



710 Striker Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95834

Terms of Certification – SQF

I. Certificate of Registration Use and Ownership

A. Terms of Use

1. The Certificate of Registration is valid for 12 months from the date the certification decision was made.
2. Certificates are issued for the following grades:
 - a. E – Excellent (Recertification required in 12 months)
 - b. G – Good (Recertification required in 12 months)
 - c. C – Complies (Surveillance audit required in 6 months)

B. Ownership

1. The certificate remains the property of Safe Food Certifications and may not be altered in any way.
2. The certificate may be revoked according to terms for suspension and withdrawal and must be returned to Safe Food Certifications upon request.

II. SQF Logo and Quality Shield Use

A. SQF Logo

1. Terms of Use

- a. Site use of the SQF logo is granted upon successfully completing the SQF Food Safety Certification.
- b. The SQF logo can be used on:
 - Brochures, advertisements, press releases, company website, and
 - Internal documents and training materials.
- c. Site use of the SQF logo must be consistent with Certificate of Registration.
 - (1) The SQF logo must not be used on products not included in scope of certification.
 - (2) The SQF logo must not be used on products from subsidiary companies or facility addresses not included on Certificate of Registration.
- d. Site must make available product, packaging, stationary, or any other material bearing the SQF logo to Safe Food Certifications



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or SQFI upon request to determine compliance with the “SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use”.

- e. Site must use the SQF logo in accordance with “Appendix-3 (SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing, Edition 9.0)

2. Ownership

- a. The SQF logo is the property of SQFI and must be used in accordance with the terms of “Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use” as defined in SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing, Ed. 9.0.

B. SQF Quality Shield

1. Terms of Use

a. Site use of the SQF Quality Shield is granted upon successful completion of SQF Quality Code certification while the site remains certified to the SQF Food Safety Code, i.e., SQF Quality Shield can only be used during the currency of the site’s certification to the SQF Food Safety Code.

b. SQF Quality Shield can be used on as defined in Appendix 5 – SQF Quality Code, Ed. 9.0:

- i. Brochures, advertisements, press releases, company website and /or;
- ii. Stationary including business cards and letterheads, signage, flags and vehicle associated with SQF certified services such as transport or delivery;
- iii. Goods or products for public display, (when product is presented for promotional or retail purposes) for example,
 - As a sticker or other label affixed to the goods or products; or
 - A product wrap.
- iv. Non-recyclable packaging or containers for goods or products intended for retail display e.g., boxes, crates or the like.

c. Site use of the SQF Quality shield must be consistent with Certificate of Registration.



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- (1) The quality shield must not be used on products not included in scope of certification.
 - (2) The quality shield must not be used on products from subsidiary companies or facility addresses not included on Certificate of Registration.
 - d. Site must give to SQFI or Safe Food Certifications access to examine the goods, products, wraps, packaging, containers, stationary, publicity material and all other such items bearing or indicating the SQF Quality Shield for the purpose of conforming compliance with the “SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use”.
 - e. Site must use the SQF Quality Shield in accordance with the terms defined in Appendix 5 (SQF Quality Code, Edition 8)
2. Ownership
- a. The SQF Quality shield is the property of SQFI and must be used in accordance with the terms of “Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use” of the most FMI published version SQF Code.
- C. Safe Food Certifications Certification Logo
1. Terms of Use
 - a. Site use of the Safe Food Certifications logo, the property of Safe Food Certifications, on stationery and Marketing materials must comply to:
 - (1) The Safe Food Certifications logo must not be used on products not included in scope of certification; and
 - (2) The Safe Food Certifications logo must not be used on products from subsidiary companies or facility addresses not included on Certificate of Registration.
- III. Conditions for Suspension and Withdrawal of Certification
- A. Suspension
1. Conditions for suspension include the following:
 - a. Site receives an “F – fails to comply” rating.
 - b. Site refuses entry to the SQF food safety auditor for an unannounced audit.



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- c. Fails to permit the re-certification of surveillance audit within specified timeframe upon notification by Safe Food Certifications
- d. Fails to permit an unannounced audit
- e. Site's food safety and/or quality system persistently or seriously fails to meet certification program requirements.
- f. Fails to take corrective action within the required timeframe (within 30 days) or corrective actions deemed unacceptable; and

2. Site notification and terms of suspension include:

- a. Safe Food Certifications shall notify the site of suspension in writing including reason for action and effective date.
- b. Safe Food Certifications shall notify SQFI (compliance Manager) of Site suspension.
- c. Site shall not use, refer to, or warrant as holding a SQF Certificate of Registration during the term of suspension and requesting an acknowledgement of notice with 48 hours.
- d. Site shall not use, distribute, or sell any goods, products, packaging, stationary, or other items which bear reference to the SQF Certificate of Registration, SQF Logo, or SQF Quality Shield.

3. Conditions to remove suspension include the following:

- a. Site shall provide a written, detailed corrective action plan outlining corrective action to be taken within 48 hours of receiving notice of suspension.
- b. Safe Food Certifications shall conduct an on-site audit to verify implementation of corrective actions within 30 days of receiving corrective action response.
- c. Safe Food Certifications shall conduct a re-audit of Site's facility within 6 months of suspension to evaluate Site's food safety and/or quality system against program requirements.
- d. Safe Food Certifications shall remove suspension and notify SQFI upon successful implementation of corrective actions and/or payment of monies owed.

B. Withdrawal

1. Conditions for withdrawal include the following:



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- a. The Site's food safety and/or quality system persistently or seriously fails to meet certification program requirements (score is less than 70)
- b. Site fails to submit approved corrective action plans within the safe Food Certifications defined timeframe, within forty-eight (48) hours when placed under suspension.
- c. Site falsifies records.
- d. Site fails to maintain the integrity of the SQF Certificate.
- e. Site uses the Certificate of Registration, SQF Logo, or SQF Quality Shield while under suspension or uses the SQF Quality Shield not in accordance with the "SQF Quality Shield and Logo – Rules for Use".
- f. Site ceases business activity or files bankruptcy.

2. Site notification and terms of withdrawal include:

- a. Safe Food Certifications shall immediately amend Certificate of Registration details in ReposiTrak (SQFI Audit database) to reflect a "withdrawn" status including reason and effective date.
- b. Safe Food Certifications shall notify Site of certificate withdrawal in writing including reason for action and effective date.
- c. Safe Food certifications to inform SQFI (Compliance Manager) or copy on the notice of withdrawal sent to the site
- d. Site shall return to Safe Food Certifications the SQF Certificate of Registration and electronic copy of SQF Logo or SQF Quality Shield within thirty (30) days of notification
- e. Site shall no longer use, distribute, or sell any goods, products, packaging, stationary, or other items which bear reference to the SQF Certificate of Registration, SQF Logo, or SQF Quality Shield.
- f. When site's certificate is withdrawn, the site will not be permitted to apply for certification for twelve (12) months from the date of certificate withdrawal

C. Disposal of prior or obsolete certificates

1. After receiving a new certificate that would have an expiration date of one year from the anniversary date of first audit plus 75 days, discard the old certificate and related documents.

IV. Change of Certification Body



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A. When a Site changes Certification Bodies (CB), the certificate of registration issued by the former CB remains valid until the documented certification window and/or certificate expiration date (a prior approval for an extension of audit window from SQFI can be obtained in case of a likelihood of exceeding the mandatory certification window for next recertification audit). The certification number and re-certification date are transferred with the Site to the new CB.

B. Transfer Procedure of Sites certification from one Certification Body (CB) to another CB:

1. Safe Food Certifications is to undertake a pre-transfer review of the Site's certification to:
 - a. Confirm the Certificate of Registration is current, valid and relates to SQF system.
 - b. Confirm the Site's FSC (Food Sector Category) falls within the scope of accreditation.
 - c. Confirm any complaints received are addressed.
 - d. Review the Site's audit history (if possible) and the impact of any outstanding non-conformities; and
 - e. Conform the stage of the current certification cycle.
2. Certificates with outstanding Critical and Major Non-conformities that have not been closed out, or Certificates known to have been suspended or withdrawn or under threat of suspension or withdrawal shall not be accepted for transfer until they are closed out to the satisfaction of the former CB.
3. Where the decision is made to proceed with Certification, Safe Food Certifications shall:
 - a. Conduct the required audit (Recertification or Surveillance) consistent with the SQF Code/ program audit frequency and certification requirement.
 - b. Issue a new Certificate of Registration under Safe Food Certifications Certification that includes the name of Safe Food Certifications; and



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- c. Ensure the Site retains its assigned unique Certification number for Quality Shield, i.e., the previous Certification number issued by another CB.

REFERENCE - LIST OF SQF STANDARDS

1. Criteria for SQF Food Safety Auditors and Technical Reviewers, Edition 9.2 (March 2021)
2. SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing 9.0. Effective from May 24, 2021
3. SQF Quality Code, Edition 9.0. Effective from May 24, 2021