



March 16, 2020

Dear ASACB Client,

We hope everyone is well and clearly join all of you in hoping for a quick ending to the spread of COVID-19.

This email is specific to ASACB audits and the precautions ASACB is taking due to COVID-19. These precautions may impact you but moreover we need your assistance with implementing the safety measures.

First, ASACB is auditing and as long as it is safe, we will continue to audit.

ASACB is working to ensure that no organization will have its certification expire or be placed on suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic due to the impact it is having on the ability to complete a recertification or surveillance audit. ASACB has been reviewing and working through the information disseminated by ANAB and IAQG on expectations and guidance regarding COVID-19. We participated in a web-ex conference Friday March 13, 2020 with the AAQG/AAQSC committee and. We were informed that the IAQG was due to release new guidance on COVID-19 this Monday March 16, 2020. An update will be provided once this new guidance is received and reviewed by ASACB.

In order to be proactive ASACB has reviewed all audits confirmed up to the end of May 2020 with a focus on audits with a time deadline like Re-Certification and First surveillance audit since the initial certification audit from 2019.

ANAB has released a guidance document *Heads Up 448*, which can be accessed by clicking on the link below.

<https://anab.qualtraxcloud.com/ShowDocument.aspx?ID=17419>

Re-Certification audits

This Heads Up defines how expiration of an ANAB-accredited certification may be extended up to six months from when the certification expires as a result of reasons directly related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

- ASACB must ensure that we have confidence in the system for which the extension would be granted
- ASACB must follow our own process, including suspension if appropriate.
- Once ASACB successfully completes the recertification process activity, the expiration of the renewed certification is based on the original recertification cycle. This means that ASACB will not provide the organization an additional six months to its certification cycle. When the organization is recertified, it will not be for three years from the recertification decision, but three years from the previous expiration date.

There are additional requirements for AS&D certifications that include AS9100, AS9110 and AS9120. IAQG resolution 98 must be followed, there is no **extension** of the certificate. The requirements of certificate re-instatement per ISO/IEC 17021-1 apply. ASACB would like to emphasize that any additional scheme or program requirements that may need to be managed above and beyond Accreditation Rule 9 and *Heads Up 448* will be imposed on all decisions regarding recertification and extension of certification as defined in this email notification.



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- **First surveillance** audit after the initial audit must be completed within 12 months after the certification decision. If the audit can't be performed within this timeframe then ASACB's suspension process will be initiated. A postponement of the audit may be initiated by the certified organization. A remote audit using ICT may also be requested using the process defined below. If the postponement and/or use of ICT is approved the audit must be started within 12 months after the initial certification decision to avoid suspension.
- **Second Surveillance** audit may be postponed and if approved the audit must be completed by the end of 2020.

When a postponement request is made, ASACB will initiate its process for Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances and email the requesting organization a link to complete an on-line survey. The completed survey will be reviewed by ASACB to determine if a postponement and/or use of ICT may be granted.

The following process will be initiated once the the postponement and/or performance of a remote audit using ICT is granted by ASACB and approved by our accreditation body.

ASACB will start the recertification audits that are postponed with a one-day off-site audit that will review the following processes of the certified organizations system.

- Management review
- Corrective actions
- Internal audits
- Risk management focusing on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have on the QMS
- Customer feedback
- Review of key performance indicator data for each process of the QMS that is measured for effectiveness

This one-day off-site audit will count towards the required audit duration for the recertification audit.

All audits classified as the first surveillance audit since the initial certification audit and postponed beyond 12 months since the certification decision will have a certification status of Suspended until the audit has been completed and a certification decision has been made.

ASACB will start the surveillance audits that are postponed due to COVID-19 with a half-day off-site audit that will review the following processes of the certified organizations system.

- Management review
- Corrective actions
- Internal audits
- Risk management focusing on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have on the QMS
- Review of Customer feedback
- Review of key performance indicator data for each process that has a PEAR



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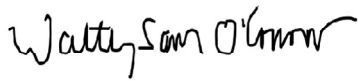
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Second, a few things to note:

- It is your decision as to whether to hold the audit. If you have agreed to an audit date, and you want to change the date, ASACB will only charge for travel fees that are not refunded. ASACB will try its best to minimize any costs related to the change request.
- The day before the audit, ASACB will contact your company to confirm that the company is not aware of any personnel with symptoms of COVID-19 or diagnosed with COVID-19. If you know this information prior to the day before, please email Sam O'Connor. ASACB will not conduct the audit. We need full known disclosure since Auditors visit several companies. If we need to reschedule the audit there will be no fee. Our concern here is that your personnel feel better and that the others remain healthy and be well.
- If a person that interacted with an Auditor becomes symptomatic for COVID-19 prior to 2 weeks of the Auditor being at your facility, please let me and the auditor know.
- **ASACB will work with you and ASACB will support you.**

Please know that open communication is best and don't hesitate to email me, Wyndie Meyer, George Ringger with any concerns regarding the above.

We look forward to serving you.



Walter "Sam" O'Connor
VP, Technical Services



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