

COVID-19 Update – “Coronavirus”

As of today, the COVID-19 Virus continues to develop, globally and in North America. This is the first in a regular series of updates to provide you with information on what we are doing to contain the impact on our respective organizations and how we are prepared to help you manage your business operations and management system requirements during this pandemic event.

Containment Actions

Our primary concern is the health and safety of our associates, our customers and their staff, and the communities we operate and live in while giving everyone the information to make informed decisions. Here is what we have done to date:

- Communicated best practice WHO recommended prevention techniques for all employees and auditors.
- Established reporting for staff and auditors of any incidence of potential exposure personally, within close family/communities, and customer locations.
- Extended work from home for all office based staff to minimize chance of exposure to COVID-19.
- Ensured auditors comply with customer requirements for site health safety.
- Fully compliant with all government isolations, travel restrictions, and health authority recommendations on a global basis. Eliminated non-essential travel, opting instead for alternative communication methods.
- Senior Management involvement in assessing the COVID-19 situation, including government announcements, accreditation requirements, containment actions and further actions that may be required from time to time.

Further Actions

Within the goal of ensuring the health and safety of our stakeholders and together minimizing the spread of the virus, we hope to retain our commitments to scheduled audit dates. While we expect this goal is attainable for most regions our customers operate and auditors live in, we have prepared for some upset. As a group, we can do our part and make the right decisions. Here are some additional considerations or options for businesses experiencing COVID-19 threats:

- Accreditors, have in very specific cases, allowed us flexibility in timing of surveillance and recertification audits to protect the audit cycle. These cases must be directly related to threats posed by the COVID-19 virus and be documented by us with very specific information. Our Customer Service and Technical teams know these rules and documentation requirements. These are temporary measures depending upon development of the spread of the outbreak.
- Two-step audits. To keep at least a portion of the regular schedule and minimize current contact, the accreditors have recognized remote auditing for part of the audit in some programs and situations. Generally, Management Review, Internal Audits, Corrective Action, and other Administrative processes are good candidates for remote auditing on many audits. An on-site visit will be required for manufacturing, laboratory and warehousing type processes within specified time limits, but practically,



after the outbreak threat has diminished. The remote audits help all of us maintain the original timing for a portion of the audit.

- Allowances may not be applicable to all programs. Please discuss your individual situation with your Customer Service Professional.

With the mutual goal of retaining accredited certification and ensuring all changes to schedules are documented, below are links to accreditation or oversight organization related policies, which DQS and consequently customers must follow. The Accreditation Bodies continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and could update the policies depending on the continued or changing impact of the outbreak:

- <https://anab.qualtraxcloud.com/ShowDocument.aspx?ID=17419>
- <https://anab.qualtraxcloud.com/ShowDocument.aspx?ID=17323>
- <https://anab.qualtraxcloud.com/ShowDocument.aspx?ID=842>
- https://www.iaf.nu/upFiles/IAFID32011_Management_of_Extraordinary_Events_or_Circumstances.pdf
- <https://oasishelp.iaqg.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-02-IAQG-OPMT-Notice-for-2019-nCOV.pdf?1583284491976>
- <https://www.iatfglobaloversight.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/IATF-Certification-Body-Communiqué-2020-001-IATF-Waivers-Coronavirus-1.pdf>

Documentation and Decision Making Requirements

In cases where your organization is impacted by the outbreak and you need to request postponement of a scheduled audit, please provide us with the following information in order to assess the impacts and alternatives to an onsite assessment:

- When will the facility/organization be able to function?
- When will the facility/organization be able to ship products or perform the service defined within the current scope of certification?
- Will the facility/organization need to use alternative manufacturing and/or distribution sites? If so, are these currently covered under the current certification, or will they need to be evaluated?
- Does existing inventory still meet customer specifications or will your clients be contacted regarding possible concessions?
- If certified to a management system standard that requires a disaster recovery plan or emergency response plan, have you implemented the plan and was it effective?
- Will some of the processes and/or services performed or products shipped be subcontracted to other organizations? If so, how will the other organizations' activities be controlled by the certified organization?
- To what extent has operation of the management system been affected?
- What processes of the organization do you believe could be effectively audited using remote auditing techniques?
- What technologies do you have available for the auditors to use for the remote auditing techniques which meet your information security requirements? (E.g. GoToMeeting, Secure access to private organizational applications/ databases, Drone, Skype, etc.)

We are here to support you. There might be additional risk considerations to discuss with your Customer Service Professional as we continually monitor regional issues. Please communicate any concerns with your Customer Service Professional or contact us at customerservice@dqsus.com 1-800-285-4476.