

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

DQS GmbH observes the developments around the spread of COVID-19 very closely and focuses on the health of its employees, auditors and customers in all decisions.

With this document we would like to give you answers to questions which have reached us increasingly through customers and which possibly also concern you at the moment.

For any industry specific regulation we would like to also refer to the information pages of further DQS companies: [DQS CFS](#), [DQS MED](#), [DQS Inc](#), [DQS Holding](#)

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1. Due to the current Covid-19 situation in our company, we cannot perform an upcoming audit as planned. What is to be done now?

Please inform us immediately if a scheduled audit cannot be performed as planned. Of course we will postpone the audit date. An extension of the deadline of initially up to 90 days is generally possible for 95% of all standards. Please note, however, that such a postponement in the case of recertification audits may result in a transition period without a valid certificate. We will discuss this with you in detail and find the best possible solution for you.

We will also be pleased to examine together with you the extent to which individual audit components can be carried out as a remote audit (video conference).

Please note that we will charge costs such as travel expenses that cannot be cancelled. Experience has shown that DQS auditors are already working at full capacity months in advance. Therefore, we recommend to postpone audits only for concrete reasons, but never purely as a precaution.

2. Audit postponements - What should be considered in principle and where are there special rules?

ISO 17021 (the globally valid accreditation standard) requires accredited certification bodies to plan and conduct surveillance audits at their customers' premises on an annual basis. The first surveillance audit after an initial certification must even be planned and carried out for a specific week.

DQS GmbH will therefore conduct all surveillance audits in the current year. This will mainly serve to avoid negative effects on the certification status.

In many places the Covid-19 situation is such that on-site auditing is basically possible in compliance with hygiene rules (mouth-and-nose protection, distance of at least 1.50 meters and forming small "audit teams"), as is already practiced by DQS GmbH.

In any case, DQS GmbH can carry out planned and scheduled audits, be it as a "remote audit" or "on site".

If you feel constrained to postpone an audit already planned with us, please inform us immediately.

Special regulations for the postponement of audits apply to the following sets of rules:

IATF 16949

As of 01.01.2021, no audit postponements are permitted. All procedures with a deadline after 01.01.2021 must be performed according to the regular deadline requirements. Either as on-site audit, remote audit or hybrid audit.

ISO 50001 and ISO 45001 (formerly BS-OHSAS)

The IAF has extended the transition periods due to the Corona crisis for all recently revised ISO management system standards by six months each. The new expiration date of the certificates has been adjusted as follows:

- BS-OHSAS - September 30, 2021
- ISO 50001 - February 20, 2022

3. Can we turn an on-site audit into a remote audit?

Basically, we support the use of video conferencing techniques to avoid on-site appointments, whereby the infrastructure for this must be provided by you for reasons of information and data security.

The extent to which the audit or only individual parts of it can be carried out remotely must be examined in each individual case together with your customer service representative and an individual risk assessment must be prepared.

[Explanatory Video Remote Audit](#)

4. How do we plan a remote audit?

In special cases, surveillance audits may be performed as 100% remote audits after consultation with your auditor and the DQS office in Frankfurt am Main. (Please note the specific exceptions under point 5).

Instead of the confirmed audit schedule, DQS GmbH will clarify the feasibility of a remote audit together with your auditor and with you.

Remote audit release - Document CF34

In order to be able to assess the situation in your organization and the risks associated with conducting remote audits in advance, we need your information and declaration of consent to conduct remote audits.

For this purpose, please use our [Covid-19 questionnaire \(CF34\)](#), which is the basis for the DQS release process of remote audits. We can then determine the feasibility and scope of the remote audit on the basis of your information.

Please send the copies of official evidence requested in the CF34 (e.g. top management travel ban policy) to your auditor. (See screenshot)

Section A - always to be completed by the organization	
Is the facility open or closed / is there a planned or existing shutdown? <small>xx</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Closed If closed: Until: <small>xxxxxx</small>
Is the facility located in a high-risk affected area/region? <small>xx</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>xxxxxx</small>
Is the site currently manufacturing (for IATF: automotive parts) parts or products for customers (even if the volume is significantly lower)? <small>xx</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>xxxxxx</small>
Has the government implemented a travel ban policy or is there any travel ban policy given by top management? If yes, please provide a copy. <small>xx</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>xxxxxx</small>
Do you have a "Restriction of Entry" policy for visitors, contractors or suppliers? If yes, please provide a copy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>xxxxxx</small>
Any other restrictions that apply that do not allow external visitors from entering the site (please specify)? If yes, please provide a copy. <small>xx</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>xxxxxx</small>

Please note that additional expenses are incurred for remote audits due to regulations-specific requirements (e.g. audit preparation, technical test, audit execution).

5. Can remote auditing be done for all standards and their certification programs?

At this time, the external regulations of ISO/TS 22163 (IRIS) do not allow remote audits.

6. Due to the Covid-19 situation, we are not able to complete the audit preparation (internal audits, management review etc.). So how do we deal with this?

As soon as the audit can then be carried out, this particular situation must be documented and evaluated as a deviation (force majeure) in the classification of the audit finding, combined with a closure date.

7. Can my auditor please provide a medical certificate or health certificate as proof that he is not ill with Covid-19?

In principle, you are welcome to ask your auditor to provide an explanation of his or her non-illness.

At this point, however, we would like to point out that most of the laboratories currently do not carry out tests on patients without a concrete suspicion of illness due to overwork and your auditor may therefore not be able to provide the desired proof.

We ask for your understanding that we will charge you for the costs in connection with a corona test initiated by you and not medically indicated.

We therefore advise against a prophylactic corona test. The number of suspected cases and contact persons is likely to increase, so all resources should be concentrated on those persons who actually present a risk.