

Primus Standard Audits General Regulations - Appendix 1

Remote Auditing Guidance

*Used in conjunction with the Primus Standard Audits General Regulations
(**version 20.06**)*

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A. Introduction

- i. An alternative to an on-site inspection can be a remote audit for the operations. This appendix has been developed to explain the processes for remote auditing for Primus Standard Audits.
- ii. The remote activities should be used in accordance to the International Accreditation Forum's MD-4:2018-IAF "Mandatory Document for the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes".

B. Process Guidance

- i. Organizations should apply for a remote audit through their Certification Body (CB) of choice.
- ii. The CB must review the organization's remote auditing request dependent upon the specific risks associated with that organization. Risks may include complaints or recalls related to the organization; history and maturity of the organization's Primus Standard Audits food safety management system; pending compliance or legal related issues; significant changes to their management or operation system, for example, a change of physical location, a change in the scope of activities, etc.
- iii. The remote audit includes an off-site desk review of documents and the off-site virtual operation inspection.
- iv. The CB and the organization shall use the compliance grid tool developed by Azzule Systems, i.e. the Certification Program Owner, or another secure data sharing method for document sharing and desk review activities involved in the remote inspection.
- v. The operation requesting the remote audit must allow the use of portable live video and audio streaming (e.g. live video capability, GoPro cameras, etc.) throughout the entirety of the audit (i.e., opening meeting, records review, walk-through, closing meeting, etc.). This is to ensure that the auditor can observe all relevant procedures, records, can see live all aspects of the hygiene of the operation, can conduct interviews, have communications with the relevant staff, and conduct any other activity required for the audit. The video and audio streaming should not be recorded, but screenshots are allowed, if necessary.
- vi. The CBs shall ensure their auditors understand the appropriate processes and procedures to be used when conducting a remote audit.
- vii. The CB shall ensure that an authorized remote audit maintains the same integrity and quality as an on-site audit and continuing throughout the evaluation, technical review, certification decision, etc.
- viii. The CB, the auditor, and the operation must have an agreed-upon audit plan for how the remote audit will be conducted prior to the occurrence of the remote audit.
- ix. All remote audits will be announced or pre-assessment audits.
- x. The certificate and report completed for a remote audit will be identified as a remote audit in the Azzule System, in the audit documents themselves. Primus Standard remote audit is valid for a maximum period of 12 months from the audit date.
- xi. When, for whatever reason, a remote audit cannot meet the same requirements and achieve the same standards as an on-site audit, the auditing company should not issue the certificate.