



COVID-19 Policy - Audit Arrangement

1. Scope of application

This special audit arrangement is applicable to the audits during the period of COVID-19 outbreak and is subject to the pandemic situation to determine the end of the audit arrangement and will be notified accordingly.

2. Audit Arrangement

- a) Unless otherwise imposed by local authority or health and safety of the client and audit team are at risk, the audit should be planned and carried out as normal.

By mutual understanding with the client, the audit may be postponed in view of the client is not in full operation/ travel restrictions to the audit site. The allowable overrun for recertification and surveillance audit is maximum 6 months. If the recertification audit cannot be undertaken within 6 months, the certification should be withdrawn, and a new initial assessment will be required. If the surveillance audit cannot be undertaken within 6 months, the certification should be suspended and to lift the suspension and continue with the certificate validity, at least a Stage 2 audit should be conducted. Otherwise, certification should be withdrawn after exceeded the suspension period of maximum 6 months.

- b) For audits that are feasible with remote audit conditions, ICT audit may be carried out to minimize the risk of transmission caused by personnel movement and to maximize the protection of client rights, valid justification shall be provided prior to conducting the audit. Refer to GIC Procedure 34 for details on the conduct of ICT audit.
- c) For audits that are NOT feasible with remote audit conditions, they should be appropriately postponed and should not be suspended or withdrawn. The audit should be resumed upon the situation is not severe. The allowable postponement period is same as above for recertification and surveillance.
- d) The audit team and the client should communicate and determine effective measures for pandemic protection (including temperature measure, wearing masks, and disinfection etc.) for the conduct of onsite audit, which should be carried out under the conditions of ensuring the health and safety of the client and the audit team.
- e) Each client should actively implement the requirements of its national and local regulations and establish and improve pandemic emergency response plans in accordance with its own actual conditions, and effectively do a good job in pandemic prevention and control. For clients certified in environmental management system and/or occupational health and safety management system, the audit team should pay attention to the pandemic prevention and control measures of the client.

Please note the advisories/ requirements by the Local Authority shall take precedence whilst carrying out these measures.

Reference:

- IAF ID3 "Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CABs and Certified Organizations"
- IAF MD4 "The Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/ Assessment"
- IAF COVID-19 FAQs
- GIC procedure 34