1.0
Effective Date	1 April 2026	Next Review	1 April 2027
Document Owner	Hotel Manager	Classification	Internal — All Staff

1. Purpose

This policy defines the rules, approval processes, documentation requirements, and decision authority for all booking cancellations and refunds at Baywatch Retreat Augusta. It is an internal operational policy that ensures every cancellation and refund request is handled consistently, transparently, and in alignment with the guest-facing Terms and Conditions).

This policy must be followed by all staff who receive, process, or approve cancellation and refund requests. It replaces all previous cancellation and refund guidance documents.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all accommodation bookings at Baywatch Retreat Augusta, regardless of the booking channel, rate type, or payment method. Specifically, it covers:

- Direct bookings (website, telephone, email, walk-in)
- Third-party OTA bookings (Booking.com, Expedia, and others)
- Group and corporate bookings
- All rate types: standard flexible, non-refundable, advance purchase, promotional, and group rates
- All payment methods: credit card, debit card, bank transfer, and OTA-processed payments

Note:

Payment and refund terms are subject to change. Baywatch Retreat Pty Ltd standard terms and conditions apply. Third-party booking agent terms and conditions may vary; however, in the event of a discrepancy, the Baywatch Retreat terms take precedence.

3. Cancellation Policy

Standard Cancellation Terms

The following cancellation terms apply to all standard flexible-rate bookings unless otherwise specified at the time of booking:

Scenario	Charge	Refund
Cancellation 14 or more days before arrival	No charge	Full refund issued
Cancellation within 14 days of arrival	Full reservation period charged	No refund
No-show (failure to arrive without prior cancellation)	Full reservation period charged	No refund
Early departure (guest checks out before the end of the booking)	Full original reservation period charged	No refund for unused nights
Late cancellation with approved exception (see Section 5)	Waived (subject to Hotel Manager approval)	Full or partial refund as approved

Non-Refundable Bookings

For bookings made at non-refundable rates, the following terms apply without exception:

- No cancellations are permitted.
- No modifications are permitted.
- No refunds are issued under any circumstances.

Sole exception: The Hotel Manager may, at their sole discretion, approve a refund or credit for a non-refundable booking in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., natural disaster, government-imposed travel ban). This requires written authorisation from the Hotel Manager and must be documented in the Cancellation Request Log.

Booking Modifications

Modifications to existing bookings are an alternative to cancellation and may be offered to the guest where applicable.

A modification is permitted only when all of the following conditions are met:

- The request is made at least 7 days prior to the original check-in date.
- The new booking is for the same or a higher total price than the original reservation.
- The original reservation room(s) are available for the new requested dates.
- The same booking conditions and room type are maintained.

If any of these conditions cannot be met, the modification must be declined and the guest advised to either retain the original booking or cancel under the applicable cancellation terms.

Modifications to non-refundable bookings are not permitted unless authorised in writing by the Hotel Manager.

4. Cancellation Request Process

All cancellation requests must follow the structured process below. Staff must not process a refund without completing every step.

Step 1 — Receive the Request

The guest must submit their cancellation request via the booking platform used for the original reservation, or directly through the Baywatch Retreat reservations team (email or telephone).

Walk-in cancellation requests are also accepted at reception.

Collect the following information from the guest and record it in the Cancellation Request Log:

Required Information	Description
Guest name	Full name as per the booking
Room number	Allocated room (or room type if not yet allocated)
Booking dates	Original check-in and check-out dates
Reservation number	Preno reservation reference or OTA confirmation number
Booking platform	Direct / Booking.com / Expedia / Other (specify)
Reason for cancellation	Change of plans / Medical / Bereavement / Travel disruption / Other
Requested action	Full cancellation / Date change / Partial modification
Date request received	Date and time the request was received by staff
Received by	Name of the staff member who received the request

Step 2 — Verify the Booking

- Open the booking in Preno and confirm the reservation details match the information provided by the guest.
- Confirm the rate type: standard flexible, non-refundable, advance purchase, promotional, or group.
- Confirm the original cancellation terms that were in effect at the time of booking.
- Calculate the number of days between the date of the cancellation request and the original arrival date.

Step 3 — Apply the Cancellation Policy

If...	Then...
Request is 14+ days before arrival AND rate is flexible	Process the cancellation and issue a full refund. No approval required.
Request is within 14 days of arrival AND rate is flexible	Inform the guest that the full reservation charge applies. No refund. Check if the guest claims an exception (proceed to Step 4 if yes).
Booking is non-refundable	Inform the guest that no cancellation, modification, or refund is permitted. Check if the guest claims extraordinary circumstances (proceed to Step 4 if yes).
Guest is a no-show	No refund. Record in Preno. No further action unless the guest contacts to claim an exception within 48 hours of the original arrival date.
Guest requests early departure	Inform the guest that the full original booking period is charged. No refund for unused nights.
Guest requests a modification (not a cancellation)	Assess against the four modification conditions in Section 3. Process if all conditions are met; decline if not.

Step 4 — Assess Exceptions (If Applicable)

If the guest claims a circumstance that may warrant an exception to the standard cancellation terms, proceed to Section 5 (Exception Requests and Required Documentation). Do not approve or promise any refund at this stage.

Step 5 — Process the Refund

- Approved refunds are processed within 7 to 14 business days, depending on the payment method. Exclusions may apply to this timeframe (e.g., OTA-processed payments may take longer).
- Process the refund through the original payment method: credit card reversal for card payments, OTA platform refund for OTA bookings, bank transfer for direct bank payments.
- Update the booking status in Preno to Cancelled.
- Record the refund amount, date processed, payment method, and authorising person in the Cancellation Request Log and in the Preno booking notes.

Step 6 — Communicate the Outcome

Notify the guest of the outcome of their cancellation request via email or through their booking channel.

If approved: Confirm the refund amount, the expected processing timeframe, and the refund method.

If declined: Explain the reason clearly and reference the applicable policy term. Offer the guest the option to contact the Hotel Manager directly if they wish to discuss further.

5. Exception Requests and Required Documentation

Cancellation fees may be waived in specific circumstances where the guest provides valid supporting documentation. All exception requests require Hotel Manager approval. Staff must not approve, promise, or imply that a refund will be issued until written authorisation has been received from the Hotel Manager.

Exception Categories and Required Proof

Exception Category	Accepted Documentation	Notes
Medical emergency	Medical certificate from a registered healthcare provider, hospital admission or discharge letter, or doctor's letter confirming the illness or injury prevented travel	Must relate to the guest or an immediate family member. The document must reference dates that overlap with the booking period.
Family bereavement	Death certificate, funeral notice, or official obituary for an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent)	The bereavement must have occurred close enough to the booking dates to reasonably prevent travel.
Flight cancellation or major travel disruption	Official airline cancellation notice, travel provider confirmation, or rebooking notification showing the disruption was beyond the guest's control	Voluntary itinerary changes by the guest do not qualify. Only involuntary cancellations or significant delays (6+ hours) are accepted.
Government travel restriction or force majeure	Official government travel advisory, border closure notice, emergency declaration, or natural disaster notification	Must directly affect the guest's ability to travel to Augusta, WA during the booked dates.
Insurance claim in progress	Proof of claim submission to the guest's travel insurance provider, with the claim reference number	Baywatch Retreat may issue a credit note or hold the refund pending the insurance outcome, at the Hotel Manager's discretion.
Other extraordinary circumstances	Assessed on a case-by-case basis. The guest must provide a written explanation and any supporting evidence available.	Approval is at the sole discretion of the Hotel Manager. There is no automatic entitlement to a refund under this category.

Documentation Standards

- All supporting documents must be in English (or accompanied by a certified translation).
- Documents must be originals or certified copies. Screenshots of text messages or social media posts are not accepted.
- The guest's name on the documentation must match the booking name.
- Documents must reference dates that are relevant to the booking period.
- All documentation must be received within 14 days of the cancellation request. Requests without documentation after 14 days will be closed and the standard cancellation terms applied.

Standard Cancellation Documentation

Even for cancellations that fall within the free cancellation window, the following documentation should be on file for record-keeping purposes:

- Copy of the original booking confirmation (email or receipt)
- Guest identification matching the booking name (verified verbally or visually; copies retained only if required by the payment processor)

6. Decision Authority

The following matrix defines who may approve each type of cancellation and refund decision. Actions requiring Hotel Manager authority must not be processed by reception or reservations staff.

Decision	Reception / Reservations Staff	Hotel Manager
Process a free cancellation (14+ days, flexible rate)	Authorised	—
Decline a refund (within policy terms)	Authorised	—
Approve a refund for a late cancellation with valid exception	Not authorised — escalate	Authorised
Approve a refund or credit for a non-refundable booking	Not authorised — escalate	Authorised (sole discretion)
Approve a partial refund	Not authorised — escalate	Authorised
Approve a modification to a flexible booking (all 4 conditions met)	Authorised	—
Approve a modification to a non-refundable booking	Not authorised — escalate	Authorised
Waive the 14-day documentation deadline for exception requests	Not authorised	Authorised
Issue a credit note instead of a cash refund	Not authorised	Authorised
Process an OTA-channel refund	Authorised (if within standard policy)	Authorised (if exception)

7. Refund Methods and Processing Times

Payment Method	Refund Method	Expected Processing Time
Credit card (Visa, MasterCard)	Reversal to the original card	7–14 business days (may vary by card issuer)
Debit card	Reversal to the original card	7–14 business days
Bank transfer	Return transfer to the originating account	5–10 business days after authorisation
OTA-processed payment (Booking.com, Expedia, etc.)	Refund processed through the OTA platform	Timeframe determined by the OTA; typically 7–21 business days
Cash (rare — walk-in bookings only)	Cash refund from petty cash or bank transfer	Same day (cash) or 5–10 business days (transfer)
Credit note (at Hotel Manager's discretion)	Credit applied to a future booking	Issued within 3 business days; valid for 12 months from issue date

Important: Refund processing times commence from the date the refund is authorised, not from the date of the cancellation request. Guests must be informed of this distinction at the time of communication.

8. No-Refund Scenarios

To ensure clarity for both staff and guests, the following scenarios do not qualify for any refund under any circumstances (unless an approved exception applies per Section 5):

Scenario	Reason
No-show	The guest failed to arrive without prior cancellation. The room was held and could not be resold.
Late cancellation (within 14 days, flexible rate)	The cancellation falls outside the free cancellation window. The room could not be resold at short notice.
Non-refundable booking (any cancellation timing)	The guest agreed to non-refundable terms at the time of booking. No refund is contractually owed.
Early departure	The guest chose to leave before the end of the booking. The room was reserved for the full period.
Dissatisfaction with property, location, weather, or area	These are not grounds for a refund. Genuine service complaints should be escalated to the Hotel Manager under the guest complaint process.
Guest booked the wrong dates	Guest error does not override the cancellation policy. Offer a modification if conditions are met (Section 3).
Third-party platform cancellation processed outside Baywatch terms	If an OTA processes a cancellation that contradicts Baywatch Retreat policy, escalate to the Hotel Manager to dispute with the OTA.

9. OTA-Specific Cancellation Procedures

Cancellations for bookings made through third-party OTAs require additional steps to ensure both Preno and the OTA platform records remain aligned.

- If the guest contacts Baywatch Retreat directly to cancel an OTA booking, advise them to also cancel through the OTA platform. Process the cancellation in Preno and notify the OTA support team by email.
- If the OTA processes a cancellation or refund that contradicts Baywatch Retreat’s policy (e.g., the OTA refunds a non-refundable booking), escalate immediately to the Hotel Manager to dispute with the OTA.
- Always update the Preno booking notes with the OTA cancellation reference number and the outcome.
- OTA commission clawback: when a refund is processed for an OTA booking, verify whether the OTA commission is also reversed. If not, flag for the Hotel Manager to raise with the OTA.

10. Record Keeping

The following records must be maintained for every cancellation and refund transaction:

Record	Retention Period	Maintained By
Cancellation Request Log (all requests received, with outcome)	Minimum 2 years from the booking date	Reservations staff
Exception documentation (medical certificates, bereavement notices, airline notices, etc.)	Minimum 2 years from the booking date	Hotel Manager
Hotel Manager written authorisation for exception refunds	Minimum 2 years	Hotel Manager
Preno booking notes (cancellation details, refund amount, dates)	Retained in Preno system	Reservations staff
Refund transaction records (payment processor receipts, bank transfer confirmations)	As per financial record-keeping requirements	Accounts
OTA correspondence (cancellation disputes, commission adjustments)	Minimum 2 years	Hotel Manager
Guest communication (outcome emails, complaint follow-ups)	Minimum 2 years	Reservations staff

11. Cancellation Request Log — Template

Use this log to record every cancellation request received. One row per request. Maintain as a spreadsheet or bound register.

Date Received	Guest Name	Res. No.	Booking Dates	Platform	Rate Type	Reason	Outcome	Authorised By

12. Guest Communication Templates

Staff should use the following templates as a guide when communicating cancellation outcomes to guests. Adjust the wording as appropriate for the specific situation.

Refund Approved

Dear [Guest Name],

Thank you for contacting Baywatch Retreat regarding your reservation [Reservation Number] for [Dates].

We confirm that your cancellation request has been approved. A refund of [Amount] will be processed to your [payment method] within [7–14] business days. Please note that the exact timing may depend on your financial institution.

If you have any questions or would like to rebook in the future, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,
Baywatch Retreat Augusta

Refund Declined

Dear [Guest Name],

Thank you for contacting Baywatch Retreat regarding your reservation [Reservation Number] for [Dates].

We have reviewed your cancellation request against the terms and conditions that applied to your booking. Unfortunately, your request does not meet the criteria for a refund under our cancellation policy, as [reason — e.g., the cancellation was received within 14 days of the arrival date / the booking was made at a non-refundable rate].

If you believe there are exceptional circumstances that we should consider, please provide supporting documentation and we will review your request further. You are also welcome to contact our Hotel Manager directly to discuss your situation.

We appreciate your understanding and hope to welcome you to Baywatch Retreat in the future.

Kind regards,
Baywatch Retreat Augusta

13. Training

Training Component	When	Delivered By
Cancellation and Refund Policy induction	Before commencing booking or reception duties	Hotel Manager
Cancellation request handling (practical walkthrough)	During induction	Hotel Manager or senior reservations staff
Exception assessment and documentation standards	During induction and annually	Hotel Manager
OTA cancellation procedures	Before being given access to OTA extranet portals	Hotel Manager
Guest communication and de-escalation	During induction and annually	Hotel Manager
Policy update briefing	Whenever this policy is revised	Hotel Manager

All training must be recorded in the Training Register and signed by the worker and trainer.