NovaMente Soluções Cognitivas

Document 18 — Standard Operating Procedures by Department

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Introduction

This document describes the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for each of NovaMente's departments. SOPs define the repeatable processes that keep each team functioning predictably and at high quality. They reduce dependence on individual knowledge, make onboarding faster, and ensure that critical processes do not break down when key people are absent. Each department is responsible for maintaining the SOPs relevant to their function and for keeping them updated as processes evolve.

Engineering

Sprint Cycle

Engineering operates in two-week sprints. Sprint planning occurs on the first Monday of each sprint, with the Engineering Head and tech leads reviewing the backlog and committing to a sprint scope. Mid-sprint check-ins occur on Wednesday of the first week. Sprint reviews are held on the last Friday of each sprint and include a demo of completed work to relevant stakeholders. Retrospectives follow immediately after the review and are facilitated by a rotating team member.

Code Review

All code changes require review by at least one other engineer before merging. For changes to critical production systems, review by the tech lead is required. Reviewers are expected to respond within one working day of a review request. Code reviews should be constructive and specific, focusing on correctness, maintainability, security, and performance. Approving a PR without reviewing it substantively is not acceptable.

Incident Response

When a production incident is detected, the on-call engineer is responsible for initial triage within 15 minutes of alert. The incident is classified by severity (P1 to P4) according to the severity matrix in the Engineering handbook. P1 and P2 incidents trigger immediate escalation to the Engineering Head and, for client-facing outages, to the Commercial team. A post-incident review is required for all P1 and P2 incidents within 48 hours of resolution.

Deployment

Deployments to production occur through the CI/CD pipeline and require passing all automated tests. Deployments during business hours are permitted for non-breaking changes. Breaking changes or major releases are deployed during low-traffic windows, defined as weekday evenings or weekend mornings, with prior notification to the Commercial team for client-facing changes.

Product & Design

Product Discovery

New features or significant changes begin with a discovery phase, during which the product manager and UX researcher define the problem, conduct user interviews, review analytics, and explore solution directions. Discovery outputs a clear problem statement and a set of design directions to be evaluated. The discovery phase lasts a minimum of two weeks for significant initiatives.

PRD Process

Before moving into engineering, every feature requires a Product Requirements Document (PRD) approved by the Product Head and the relevant Engineering tech lead. The PRD template is maintained in the knowledge base and includes: problem statement, user stories, acceptance criteria, out-of-scope items, dependencies, and open questions. Engineering may not begin work on a feature without an approved PRD.

Design Handoff

Design handoff to engineering occurs through Figma, using the shared component library as the source of truth. Designers are responsible for annotating designs with interaction notes and edge cases before handoff. A handoff review session between the designer and the lead engineer is conducted for all significant features to resolve questions before implementation begins.

Data & AI

Model Development

New machine learning models follow a structured development workflow: problem framing, data exploration and validation, feature engineering, model training and evaluation, bias audit, and production deployment. Each stage produces a documented artifact in the model registry. Models may not be deployed to production without completing the bias audit and performance benchmark review.

Model Monitoring

All production models are monitored weekly for performance drift, data quality issues, and anomalous outputs. The data scientist assigned to each model is responsible for reviewing monitoring reports and escalating concerns to the Data & AI Head when thresholds are exceeded. Models that fail monitoring thresholds are flagged for retraining or review before the next deployment cycle.

Data Pipeline Management

Data pipelines are documented in the data catalog, including source, transformation logic, destination, refresh cadence, and data owner. Any change to a production pipeline requires review by a second data engineer and testing in the staging environment before deployment. Pipeline failures trigger automated alerts to the on-call data engineer within five minutes of detection.

Commercial

Lead Management

All inbound leads are entered into the CRM within one working day of receipt and assigned to a sales representative by the Commercial Operations contact. Initial outreach to inbound leads must occur within 24 hours of assignment. Lead qualification follows the standard framework documented in the Commercial playbook, which defines criteria for advancing, nurturing, or disqualifying a prospect at each stage.

Client Onboarding

Upon contract signature, the account is transitioned from Sales to Customer Success within three working days. The Customer Success manager conducts a kickoff call with the client within one week of contract signature, establishes the onboarding timeline, and provides access credentials and technical setup instructions. A 30-day check-in and a 90-day business review are mandatory for all new accounts.

Renewal Management

Customer Success managers initiate renewal conversations 90 days before the contract end date. A renewal risk assessment is completed for each account at the 120-day mark, identifying accounts requiring additional attention. Renewals are tracked in the CRM and escalated to the Commercial Head if at risk of churning 60 or more days before expiry.

HR & Culture

Recruitment Process

The end-to-end recruitment process follows the four-stage framework described in Document 08. The HR Manager coordinates each stage, tracks candidate progress in the applicant tracking system, and ensures that all candidates receive timely communications at each stage. Time-to-fill targets and candidate experience metrics are reported monthly to the COO.

Onboarding

New employee onboarding follows the two-week program described in Document 04. The HR & Culture team is responsible for preparing access, equipment, and documentation before the employee's start date. Onboarding checklists are completed and filed in the HR system by the end of the employee's second week. A 30-day and 60-day check-in are scheduled by the HR Manager for all new hires.

Performance Review Cycle

Semi-annual performance reviews occur in June and December. The HR & Culture team distributes self-assessment forms three weeks before the review window. Managers conduct review conversations in the second week of the review window and submit evaluation forms to the HR system within five working days of the conversation. Salary adjustment decisions are communicated within two weeks of the review window closing.

Finance & Legal

Payroll

Payroll is processed monthly. Payslips are distributed to employees by the last working day of each month. The Finance team collects all input data — overtime, commissions, expense reimbursements, benefit deductions — by the 20th of each month. Errors on payslips must be reported to the Finance team within five working days of receipt; corrections are processed in the following month's cycle unless the error is material, in which case an off-cycle correction is issued.

Contract Review

All contracts to which NovaMente is a party — client agreements, vendor contracts, NDAs, and employment agreements — require review and sign-off from the Legal Analyst before execution. Standard agreements below defined value thresholds use pre-approved templates that do not require individual review. Contracts above the threshold or with non-standard terms require a full legal review, the timeline for which depends on complexity and is agreed in advance with the requesting team.

Budget Management

Annual budgets are set in November for the following calendar year, in coordination between the Finance Manager, department heads, and the COO. Quarterly budget reviews are conducted in March, June, and September. Department heads are responsible for monitoring their budget and flagging variances greater than 10% of the quarterly allocation to the Finance Manager as soon as they are identified.

Marketing

Campaign Planning

Marketing campaigns are planned on a monthly cycle aligned with the Commercial team's pipeline targets. Campaign briefs are produced by the marketing manager by the 15th of the preceding month, reviewed by the Commercial Head, and approved before production begins. Post-campaign performance reviews are conducted within two weeks of campaign completion, with results shared in the weekly Commercial-Marketing alignment meeting.

Content Production

All external content — blog posts, white papers, social media posts, email campaigns, and product materials — is reviewed for accuracy, brand consistency, and legal compliance before publication. Technical content is reviewed by a subject matter expert from the relevant department. Content featuring client references or case studies requires written approval from the client before publication.

Event Management

Industry events attended or hosted by NovaMente are planned a minimum of six weeks in advance. Event briefs, budgets, and logistics are coordinated by the Marketing team with input from the relevant department heads. Post-event reports, including lead capture, brand exposure metrics, and follow-up actions, are produced within one week of each event.