
	<b>Document Title:</b> General Guidelines for Halal Certification of Clients			
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## 1. Introduction

This document is applies to HalalCo as a third-party Halal certification body in determining a client’s conformity with internationally accepted Halal standards. This system corresponds to the GSO 2055-2, UAE.S 2055-2 and OIC SMIIIC/2 Standards which consists of: An onsite two-stage initial audit, surveillance audits in the first and the second years, and a recertification audit in the third year prior to expiration of certification. The certification cycle begins with a unanimous recommendation by the Decision Committee.

## 2. Definitions and Terms

- 2.1. Certification – procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements
- 2.2. Certification Scheme – certification related to specific products, processes, or services to which the same relevant standards and rules apply.
- 2.3. Specific Rules – a document specifying the set of rules that are applicable to a particular certification scheme, taking into account the production methods and the kind of product or group of products to be covered under the scheme.
- 2.4. Certificate of Conformity– a document issued under the rules of a certification system, by which a certification body grants to certified applicants the right to use the HalalCo’s Halal Conformity Mark for its products, processes or services in accordance with the rules of the relevant certification scheme.
- 2.5. Client– organization or person responsible to a certification body for ensuring that certification requirements, and product requirements, are fulfilled. Whenever the term “client” is used in this General Rules, it applies to both the “applicant” and the “client”, unless otherwise specified.
- 2.6. HalalCo Mark– refers to the HalalCo Halal Conformity Mark, which is a protected mark applied to a product, issued under the rules of a certification system, indicating that confidence is provided that the relevant product, process or service is in conformity with a specific standard or other normative document.
- 2.7. Applicant – means the company, organization or individual applying for a Certification and the right to use the HalalCo Mark.
- 2.8. Halal Assurance Scheme – refers to Halal Assurance Certification related to specific products, processes, or services to which Halal standards and specific rules, and the same procedure apply.
- 2.9. Product : Includes the product, process and service
- 2.10. Authorized Auditor: is any approved auditor by HalalCo either internal within HalalCo or external (Approved HalalCo auditor or approved auditor based on a signed contract)

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### 3. Basic Conditions for Granting Certificates of Conformity

- 3.1. The basic conditions for granting applicants certificates of conformity consists of the satisfactory compliance with the General Guidelines of HalalCo's certification system, as well as the satisfactory compliance with the specific requirements of HalalCo's certification scheme for a particular product or type of product subject to certification. The decision for granting the certification is done by a unanimous vote tally of a selected committee of decision makers assigned by the Quality Management Team (QMT). The Decision Committee shall be at least three members, two of which are Islamic Affairs Experts.
- 3.2. HalalCo may modify these General Guidelines at any time, including any modification necessary to satisfy instructions given by the accreditation authority. Any modification will be communicated to the applicant/client through publication on HalalCo's website.

### 4. Application for Certification

- 4.1. The Application for Halal certification is accessible on HalalCo's website [www.halalco.us](http://www.halalco.us).
- 4.2. Separate applications shall be submitted for each product type or group of products that refers to a different scope and/or location.
- 4.3. The completed application shall be submitted to HalalCo through approved application channels together with the required supporting documents specified in the application form.
- 4.4. Upon receipt and satisfactory results of review of the application, HalalCo's QMT shall prepare and send a certification agreement to the applicant, giving the terms and fees for providing the certification service.
- 4.5. Conditions for Accepting or Declining application
  - 4.6.1 HalalCo's reasoning for declining or rejecting an application can include but are not limited to the following:
    - Scope of application is not within the capability of HalalCo;
    - The client failed to submit all required information and/or payment of the certification fees on the agreed time;
    - Policies and directions from the legal and relative authorities;
    - Any other reasons decided by HalalCo as not relevant to accept the application.
  - 4.6.2 The reasons for declining the application shall be documented and communicated to the client.


### 5. Initial Assessment

- 5.1 Upon acceptance of the proposal by the applicant and payment of the initial fees, HalalCo's QMT shall make the necessary arrangements with the applicant for carrying out the initial assessment. Stages 1 and 2 of the initial assessment shall consist of: (1) Onsite documentation review (2) audit of the facility's quality management system/Halal



assurance management system and facility's production control, and (3) initial testing/evaluation/validation of the product/service

- 5.2 The applicant shall submit all pre-audit requirements and requested documents. Should the applicant fail to submit the pre-audit requirements and pending documents, or, for other reasons, request for a postponement of the initial assessment audit, HalalCo shall allow a maximum of six (6) months from the proposed audit schedule or application date. Otherwise, the application shall be considered cancelled, and any fees already paid shall be considered forfeited.
- 5.3 Assessment of the organization's food safety management system/Halal assurance management system and facility's production control shall be onsite and in accordance with the guidelines of HalalCo's scheme, product specification standards, and shall be carried out by the duly authorized auditor(s).
- 5.4 Applicant's food safety management system/Halal assurance management system shall be audited against the requirements of the applicable standards.
- 5.5 If testing of the product is applicable, sampling and initial testing of the product shall be carried out in accordance with the product standard/specifications. Ex. Further processed food items: samples shall be testes to ensure products are adhering to food safety protocols and are free from Non-Halal contaminants.
- 5.6 The tests (if applicable) shall be carried out at an ISO 17025 certified independent testing laboratory.
- 5.7 HalalCo is obligated to issue a Non-Compliance Report (NCR) if any non-conformance(s) are identified during the production walkthrough and product evaluation (if applicable).
- 5.8 Applicant shall submit corrective action plan for all non-conformances (NCR) identified during the initial audit within ten (10) days from the date of the audit. The completion date for the submitted corrective action shall be an agreed upon time frame not to exceed six months from date of issue. Under certain circumstances and with the agreement of HalalCo's Decision Committee, the NCR may be re-issued (with a new completion date) at the end of the 6 months period; or, the Lead Auditor may consider the findings no longer valid and conduct a complete re-audit. Additional fees for re-audit shall be charged accordingly. Non-compliance with these provisions may result in cancellation of the application and any fees already paid shall be considered forfeited.
- 5.9 After the agreed period for implementation, HalalCo shall evaluate the evidence of implementation of the corrective actions. If deemed necessary, a follow up visit may be conducted.
- 5.10 If the results of follow up audit indicate that the corrective actions do not meet HalalCo's requirements, HalalCo has the option to allow more time to rectify, or to abort the initial audit. HalalCo will take steps to schedule a new initial audit.

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5.11 If the corrective actions are satisfactory, the issued NCR shall be closed.

## 6. Granting the Certificate of Conformity

- 6.1 Halal certification shall be granted when the results of the initial audit (and subsequent follow up audits where necessary) indicate that the organization has fully complied with the requirements of these Guidelines, HalalCo's scheme, and other applicable standards.
- 6.2 The Lead Auditor shall prepare the final audit report and recommendation, which will be subject to review by HalalCo's QMT before the final approval by HalalCo's decision committee.
- 6.3 The certification decision shall be based on the evaluation of the audit findings, if any, and conclusions and any other relevant information (e.g. public information, comments on the audit report from the client).
- 6.4 The organization shall pay the certification fees as per applicable fee structure. NOTE: Payment shall be made within a period of not more than forty five (45) days from date of approval of certification recommendation, this period may be extended by HalalCo if the reasons for extensions from the client are justifiable; otherwise HalalCo may opt to cancel the application and any fees already paid is considered forfeited.
- 6.5 HalalCo shall issue a Certificate of Conformity when the following conditions have been met:
- 6.5.1 The conditions mentioned in clause [6] are fully satisfied.
  - 6.5.2 The client has submitted a product marking proposal for approval. The marking proposal shall comply with the guidelines issued by HalalCo.
  - 6.5.3 The client has implemented an internal quality assurance plan to ensure that the product covered by the certification continue to satisfy the requirements of the product specification standards.
- 6.4 The Certificate of Conformity shall be issued together with a Halal Product Certificate giving details of the product(s) covered by the certification. The Certificate of Conformity shall be for a specific factory location only.
- 6.5 The Certificate of Conformity is valid for three years and can be renewed upon the continuing satisfactory compliance with the requirements as verified during surveillance and re-certification audits (Refer to clause 8 and 9 below). The recertification activity will be renewed unless the halal certificate is suspended or withdrawn. Certificate owners (certified organization) shall not be required to submit a renewal application for continued certification at the time of renewal.
- 6.6 A Certificate of Conformity is non-transferable.

## 7. Extending The Scope of The Certification and Short Notice Audits

Printed documents are uncontrolled copies. Controlled documents are kept and maintained electronically.

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- 7.1 The client can extend the certification to other types of products made in the same facility to the same General Guidelines and standards for which the certification is already granted.
- 7.2 Likewise, an extension may also be applied to additional types of products made at the same facility, but to different General Guidelines and standards. In this case, a separate application shall be submitted.
- 7.3 If the client wishes to apply for certification to the same product in another factory, the application will be treated independently, and the complete assessment shall be carried out. A separate Certificate shall be issued for such application.
- 7.4 HalalCo may conduct an audit of a client on short notice to investigate complaints or in response to changes or as follow up on suspension. All conditions under which short notice audits are to be conducted shall be communicated to the client in accordance with the requirements of the standards and certification scheme.

**8. Surveillance**

- 8.1 HalalCo shall carry out surveillance visits in accordance with our certification scheme and applicable standards in order to assess the continuing compliance of the food safety management system/Halal assurance management system, and (if applicable) shall take samples of products bearing the mark, either from the manufacturing premises or from the open market for independent testing in accordance with the surveillance plan.
- 8.2 During surveillance visits, HalalCo shall check the client’s compliance with the producer’s internal quality assurance program. HalalCo may require an increase in the frequency of surveillances audits if any non-conformances are issued while assessing the client’s the internal quality assurance program.
- 8.3 Any non-conformance found during the surveillance audit shall be documented and submitted to the client in a non-conformance report. The client shall submit a corrective action plan to the Lead Auditor for all non-conformances identified during the surveillance audit within ten (10) business days from the date of the audit. Evidence of the implementation of the corrective actions shall be submitted to the Lead Auditor not more than forty-five (45) days from acceptance of the proposed action unless there is valid justification for an extended period. Non-compliance with these provisions may result in the cancellation of the application.
- 8.4 In addition to the surveillance visits, HalalCo may carry out special inspections/audits at any time and in any place in order to verify whether the products conform to the requirements of the standard. If non-conformities are found during such special surveillance visits, a non-conformity report shall be issued to the client and the cost of testing and inspection shall be charged against them.

**9. Recertification**

- 9.1 Certified clients must notify HalalCo if they intend to renew their certification; Renewal shall be based on the following:

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- The certified client continues to comply with the requirements of the General Rules, and applicable standards, as evidenced by the results of the surveillance visits;
- The certified client has paid the renewal and other applicable fees.

9.2 Recertification audit shall be carried out in the third year of certification prior to the expiration of certification during renewal of the three years-certificate. The objective of recertification audits is to evaluate the continued fulfillment of all of the requirements of HalalCo's certification rules and requirements. It shall include, but is not limited to the review of previous surveillance audit reports during the certification cycle.

9.3 The recertification audit shall include an on-site audit (Refer to clause 5.3) that addresses the effectiveness and improvements of the management system. Clause 8.3 to be followed for any non-conformance found during recertification audit.

9.4 The decision on renewing certification is subject to satisfactory results of the recertification audit, as well as the results of the review of the system over the period of certification and complaints, if any, received from users of certification.

9.5 In situations where major changes in the management system of the certified client, recertification may need to have a stage 1 audit.

#### 10. Use Of HalalCo's Conformity Mark

10.1 Upon obtaining the certification, the client is granted the right to use the HalalCo Conformity Mark on the products covered by the scope of certification, in accordance with the approved product-marking proposal. If there are requirements related to the mark in HalalCo's procedures, these requirements shall be satisfied.

10.2 The client may use the mark in advertisements and on stationery together with the logo or the name of the client establishment, provided that it is not used in such manner that HalalCo may consider as misleading.

10.3 The client shall comply with the guidelines for the use of the Mark as per P-UCMC and any other guidelines that may be issued for specific products.


#### 11. Publicity For Certified Products

11.1 HalalCo shall, within its power, take the necessary action to market and promote the HalalCo Third Party Halal Conformity Certification System through any means available.

11.2 The client has the right to publish and advertise that he has been granted the Certificate of Conformity and use of the HalalCo Conformity Mark for products covered by the certification. The client shall take care that the publications and advertisements does not create any confusions between certified and non-certified products.

#### 12. Suspension, Withdrawal, Termination and Reducing the Scope of Certification

12.1 A certification may be suspended, terminated, or withdrawn under the conditions specified in the procedure for suspension, termination and withdrawal of Certification, P-SRWC.

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12.2 When the client has persistently or seriously failed to comply with HalalCo rules and certification's requirements for any parts of the scope of certification the client's scope shall be reduced to exclude those parts subject to the decision and approval of the Decision Committee.

12.3 The certified client has the right to voluntarily request a suspension, HalalCo shall review the request and take the necessary actions accordingly, the voluntary suspension can be lifted upon mutual agreement between the client and HalalCo.

12.4 Similarly, the client may opt to voluntarily withdraw the certification at any time during the validity of the certificate; the conditions for termination of certificate as per FC-WoC shall be applied accordingly.

### 13. Revision of Rules and Standards

13.1 HalalCo has the right to change these General Guidelines and any guidelines in our certification scheme. The client shall regularly check the HalalCo web page for announcements and instructions related to their certification and shall ensure that only the latest versions of the relevant certification documents are used and implemented.

13.2 If the applicable standards or normative documents are revised or replaced such that the compliance of the product is affected, the certification will be renewed only if the client agrees to fulfill the requirements of the new standard or normative documents. HalalCo shall issue the procedures, the transition schedule, and other instructions for the implementation of the revised or replaced documents.

13.3 If the revision(s) on the standard or normative document do not affect the compliance of the product with the requirements, the Certificate of Conformity will be automatically updated to the new standard at the time of renewal.

### 14. Fees

14.1 The client shall pay the necessary fees in accordance with HalalCo's fee structure.

14.2 HalalCo has the right to invoice for any additional work related to repeated or additional testing and/or auditing due to non-compliance found during regular assessment.

14.3 HalalCo reserves the right to amend the Schedule of Fees if necessary. The amended fees shall be published in the DCL webpage


14.4 Paid fees are non-refundable.

### 15. Appeals

15.1 The client may appeal any decision by HalalCo in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Procedure, P-CAPA

### 16. Liability/Disclaimer

16.1 HalalCo shall not be held liable for any action (legal or otherwise) raised by any party against the client on matters resulting from the implementation of HalalCo's Third Party Certification System.

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16.2 The client is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the product meets the requirements of other applicable regulations that were not assessed during the certification process. This includes safety, health, and environmental regulations that are not necessarily covered by the standard or the normative document referred to in the Specific Rules.