

**Any Update to this Document is Posted on the [AIB International website](#).**

1. These rules define the general terms and conditions that clients (this also includes applicants/suppliers as referred to in some Standards and Codes) must adhere to, which are the requirements of the certification schemes (such as BRCGS, SQF, FSSC, IFS, PPC, RSPO) operated by AIB International Certification Services, Inc., a wholly owned and legally separate subsidiary of AIB International (hereafter AIBI-CS or CB). These rules include the granting, maintaining, extending, suspending and withdrawing certification.
2. AIBI-CS certificates may be granted, suspended or withdrawn by AIBI-CS acting through the General Manager, Certification Managers (CM) or other CB Management staff.
3. Evaluation (audit) reports will be inspected according to the relevant procedures (governed by the scheme rules/procedures and/or Standard or Code protocols) and certificates will only be awarded to those clients that conform to the Standards or Codes under these schemes. This award will also be subject to clients complying with these rules that will be periodically updated and reviewed as necessary.
4. Clients shall:
  - 4.1 Comply with these rules and updates at all times.
  - 4.2 Comply with the requirements of the Standards or Codes.
  - 4.3 Notify the CB ([certification@aibinternational.com](mailto:certification@aibinternational.com)) anytime there is a regulatory issue related to product safety or legality.
  - 4.4 Fulfill the certification requirements including implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by the CB.
    - 4.4.1 Certification Requirements include:
      - Completing the certification agreement;
      - Paying fees;
      - Providing information about changes to the certified product;
      - Providing access to certified products for surveillance activities.
    - 4.5 Inform AIBI-CS ([Certification@aibinternational.com](mailto:Certification@aibinternational.com)) as soon as possible of any changes in the operation that may affect certification conditions or conformance to the Certified Standard or Code.
      - 4.5.1 This may include, but is not limited, to changes relating to:
        - the legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership,

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- organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff),
  - contact address and sites,
  - scope of operations under the certified management system, and
  - major changes to the management system and processes
  - For PPC only, pandemic outbreaks within a certified facility/office
- 4.5.2 Upon receiving notification, the information will be forwarded to the Certification Manager, who will evaluate the potential risk and determine the course of action, which could range from no action needed to a follow-up audit.
- 4.6 Inform AIBI-CS of any changes or addition to the scope of certification. AIBI-CS will in turn decide if a site visit/audit or other action is needed. Similarly, AIBI-CS will decide if a site visit/ audit or other action is needed when the CB receives a complaint about the site or learns of a recall that the site is involved in.
- 4.6.1 For RSPO – AIBI-CS retain the right to conduct any such site visit/audit unannounced in response to a complaint
- 4.7 Maintain sufficient records to demonstrate continuous conformance to the specified requirements for the Certified Standard or Code and regulations for the country. These records must be legible, readily accessible and be available to AIBI-CS or its subcontractors on demand.
- 4.8 Keep records of any complaints made relating to conformance to the Certified Standard or Code and AIBI-CS certification. Documented evidence of actions following these types of complaints shall also be held. These records must be available to AIBI-CS, the scheme owner or its subcontractors on demand.
- 4.9 Make all necessary arrangements for the conducting of audits/evaluations, be they announced or unannounced and allow access for AIBI-CS or its subcontractors to all the necessary documents, areas and personnel to allow them to determine that the specified requirements of the Standards or Codes are being met.
- 4.10 Must allow for additional observers during audits/ evaluations. From time to time, auditors will be accompanied for the purposes of training and assessment; sites must allow this as a condition of certification. The scheme owner also reserves the right to conduct its own audit of a site and contact the site directly.
- 4.11 Must allow the accreditation body to conduct witness assessments (including via remote means), compliance assessments, unannounced assessments, or any other special short notice assessments.

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- 4.12 Have a designated manager and one or more deputies (for times of absence) who shall be responsible for all matters in connection with the requirements of the Standard or Code under which the client is certified.
  - 4.13 Correct any non-conformances identified during the audit/evaluation audits within the specified time scale as defined in the Standard or Code.
  - 4.14 Ensure that if copies of the certification documents are provided to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety or as specified by the certification scheme.
  - 4.15 Agree to comply with the requirements of the CB or as specified by the certification scheme when making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising.
  - 4.16 Understand the rights and duties as clients and comply with each stage of the certification program.
  - 4.17 Ensure that they are working with the most up-to-date Standard or Code that the audit is being carried out against.
  - 4.18 Comply with the AIBI-CS quality system as defined in various documents.
- 5. Clients must comply with the certification scheme relating to the use of their marks of conformity and on information related to the product.
  - 6. AIBI-CS does not allow the use of the AIB International Logo.
  - 7. If AIBI-CS becomes aware of the use of the logo or inaccurate and misleading statements about the status, AIBI-CS reserves the right to instruct the company or sole trader concerned to cease using the logo and / or to withdraw / correct any misleading statements.
  - 8. A client must not make misleading claims about the scope of its certification. In particular, it must:
    - 8.1 Use the Mark of Certification only in respect of products that are subject to the certificate at the address stated in the certificate, and in accordance with the conditions for their use.
    - 8.2 Not deliver or knowingly permit the delivery or sale of product that is outside the scope of the certificate but falsely described as having been produced in accordance with the scope of the Standard or Code.
      - 8.2.1 For PPC – any activities or incidents that bring into doubt the organization’s ability to manage and be prepared for a pandemic.
    - 8.3 Upon the suspension, withdrawal or termination of the certification discontinue use of the Mark of Certification and any other material(s) that make any reference and not represent itself as holding certification. In the case of certificate suspension, withdrawal or termination, return the certificate to AIBI-

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CS and for SQF or IFS certification the electronic copy of the Trade Mark or logo where held.

- 8.4 Amend all advertising matter when the scope of certification has been reduced, altered or changed.
- 9. The client shall not conduct operations in a manner that may affect the confidence of buyers and consumers in the integrity and reliability of AIBI-CS as a certification body.
- 10. AIBI-CS shall:
  - 10.1 Ensure that its organization gives confidence in its certification activities and have adequate arrangements to cover liabilities arising from its operations and/or activities.
  - 10.2 Shall maintain its relevant accreditation and licenses pertaining to the services offered to certified organisations. In the event of any change to accreditation or licenses AIBI-CS shall inform certified organisations and/or interested parties in a timely manner or by timelines set by the relevant Scheme owner.
  - 10.3 Ensure that any auditor who carries out an audit/evaluation of the specified premises of the client does so in accordance with the Standard or Code and AIBI-CS certification rules. The aim of the audit/evaluation is to ensure compliance to the Standard or Code.
  - 10.4 Have documented procedures that cover initial assessment of a client's system, initial certification audits and subsequent surveillance and reassessment audits according to the scheme or standard rules.
  - 10.5 Shall confine its requirements, evaluation, review, decision and surveillance (if any) to those matters specifically related to the scope of certification.
  - 10.6 Notify all clients (as well as internal staff and external contractors) of changes to scheme requirements, governed or generated by the scheme/standard owner, accreditation body or AIBI-CS operations that affect the scheme. These changes will be communicated and verified per scheme owner's implementation requirements.
  - 10.7 Respond to notifications by clients or other stakeholders. In the event AIBI-CS is made aware of significant change which could affect the safety of product, changes to the requirement of the certification scheme standard, change of ownership or management of the supplier or the certification has reason to believe there could be compliance issues in relation to certification, AIBI-CS will re-evaluate the supplier(s) to assess compliance with the certification scheme standard. AIBI-CS will also notify to the scheme owner in a timely manner of these events.
  - 10.8 Be responsible for the management of all information obtained or created during the performance of certification activities. Except for information that the client makes publicly available, or when agreed between the CB and the client, all other information is considered proprietary information and shall be regarded as

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confidential. The CB shall inform the client, in advance, of the information it intends to place in the public domain.

- 10.8.1 For RSPO – shall make any declarations of conflict of interest prior to conducting the audit
  - 10.8.2 For RSPO – the following information shall be made publicly available by AIBI-CS and/or the RSPO Secretariat upon request (and made available on the applicable website),
    - RSPO Supply Chain Certificate
    - For Independent mill, the RSPO audit report
    - Procedures of the AIBI-CS for complaints and grievances and appeals, including resolution mechanisms
    - The list of certified organisations, which includes details of the scope of each certificate, i.e. which sites and/or processes are approved (RSPO Secretariat).
  - 10.9 When the CB is required by law or authorized by contractual arrangements to release confidential information, the client or person concerned shall, unless prohibited by law, be notified of the information provided.
  - 10.10 Upon request, release information that is a normal part of the certification activity to the Scheme Holder and/or Accreditation Body.
    - 10.10.1 For RSPO this includes the right of AIBI-CS and the Accreditation Body's representatives to access the certificate holders' premises, as well as documents and records deemed necessary by AIBI-CS or its associated Accreditation Body;
  - 10.11 Notify clients of any complaints received relating to certification.
  - 10.12 Treat information about the client obtained from sources other than the client as confidential.
  - 10.13 Notify client in advance of any information it intends to place in the public domain.
11. If a client fails to comply with these rules, as amended from time to time, AIBI-CS may, subject to the appeals provisions:
- 11.1 Withdraw or suspend the certificate; or
  - 11.2 Refuse to grant or renew the certificate.
- Such decisions and the grounds for them shall be communicated to the client in writing.
12. Clients may appeal against a decision to deny, withdraw or suspend certification in accordance with AIBI-CS appeals procedure. Upon receipt of this notice to appeal, AIBI-CS will ensure that an independent person will carry out a full investigation. The outcome of the appeal will determine the certification status. If the appeal is unsuccessful, AIBI-CS may

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charge for the time and expenses spent to process the appeal.

13. AIBI-CS will make available on request its appeals and/or complaints procedure.
14. If significant changes are made to these rules by AIBI-CS they will inform the client in writing with the date of enforcement of the new rules, to allow sufficient time to make any necessary alterations, allowing them to use the Mark of Certification, or to claim conformance to the relevant Standard or Code.
15. A register of suppliers (certified clients) shall be held by AIBI-CS. These registers will be made available upon request.
16. If the evaluator or client feels that the audit has been compromised in any way, they can report the concern using the confidential hotline. This is available by visiting the [AIB International website](#). The Confidential Reporting hotline link is the available at the bottom of each page.

#### **CANCELLATION AND REFUSED ENTRY POLICY**

- **Cancellations, including postponements, must be communicated by fax or e-mail. Until you receive a response to the fax or e-mail from AIB International, the cancellation is not complete.**
- A request to cancel or change confirmed or unannounced events including dates, location or activity within 21 calendar days will result in a charge for the lost time and any expenses already incurred, unless the request is a result of force majeure (disaster or catastrophe).
- If the auditor arrives at the audit site for an announced or unannounced audit and is not allowed to enter the site and carry out the audit, or cannot complete the audit as there is no product within scope being produced during the audit, this shall be documented as refused entry. In the event of refused entry, the client will be billed at the current full daily rate for the audit days, as well as any associated and non-reimbursable costs incurred, such as non-refundable tickets, penalties for redoing airline tickets, rental car and hotel reservations, etc.

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