As of: November 2026

TECHNICAL MANUAL

ACCESS, SERVICE & SECURITY

Reception & Gatekeeper Services

Controlled Entry – Service, Security, Data Protection

SPECIALIST PORTALS AND BRANDS OF SECUCONCEPT

Access concept · Visitor, contractor and supplier processes

§ 34a GewO · Domiciliary rights · ID cards and GDPR at reception

Emergency response and de-escalation · Technology · Cost examples · Checklists

Quality through Trust

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

The First and the Last Line

Reception is a company's calling card – and, at the same time, its most important security interface. This is where it is decided who enters the building, who is escorted and who stays outside. A good reception and gatekeeper service combines both: friendly service for guests and consistent control for everyone else.

This manual is written for executive management, facility and security management, office and site managers, and procurement. It describes access concepts and visitor processes, the legal limits around ID documents, checks and data protection, conduct in emergencies, suitable technology, and transparent cost models.

Contents

1 At a Glance 3

2 Reception, Gate, Factory Gate 4

3 Access and Entry Control 5

4 Law and Data Protection at Reception 6

5 Emergency, Threats and De-escalation 8

6 Staff, Quality and Cooperation 9

7 Technology at Reception 10

8 Cost Examples and Economics 11

9 Checklist for Clients 12

10 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) 13

11 Your Partner for Reception and Gate Duty 14

12 Sources, Standards and Legal Status 15

KEY MESSAGES FOR DECISION-MAKERS

01 At a Glance

The ten most important facts for everyone setting up, contracting or improving a reception or gatekeeper service.

1 **Reception is service and security in one:** any person who enters unchecked bypasses every other protective measure in the building.

2 **An outsourced gate with access control is guarding** within the meaning of § 34a GewO (German Trade Regulation Act): the staff need at least the 40-hour instruction course.

3 **A company's own employees at reception** are not guarding third-party premises – § 34a GewO does not apply to them. Training and instruction are still required.

4 **The national ID card is not a deposit:** requiring visitors to leave it behind is prohibited under the German Identity Card Act.

5 **Copies of ID cards** are permitted only with the holder's consent, must be recognizable as copies, and are almost never necessary at reception.

6 **Open visitor lists are a data protection violation:** every subsequent guest sees the names and companies of the previous ones.

7 **A zone concept** defines who may move where – reception enforces it, technology supports it.

8 **In an emergency,** reception is the contact point for fire and rescue services and keeps track of which guests are in the building.

9 **It does not work without cooperation:** hosts register their visitors, collect and escort them; employees wear their badges visibly.

10 **Not every door needs round-the-clock staffing:** a staffed daytime reception with a remote gate service run by a control center can be considerably less expensive.

Important note on legal force

This manual provides professional guidance and is no substitute for legal advice. In cases of doubt, the competent trade licensing authority (Gewerbeamt) decides whether specific activities fall under German security guarding law; data protection questions should be agreed with your data protection officer. Research status: November 2026. Cost figures are model calculations and non-binding reference values (net).

TASKS · DISTINCTIONS · SERVICE PROFILES

02 Reception, Gate, Factory Gate

Reception desk, gatehouse and factory gate share the same core task – controlled access – but with different emphases. A reception that is merely friendly will be bypassed; one that merely controls deters guests. Professional staff combine both – on the basis of service instructions that state unambiguously who may pass unescorted.

2.1 Three deployment models compared

Characteristic	Reception / front desk	Gatehouse	Factory gate
Typical location	Headquarters, administration, office building	Company premises, public authority, hospital	Industry, logistics, chemicals, energy
Focus	Guests, service, representation	Access, keys, control	People and vehicle traffic, materials
Depth of control	Identity, registration, badge	Authorization, zones, keys	Badges, cargo, contractors, works traffic
Staffing	usually weekdays, daytime	often in shift operation	frequently around the clock
Requirements	Service, languages, IT	Control, technology, de-escalation	Plant security expertise, hazardous substances, emergency response

2.2 Tasks at a glance

Area	Typical tasks
Access	Verify identity, check authorization, issue and retrieve visitor badges, prevent tailgating
Visitors	Process pre-registrations, notify hosts, attend to the waiting area, organize escorts
Contractors and suppliers	Verify the order, check proof of safety instruction, assign work areas, direct deliveries
Mail and parcels	Acceptance, visual inspection, forwarding, handling of suspicious items
Keys and badges	Issue, return, logging, blocking in case of loss
Service	Telephone, conference rooms, taxis, lost property, information
Security	Monitor alarm and hazard detection systems, patrol rounds, raising the alarm, first response in emergencies

ZONE CONCEPT · VISITOR PROCESS · CONTRACTORS · MAIL

03 Access and Entry Control

Entry control does not begin at the front desk – it begins with a concept: who may go where, when, and escorted by whom?

3.1 The zone concept

Zone	Examples	Access
Public	Forecourt, foyer up to the front desk	all persons
Semi-public	Meeting rooms in the reception area, canteen	registered guests, unescorted where appropriate
Internal	Offices, production areas, warehouses	employees; guests only when escorted
Security-critical	Server rooms, utility control rooms, laboratories, cash offices	individually authorized persons, with access logged

3.2 The visitor process

1	**Pre-registration**	The host registers the visit with name, company, time and destination area – via form or visitor management system.
2	**Arrival**	Greeting, comparison with the registration, identity verified by having an ID document shown – no copying, no retention.
3	**Badge and briefing**	Issue a visitor badge with a validity period; advise on safety, the photography ban and emergency procedures.
4	**Collection**	The host collects guests in the reception area; without collection there is no access to internal zones.
5	**Escort**	Guests move through internal zones only when escorted; passing the badge on to others is prohibited.
6	**Sign-out**	Badge returned, visit signed out, data deleted after the defined retention period.

3.3 Contractors, suppliers and mail

- **Contractors:** verify the order and contact person, proof of safety instruction, work permits for special tasks, tool and material list where required
- **Suppliers:** fixed delivery zone and delivery hours, no through-access to internal areas without clearance, drivers stay with the vehicle or are escorted
- **Mail and parcels:** central acceptance, visual check for anomalies (missing sender, unusual weight, leakage, wires, odors)
- **Suspicious item:** do not open, do not move, leave and secure the room, alert the police via 110

§ 34A GEWO · DOMICILIARY RIGHTS · ID CARDS · GDPR

04 Law and Data Protection at Reception

Reception is where security guarding law, domiciliary rights and data protection meet. The most important rules are simple – yet frequently violated in day-to-day practice.

4.1 Do reception staff need a qualification under § 34a GewO?

Scenario	Requirement
A company's own employees at reception or the gate	no guarding within the meaning of § 34a GewO; training based on the risk assessment
External service provider, purely service-oriented reception without control duties	classification decided case by case by the trade licensing authority
External service provider, gate or reception with access control	guarding license for the company, 40-hour instruction course (Unterrichtung) for the staff
Entry control at access-protected major events in a supervisory role	expert knowledge examination (Sachkundeprüfung)

4.2 Domiciliary rights (Hausrecht)

Domiciliary rights (Hausrecht) allow the owner to decide on entry and continued presence – including refusing entry to individual persons or issuing a banning order. Reception exercises these rights on the owner's behalf; for external service providers they should be transferred in writing. Banning orders are documented – with a photo only where clearly necessary – and kept in a protected list that is reviewed regularly.

ID card: showing yes, surrendering no

No deposit: Under § 1 (1) sentence 3 of the German Identity Card Act (PAuswG), holders may not be required to deposit their ID card or otherwise give up custody of it. "Exchanging" ID cards for visitor badges is therefore prohibited.

Copies only by way of exception: A copy may be made only by the holder or with the holder's consent and must be clearly and permanently recognizable as a copy (§ 20 (2) PAuswG). Under the principle of data minimization, having the card shown and noting the name is almost always sufficient at reception.

In practice: Suitable deposits for visitor badges include a small cash deposit, a business card, or simply collection by the host.

4.3 Data protection for visitor data

Topic	Rule
Visitor list	Never display it openly; record each visitor individually on screen or on separate sheets
Scope	Only the data that is necessary: name, company, host, times; no ID card numbers without a specific reason
Retention period	Deletion after a defined period once the purpose has been fulfilled; document exceptions in the case of security incidents
Information	Privacy notices under Art. 13 GDPR at reception or in the invitation
Photos on visitor badges	Only where there is a justified security need and a deletion concept
Video surveillance in the foyer	Signage, balancing of interests; do not permanently cover the reception staff's workstations

4.4 Bag and body checks

Reception and gate staff have no powers of search. Checks are possible only on a voluntary basis or on the basis of clearly stated conditions of entry; anyone who refuses can be excluded under domiciliary rights. For employees, the works agreement and co-determination apply (§ 87 (1) no. 1 of the German Works Constitution Act, BetrVG). If a criminal offense is suspected, the police are called in.

EVACUATION · EMERGENCY SERVICES · DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

05 Emergency, Threats and De-escalation

When something happens, reception is where all information converges – and where fire, rescue and police services arrive first.

5.1 Reception's tasks in an emergency

1	**Alert**	Call 112 or 110, trigger the internal alarm chain, inform the control center.
2	**Direct**	Keep access clear for the emergency services, secure elevators and access routes, keep onlookers away.
3	**Brief**	Brief the emergency services: situation, route, keys, routing cards (Laufkarten) of the fire alarm system.
4	**Keep the overview**	Provide the list of guests and contractors present for the roll call at the assembly point.
5	**Document**	Record times, measures and persons involved; refer media inquiries to the responsible department.

5.2 Difficult visitors and threat situations

- **De-escalation:** stay calm, keep your distance, use names, listen, offer clear alternatives, do not let yourself be provoked
- **Self-protection:** use the desk as a distance zone, keep the escape route behind the workstation clear, no dangerous objects within reach
- **Silent alarm:** hold-up or emergency button connected to a control center or the police; practice triggering it regularly
- **Second person:** in known conflict situations (dismissals, social-services offices, hospitals) staff the reception with two people or keep a security officer in the background
- **Follow-up:** document the incident, consider a banning order, relieve those affected and offer support where needed

> **Practice creates safety**
>
> Reception staff should practice evacuation, briefing the fire service and triggering the silent alarm at least once a year – together with the fire protection officers and building services. After every drill, the lessons learned belong in the service instructions.

REQUIREMENTS PROFILE · KEY FIGURES · THE CLIENT'S CONTRIBUTION

06 Staff, Quality and Cooperation

At reception, every person represents the company to the outside world. Selection, induction and team continuity determine whether the reception is perceived as professional – and whether it works when it matters.

6.1 Requirements profile

Competency	Content
Service	Appearance, communication, telephone, handling VIP guests
Languages	confident German, plus English or further languages depending on the site
Security	access rules, recognizing anomalies, raising the alarm, first aid
Technology	visitor management, access control, alarm and hazard detection systems, video
Conflict management	de-escalation, enforcing rules without escalation
Legal	domiciliary rights, data protection, limits of authority; where required, instruction under § 34a GewO

6.2 Key figures

Indicator	What it tells you
Waiting time at reception	How quickly are guests greeted and handed over to their hosts?
Badge return rate	How many visitor badges come back at the end of the day?
Pre-registration rate	How many visits are registered in advance?
Findings	Tailgating, unauthorized access attempts, open doors
Team continuity	Share of permanently assigned, fully inducted staff

6.3 Contribution of the client and the employees

- Hosts register visits, collect their guests, escort them and sign them out again
- Employees wear their badges visibly, do not hold doors open for strangers and report lost badges immediately
- HR reports joiners and leavers promptly so that authorizations are created or revoked
- Managers back the reception team when rules are enforced – including towards their own staff
- The client keeps the access rules, the banning list and the contact persons up to date and manages the service through the provider's site manager

VISITOR MANAGEMENT · ACCESS CONTROL · REMOTE GATE

07 Technology at Reception

Technology relieves reception of routine work and creates evidence – but it does not replace human judgment.

Technology	Benefit	What to watch
Visitor management software	pre-registration, invitations with QR code, badge printing, attendance list	deletion periods, roles, privacy notices
Self-service terminal	fast registration at high visitor volumes	alternative route via the staffed reception
Access control	authorizations by zone and time, logging	blocking process in case of loss, co-determination
Entrance separation	turnstiles, interlocks against tailgating	accessibility, escape routes, fire protection
Hold-up and emergency button	silent alarm to a control center or the police	regular functional testing
Remote gate / video intercom	access outside staffed hours via a control center	clear rules, verification, response time

Tailgating – the most common gap

Most unauthorized entries result not from force but from politeness: somebody holds the door open. Entrance separation systems such as turnstiles or interlocks help, but they do not replace the attentiveness of the reception and clear rules for employees. Addressing strangers in a friendly way (“May I help you?”) prevents more than any barrier.

Biometrics only with a sense of proportion

Facial recognition or fingerprints at reception process special categories of personal data (Art. 9 GDPR). For visitors they are practically never necessary; for employees they come into consideration only with voluntary consent and an equivalent alternative. A badge, a PIN or escorted access is sufficient in almost all cases.

ROUND-THE-CLOCK PRESENCE · DAYTIME RECEPTION WITH REMOTE GATE

08 Cost Examples and Economics

The examples show typical orders of magnitude based on the collectively-agreed model rate from the SecuConCept manual “Security Services in Practice” (30.69 € net per hour of gate duty).

Example A – Round-the-clock presence

Item	Calculation	Cost per year
Reception, weekdays 7 am–7 pm (12 h × 250 days = 3,000 h)	3,000 h × 33.50 €	100,500.00 €
Gate duty outside reception hours	5,760 h × 30.69 €	176,774.40 €
Total	**8,760 h**	**277,274.40 €**

Example B – Daytime reception plus SecuConCept remote gate

Item	Calculation	Cost per year
Reception, weekdays 7 am–7 pm	3,000 h × 33.50 €	100,500 €
Remote gate via control center (assumption: flat rate)	1,250 € × 12 months	15,000 €
Technology: video intercom, remote door release (assumption)	18,000 € ÷ 5 years	3,600 €
Total		**119,100 €**

Difference versus Example A: 277,274.40 € − 119,100 € = 158,174.40 € per year. Response call-outs outside staffed hours are billed additionally in accordance with the contract. The rate of 33.50 € for a reception service with service and language requirements is an assumption.

> **Advocatus Diaboli: the remote gate does not fit everywhere**
>
> The combined model pays off only where there is little people and vehicle traffic outside office hours. With shift operation, regular night deliveries, plant security duties or sensitive sites, the person who reacts on site, carries out checks and briefs the emergency services is missing. The decision therefore belongs in the risk analysis – not in the cost calculation alone.

FROM CONCEPT TO ROUTINE OPERATION

09 Checklist for Clients

This checklist supports the planning, tendering and annual review of reception and gatekeeper services.

Phase 1 – Concept	
☐	Define the zone concept: public, semi-public, internal, security-critical
☐	Determine staffed hours and the model: on-site presence, remote gate or a combination
☐	Describe the processes for visitors, contractors, suppliers and mail
☐	Data protection: data scope, deletion periods, notices under Art. 13 GDPR, no ID card as a deposit

Phase 2 – Award and start	
☐	Service specification with service and security requirements, languages and key figures
☐	Evidence: § 34a GewO where access control is performed, insurance, compliance with collective wage agreements
☐	Service instructions, written transfer of domiciliary rights, banning list, contact persons
☐	On-site induction, technology training, emergency instruction

Phase 3 – Routine operation	
☐	Evaluate key figures monthly: waiting time, badge return rate, findings
☐	Regularly remind employees of the badge obligation and the tailgating rules
☐	Practice evacuation and the silent alarm at least once a year
☐	Delete visitor data on schedule, review the banning list regularly

ANSWERED BRIEFLY AND RELIABLY

10 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

May reception retain a visitor's national ID card as a deposit for the visitor badge?

No. Under § 1 (1) sentence 3 of the German Identity Card Act, holders may not be required to deposit their ID card. The card may be shown, but not retained.

May we copy or scan visitors' ID cards?

Only with the holder's consent and as a recognizable copy – and only where it is necessary. For normal visitor reception this is almost never the case.

Does our receptionist need the instruction course under § 34a GewO?

Your own employees do not. External staff who perform access control need at least the 40-hour instruction course.

Is a visitor list at reception permitted?

Yes, but not openly displayed. Each guest may see only their own data; the data is deleted once its purpose has been fulfilled.

May we check visitors' bags?

Only on a voluntary basis or as a condition of entry. A search against a person's will is not permitted; anyone who refuses can be excluded from access.

What should we do about a suspicious mail item?

Do not open it, do not move it, leave and lock the room, alert the police via 110 and document the sequence of events.

Is a remote gate worthwhile?

Where there is little traffic outside office hours, it can cut costs considerably. With shift operation or sensitive sites, an on-site presence usually remains necessary.

Who is responsible for tailgating?

Everyone: reception keeps watch, technology makes it harder, and employees do not hold doors open for strangers. Without clear rules for your own staff, every control remains incomplete.

SECURITY · CONSULTING · CONCEPTION

11 Your Partner for Reception and Gate Duty

SecuConCept combines vendor-independent consulting, security conception and operational delivery from a single source – across Germany, personally coordinated.

Consulting

Access and zone concepts, process analysis at reception, data protection check, tender support

Conception

Service instructions, visitor and contractor processes, emergency procedures, key figures

Security

Reception and gatekeeper service, remote gate, plant security, mobile patrol and alarm response, alarm monitoring

Why SecuConCept?

- **SecuNET by SecuConCept:** more than 350 specialist security companies across Germany – regional expertise with uniform quality standards.
- **One contractual partner:** even when SecuNET partners work on site, SecuConCept remains your contractual partner and coordinator.
- **Remote gate from our own control center:** access outside staffed hours via video intercom, with verification, remote door release and on-site response – from our certified, redundantly designed alarm receiving center pursuant to DIN EN 50518 / VdS.
- **Vendor-independent and economical:** no commissions from manufacturers, up to 15 % discount for framework agreement customers.

Specialist portals and brands

CCTV-Security.de by SecuConCept – specialist portal for mobile camera towers, alarm center, alarm response and implementation.

SecuFokus by SecuConCept – Managing Security Together.
Specialist information and tools for operators, partners and service providers.

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

Reception check for your site

Access concept, visitor process, data protection and staffing model – including an assessment of whether a remote gate pays off for your site.

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FOR REFERENCE

12 Sources, Standards and Legal Status

Legal foundations

- § 34a of the German Trade Regulation Act (GewO); German Security Guarding Ordinance (BewachV)
- German Identity Card Act (PAuswG), in particular § 1 (1) sentence 3 and § 20 (2)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in particular Art. 5, 6, 9, 13 and 30
- § 87 (1) nos. 1 and 6 of the German Works Constitution Act (BetrVG); § 8 of the German Occupational Safety and Health Act (ArbSchG)
- §§ 858 et seq., 903, 1004 of the German Civil Code (BGB) (domiciliary rights); § 123 of the German Criminal Code (StGB) (trespass)

Standards and guidance

- DIN 77200-1:2022-10 – Security services (reception service as a stationary security service)
- DGUV Regulation 23 “Guard and Security Services”
- Guidance notes issued by the German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (IHK) on distinguishing the instruction course from the expert knowledge examination, including for gate duties with access control
- Guidance from the German data protection supervisory authorities on visitor lists and ID card copies

Legal status and liability: Research status November 2026. The competent trade licensing authority decides whether specific activities fall under German security guarding law. This manual does not constitute legal advice. Cost figures are model calculations and non-binding reference values (net).

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