

IQNet Ltd Health and Safety Measures during on-site SA8000 Audits to address COVID-19 related risks

SAFETY FIRST

The health and safety is one of the main focuses of IQNet Ltd during COVID-19 outbreak.

WHEN CAN ON-SITE AUDITS TAKE PLACE

During the COVID-19 outbreak, on-site audits will take place when there is sufficient assurance from the auditor and auditee that the risks of COVID-19 infection are contained.

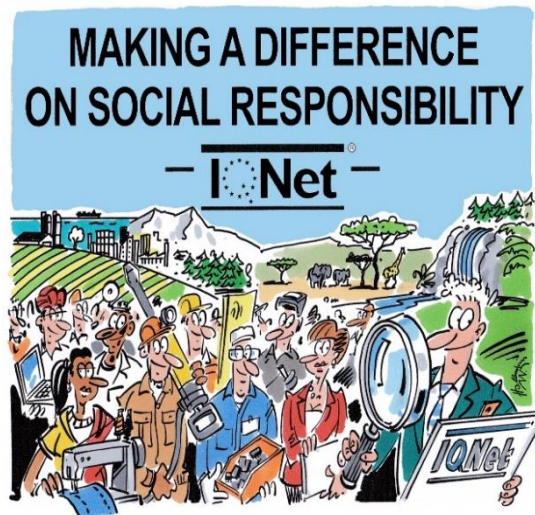
PREPARATION FOR THE AUDIT

Communication of relevant information by the auditee is relevant for the proper planning of the on-site activities.

RESOURCES

For audit preparation, please review the SAI COVID-19 Guidance for SA8000-Certified Organizations available on our Website at

<https://www.iqnet-ltd.com/en/audit---certification/sa8000/related-resources>



Pre-requisites for IQNet Ltd SA8000 On-site Audits During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- On-site audits shall only take place when the governmental restrictions allow the resuming of economic activity and travel.
- Audits shall only take place within the due timeframes, if your organization provides assurance of no direct or indirect known contact with persons being sick, testing positive or under the quarantine prescription for COVID-19, within the last 14 days. Otherwise alternative measures may be considered (hybrid audits – combination on-site and off-site, standalone remote audits, desktop remote audits or temporary suspension of certification).
- If, due to internal risk prevention policies, your organization cannot accommodate an SA8000 audit within the required timeframes, you are entitled to request the on-site activity to be postponed and replaced by an alternative measure.
- Our IQNet Ltd auditors are entitled to postpone an audit activity due to the identification of particularly risky situations (such as use of public transport in areas with high contagion risk). In such cases, our audit team leader shall conduct the required remote activity.
- If your organization does not allow neither the on-site audit nor the hybrid or remote audit being conducted within the required timeframes, a temporary suspension of the SA8000 certificate will be applied.
- Audit activities conducted entirely remote are not applicable for the initial Stage 2 certification.

Initial Remarks

The health and safety of our Headoffice Team, IQNet Ltd Representatives' staff, auditors and clients' personnel is one of the main focuses of IQNet Ltd during COVID-19 outbreak and supports numerous contingency measures.

As government and industry contingency regulations change and on-site audit activities are resumed, guidelines are needed to fully achieve the previous goals.

We are requiring all IQNet Ltd auditors to adhere to strict preventive measures and good practices that may go above and beyond what is recommended by the World Health Organization and local authorities.

We are also asking all our clients to respect the preventive behaviour of our SA8000 audit team and make all the necessary arrangements for reducing and/or avoiding any related risks.

Audit Preparation

- As a temporary measure, audits will be conducted as announced (even those which, according to your audit program, were supposed to be unannounced or semi-announced). This is aimed to enable a proper communication and preparation of the audit. The unannounced / semi-announced activity will be deferred to a future audit within your certification program.
- When planning the audit, the auditors will need to receive information from your organization regarding the following:
 - Any cases testing positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days in your organization.
 - Any specific health and safety control measures in place that the audit team needs to be aware prior to their visit.
 - Any specific functions, relevant for SA8000 audit, working from home and timeframes when these can be reached.
 - Any short-working or reduced work arrangements and personnel impacted.
 - Location and how to reach the sites scheduled for the audit (see also Commuting and Transportation)
 - Any options for buying meals within a reasonable distance from the audit location (see also Meals and Breaks).
- For the preparation of the audit, please review the SAI COVID-19 Guidance for SA8000-Certified Organizations.

AUDIT CONDUCT

Preventive measures (some with temporary nature during the COVID-19 crisis) have been introduced to minimize risk of contagion.

COMMUTING AND TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation or car travel with unknown passengers will be avoided.

Communication of the sites' details and logistics will be necessary to support the audit organization.

MEALS AND BREAKS

Meals at client premises will be avoided or enjoyed individually.

HYGIENE AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Wearing masks, hand hygiene and social distancing are essential during audits.

OTHER RELEVANT PROVISIONS

Sensitive to different contexts of operation, our rules require full respect of the instructions released by health authorities and may be complemented by other local specific instructions.

Audit Conduct

- As a temporary measure, in case of shortened work program, auditors will work the same length of shift (or management working day) as your organization, but the audit day will not be less than 6 working hours. The evidence of reduced work program will be attached to the SA8000 audit report.
- As a temporary measure, our audit team will carry out the audit during the day shift work hours. However, the audit team will seek to interview any shift workers present during their work time and review records related to all shifts.
- During the opening meeting, our audit team will communicate and agree with you on the importance of adherence to COVID-19 controls throughout the audit (such as social distancing, PPEs, personal hygiene, meeting/interview conditions).
- As a temporary measure, for opening and closing meetings, the attendance will be kept at a minimum, ensuring both management and worker interests are represented.
- Otherwise, auditors will seek to interview/interact with no more than 2 persons simultaneously in a room, maintaining a safe distance at all times.
- Where possible, interviews with relevant personnel may be conducted in an open area.
- Our auditors will not be accompanied by more than 2 people during site visits (for example your representative and the person in charge of the audited area).
- If our audit team includes more auditors, they will separate in groups.
- As a temporary measure, for confidential worker interviews, our auditors will limit interview/interraction to a maximum of 2 persons. Where our audit procedure requires interviews with larger groups, the audit team will divide the participants in smaller groups (e.g. instead of a group of 4, 2 groups of 2 people will be organized).
- When auditing a certain department and where feasible, our auditors will seek to divide the audit time between document review (activity which can be accomplished unaccompanied) and interview with the relevant function (inquiring clarifications/ details).
- Our auditors will not be part of any audit situation on which they have evidence or doubts that their safety and the safety of others is not being protected.
- Should the audit be temporarily interrupted due to the audit team's concerns on safety measures, your organization will be required for correction. In case the audit cannot be resumed and if, due to this, the audit objectives are compromised, the audit team has the right to terminate the audit and/or remove itself from any dangerous situation.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Certification

Audit

Training

Capacity Building

Commuting and Transportation

- Auditors will avoid using public transportation when commuting to a "meeting point" with other audit team members, to or from client premises.
- Auditors will only travel in their own car or in the car of a colleague and no other passengers will be allowed.
- If transporting a colleague, only one passenger will be allowed and only in the back seat. Both passengers will be wearing masks.
- If auditing different sites apply due to the certification program criteria, a preliminary risk assessment will be made when planning the audit. If the risk is unacceptable (e.g. travelling in public transportation or in unknown's person car) the use of alternative non-traditional audit techniques shall be considered or even postponing distant/remote locations to a subsequent audit.
- Please support our auditors by communicating in advance the sites' details.

Meals and Breaks

- The auditors will avoid having meals at client premises.
- If business restrictions are in place (e.g. restaurants and shops closed or within unreachable distance), auditors will bring their own meal and cutlery to be enjoyed preferably alone (or ensuring social distancing).
- Please advise our auditors whether any options for buying their own meal are within reasonable distance.

Hygiene and Social Distancing

- The auditors will follow IQNet Ltd hygiene measures such as wearing protective masks, wearing gloves and/or washing and/or sanitizing hands regularly, etc.
- The auditors will respect the social distancing requirements as established by the local health authorities (or minimum 1 m – 1.5 m distance / 3 – 5 feet).
- Please support our auditors by ensuring access to sufficiently large and ventilated rooms and to lavatories equipped with soap, paper towels and closed recycle bins.

Other Relevant Provisions

- Recognizing the differences in the specific contexts of local operations, our measures require full respect of the instructions released by the relevant local health authorities and are complemented by any specific related rules of our IQNet Ltd Representatives, whereas the most protective measures shall be applied.