

Informative Guide

INTRODUCTION:

This document provides a comprehensive guidance to the applicant and / or certified client to know Credenza Certs India Pvt Ltd (CC IPL) policies and certification process.

LEGAL STATUS:

CC IPL is a legally established organization per details below:

CIN	U71200PN2025PTC241468
PAN	AAMCC6904G
TAN	PNEC20675E
GST	27AAMCC6904G1ZJ

CC IPL is legally responsible for all audit and certification services conducted by CC IPL.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

CC IPL will maintain complete confidentiality regarding all information with which it becomes acquainted as a result of contact with the client organization.

GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR CERTIFICATION:

- The applicant shall make available to the audit team all information required to establish the status of the management system.
- CC IPL approves the certification as per the applicant defined scope only if the applicant's documented management system conforms to applicable standard/s.
- The approval is also subject to, that there is no major discrepancy arising out of the audit and/or suitable corrective action has been applied and evidenced.
- Where the applicant cannot show that effective corrective action has occurred within the specified time limit, it may be necessary for CC IPL to conduct a further additional audit of the management system. The additional audit will be at extra cost to the applicant.
- In case of multi-site audits and subject to successful verification of compliance, a certificate clearly defining the activities and locations will be issued. The applicant shall not claim or otherwise imply that the certification applies to other locations or activities not covered by the issued certificate.
- Certification will be valid for a period of three years w.e.f. the date of approval, on a condition that the surveillance audits are conducted as per the planned interval and reveal no deterioration in the management system, and the client does not breach the terms and conditions mentioned in the **Certification Agreement**.

STEPS IN CERTIFICATION PROCESS:

Application for registration -

The applicant is required to submit a duly filled **Application Form** in CC IPL's format to CC IPL.

CC IPL accepts the **Application Form** based on the positive application review output and ability to conduct audit and certification activity with compliance to review output.

The audit and certification service may be declined by CC IPL for one or more of the following reasons:

- Non-availability of accredited scope.
- Non-availability of audit personnel with approval of specific technical area.
- Non-availability of audit personnel to conduct audit in a specific geographical location.
- Failure to establish legality of the business activity provided by the potential client.
- Any other adverse market information which does not allow audit and certification activity to happen.
- Any reason identified by CC IPL as an unavoidable threat to impartiality / bias.

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In such case, the applicant organization is formally informed with reasons through email about CCIPL decision to decline the application.

In case of acceptance, the potential client is formally informed regarding the acceptance of the **Application**, and **Quotation** is submitted to the client. A **Certification Agreement** and **Informative Guide** are enclosed along with the **Quotation**.

Once duly signed and stamped Certification Agreement is received along with the application fee, a File / Registration Number will be allotted. Our Client Representative will liaise with applicant organization from the application stage to certification stage. Initial certification takes place in two stages.

Stage 1 audit (initial certification) –

The objectives of stage 1 are to:

- a) Review the client’s management system documented information.
- b) Evaluate the client’s site-specific conditions and to undertake discussions with the client’s personnel to determine the preparedness for stage 2.
- c) Review the client’s status and understanding regarding requirements of the standard, in particular with respect to the identification of key performance or significant aspects, processes, objectives and operation of the management system.
- d) Obtain necessary information regarding the scope of the management system, including:
 - the client’s sites.
 - processes and equipment used.
 - levels of controls established (particularly in case of multisite clients).
 - applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.
- e) Review the allocation of resources for stage 2 and agree the details of stage 2 with the client.
- f) Provide a focus for planning stage 2 by gaining a sufficient understanding of the client’s management system and site operations in the context of the management system standard or other normative document.
- g) Evaluate if the internal audits and management reviews are being planned and performed, and that the level of implementation of the management system substantiates that the client is ready for stage 2.

Stage 2 audit (initial certification) –

The purpose of stage 2 is to evaluate the implementation, including effectiveness, of the client’s management system. The stage 2 shall take place at the site(s) of the client. It shall include the auditing of at least the following:

- a) Information and evidence about conformity to all requirements of the applicable management system standard or other normative documents.
- b) Performance monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing against key performance objectives and targets (consistent with the expectations in the applicable management system standard or other normative document).
- c) The client’s management system ability and its performance regarding meeting of applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements.
- d) Operational control of the client’s processes.
- e) Internal auditing and management review.
- f) Management responsibility for the client’s policies.

The gap between Stage 1 and Stage 2 audit should not exceed 90 days. On Lapse of 90 days Stage 1 audit is re-conducted at the extra cost.

Corrective action request -

If a non-conformance is detected during the audit, a corrective action request (CAR) will be issued and a corrective action process will commence. The client is responsible to submit formal corrective action plan to resolve the non-conformity within a stipulated time period. These Corrective action plans and related evidence

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are verified by the lead auditor to decide on the closure of non-conformity. In case of major non-conformity, evidence of corrective action implementation needs to be submitted for the closure of the audit conclusions.

Certification Decision -

CC IPL ensures that information prior to making a certification is sufficient to carry out certification decision. The information is provided by the audit team leader (Lead Auditor) to the Report Review and Certification Decision authority for verification and upon approval, subsequent decision for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification is taken, as appropriate.

Refusal to certification -

The certification may be refused under following conditions:

- Non fulfilment of the requirements of the standard applied for.
- Failure to submit corrective actions for non-conformities (major / minor) in stipulated time-period.
- Where the applicant cannot show that effective corrective action has occurred within the specified time limit, it may be necessary for CC IPL to conduct a further additional audit of the management system.
- Nonpayment of financial dues after the conduct of audit activities.

Surveillance (maintaining certification) -

As a part of Surveillance activities, periodic surveillance audits will be carried out to ensure that the management system is not only being maintained but is being reviewed and developed further to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the business processes. These audits are conducted at mutually agreed intervals (not exceeding 12 months). Surveillance audits will always cover certain key elements crucial to the success of your business. These would include internal audits, management reviews, continuing operational control and corrective actions. Client's customer complaints data would also be examined to see how quickly and effectively client deal and resolve customer complaints.

Other aspects of the management system will be covered selectively, over the period of certification (three years), depending on their importance in the scope of certification.

CC IPL shall be granted the right of access for surveillance purposes whenever deemed necessary and shall reserve the right to make short notice visits as required.

A written communication / audit report will provide the client with feedback regarding the results of the audit.

Renewal -

Every three years of certification, client will be subjected to another comprehensive audit similar to that of the initial audit. This will ensure that the entire management system is cohesive and continues to effectively comply with your selected certification standard. A fresh **Application Form** may be invited from the client to note down the changes in the products / processes / manpower etc. which may affect the certification process.

EXTENSION OF SCOPE / CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

To extend the scope of registration to cover additional products, processes or services, a fresh **Application Form** needs to be submitted by the client. The application procedure previously outlined will be followed and an audit will be carried out on those areas not previously covered. The cost of extending the scope of registration will be based on the nature and programme of work. Following a successful audit, an amended certificate of registration will be issued covering the aspects. The validity of the certificate remains the same as granted during the initial certification.

The certificate is issued to cover the place where the audit was conducted. If client intends a change in address or addition of sites, the client informs CC IPL and a similar process as indicated above is carried out. Temporary site covered during the audit will not appear on the Certificate.

The client shall inform CC IPL of any intended modification to the product, process or management system that may affect compliance with the relevant part of international standard. CC IPL will then determine whether the notified changes require additional audit.

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Failure to notify CCIPL may result in suspension of the Certificate.

PUBLICITY BY CERTIFICATE HOLDERS:

A certificate holder has the right to publish that the management system has been successfully audited and certified.

CCIPL Certification Mark (logo)

An organization whose management system has been certified by CCIPL may use the “CCIPL Certification Mark (logo)” on stationery, promotional and corporate publications relating to the scope of certification.

In every case, the client must ensure that in its publications and advertising, there is no misleading information or confusion arising between granted and published scope.

The client must ensure that the Certification Mark affixed does not indicate product certification or conformity.

MISUSE OF A CERTIFICATE:

CCIPL takes reasonable precautions to control the use of its certificates. Incorrect references to certification, or misleading use of certificates found in advertisements, catalogues, etc., will be dealt with by suitable actions which could include suspension or withdrawal of certificate, legal action and / or public notice.

SUSPENSION OF A CERTIFICATE:

A Certificate may be suspended for a limited period (not exceeding three months) in following cases:

- a) If Corrective Action Requests are not closed within the designated time limit.
- b) If a case of improper use of the certificate or misleading prints or advertising, is not solved by suitable interactions or other appropriate remedial measures by the Client.
- c) Surveillance audits are not conducted / concluded as planned.
- d) Client fails to comply with due settlement of financial obligation to CCIPL.
- e) Client applies for voluntary suspension.

The client shall not identify itself as certified, under a suspended certificate.

An official suspension of a certificate will be confirmed in writing (email) by CCIPL to the client. The conditions under which the suspension will be removed will also be included.

On fulfilment of the conditions for reinstating the certificate, the suspension shall be lifted, and the client shall be notified of the certificate reinstatement. If the conditions are not fulfilled, the certificate will be withdrawn at the end of the suspension period.

All costs incurred by CCIPL in suspending and reinstating the certificate will be charged to the client.

WITHDRAWAL OF A CERTIFICATE:

A Certificate may be withdrawn in the following cases:

- a) If adequate measures are not taken by the client in the case of suspension.
- b) If the client fails to comply with the due settlement of its financial obligation.
- c) Client does not wish to continue / renew the certificate and provides a voluntary request for Certificate withdrawal.

If either of the above applies, CCIPL has the right to withdraw the certificate and will inform the client (email) accordingly.

In such case, no refund of audit fees will be given. Withdrawal of a certificate may be published by CCIPL.

FEES:

Fees will be mentioned in the quotation submitted to applicant. As costs are based on the rate applicable at the time of submitting a proposal, CCIPL reserves the right to increase charges during the certification period. Clients will be notified of any increase in fees and approval will be obtained in writing.

Additional fees shall be charged for all additional work that is not included in the agreed proposal and for extra, unscheduled surveillance audits required due to non-compliances being identified in the management system.

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This will include, but is not restricted to, the costs resulting from:

- a) Repeats of all, or any part, of the audit program due to the initial registration requirements not being met.
- b) Additional work due to suspension, withdrawal and / or reinstatement of a certificate.
- c) Additional audit / special audit due to any changes in the management system.
- d) Issuance of revised certificate due to changes in the contents such as name, address, scope of the Client organization.

Special Condition: In case the accreditation of CCIPL is cancelled or CCIPL decides to discontinue certification activity, then only certificate fee (as applicable) shall be refundable on the remaining period of certification validity i.e. on pro rata basis.

APPEALS:

CC IPL applicant and/or certified client can appeal against following aspects:

- a. Audit recommendation or certification decision.
- b. Notifications for suspension or withdrawal.

An appeal should reach CCIPL in writing (email) with identification of the sender. The e-mail goes to CCIPL Director Operations who in turn deals with the appeal. The receipt of the appeal is acknowledged to the client in writing, and appellant is regularly provided (email) with progress reports and outcome.

It is ensured that the person/s engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions or been involved in the subject of appeal. And as such if Director Operations was involved as an auditor or certification decision maker in the case against which the appeal has been made, then the appeal is forwarded to the Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality (CFSI) chairperson and appellant is informed about this.

Submission, investigation and decision on appeals do not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

Effectiveness of these actions is reviewed by Director Operations or the CFSI Chairperson, as responsible to deal with specific appeal. The decision taken by Director Operations or CFSI Chairperson is binding on CCIPL to take suitable actions.

CC IPL gives a formal notice (email) to the appellant at the end of the appeals-handling process and the relevant records are maintained. The feedback is invited from the appellant / concerned client.

Once the appeal has been resolved by CCIPL Director Operations and/or CFSI Chairperson, then no counter claim by either party in dispute can be made to amend or change the decision.

In instances where the appeal has been successful and the certificate reinstated, no claim can be made against CCIPL for reimbursement of costs or any losses incurred as a result of the initial withdrawal notification.

Contact e-mail id of CCIPL Director Operations – credenzacerts@gmail.com

Contact e-mail id of CCIPL CFSI Chairperson – cfsi.credenza@gmail.com

COMPLAINTS:

A complaint should reach CCIPL in writing (email) with identification of the sender.

The complaints can be made by the client expressing dissatisfaction over CCIPL decision related to certification i.e. granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification or any other unacceptable situation arising out of CCIPL activities with the client and a response is expected.

The e-mail goes to Director Operations who in turn deals with the complaint.

This process is subjected to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint.

CC IPL gathers and verifies all necessary information to validate the complaint and acknowledge receipt of the complaint and provides the complainant (email) with progress reports and the outcome.

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It is ensured that the person engaged in the complaint handling process is different from the one involved in the subject of complaint. If Director Operations was involved as an auditor or certification decision maker in the case against which the complaint has been made, then the complaint is forwarded to CFSI chairperson and complainant is informed about this.

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints do not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.

Effectiveness of these actions is reviewed by Director Operations or the CFSI Chairperson, as responsible to deal with specific complaint. The decision taken by Director Operations or CFSI Chairperson is binding on CCIPL to take suitable actions.

CC IPL gives a formal notice to the complainant (email) at the end of the complaint handling process and the relevant records are maintained. Feedback is sought from the complainant / concerned client.

In another case, a complaint can be raised by an Interested Party against CCIPL certified Client. An interested party is generally the one who has business interest with CCIPL certified Client.

A complaint should reach CCIPL in writing (email) with identification of the sender.

This process is subjected to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint.

Upon receipt of a complaint from such an interested party, CCIPL confirms whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for, and if so, takes necessary correction and corrective actions. If the complaint relates to a certified Client, then examination of the complaint is done by a short notice audit at client's end and based on the audit outcome, necessary correction and corrective actions are taken.

Any valid complaint about a certified Client shall also be referred by CCIPL to the certified Client in question at an appropriate time.

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints do not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.

The complaint from an interested party is dealt by Director Operations. In case, the interested party (complainant) does not accept the outcome reported by Director Operations then the interested party (complainant) has the right to raise the matter with CFSI chairperson.

CC IPL gives a formal notice (email) to the complainant at the end of the complaint handling process and the relevant records are maintained. Feedback is sought from the complainant / concerned Client.

CC IPL determines together with the Client and the complainant that to what an extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution is to be made public.

Once the complaint has been resolved by CCIPL Director Operations and/or CCIPL / CFSI Chairperson, then no counter claim by either party in dispute can be made to amend or change the decision.

In instances where the complaint has been resolved in favour of the complainant, no claim can be made against CCIPL for reimbursement of costs or any losses incurred as a result of the initial problems faced by the complainant.

Contact e-mail id of CCIPL Director Operations – credenzacerts@gmail.com

Contact e-mail id of CCIPL CFSI Chairperson – cfsi.credenza@gmail.com

NOTICE OF CHANGES BY A CERTIFIED CLIENT:

CC IPL shall have legally enforceable arrangements to ensure that the certified client informs the certification body, without delay, of matters that may affect the capability of the management system to continue to fulfil the requirements of the standard used for certification. These include, for example, changes relating to:

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- a) The legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership.
- b) Organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff).
- c) Contact address and sites.
- d) Scope of operations under the certified management system.
- e) Major changes to the management system and processes.

CCIPL shall take action as appropriate.

NOTICE OF CHANGES BY CCIPL:

CCIPL shall give its certified clients due notice of any changes to its requirements for certification. CCIPL shall verify that each certified client complies with the new requirements.

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