

General Circular

General Circular 12/2020

Changes to the Third Party Auditor renewal process under the *Food Act 2003*

An important update from the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) for Third Party Auditors (TPA) in NSW.

What is changing?

Changes to existing renewal requirements for TPAs authorised to conduct food safety audits at licenced facilities.

NSW DPI is actively seeking ways to improve processes and reduce red tape for stakeholders. After reviewing the TPA system's compliance performance and auditing behaviour, there is evidence to justify amending witness audit frequency when an auditor's performance, skills, and knowledge and experience are maintained at or above required levels.

To make the renewal process simpler for TPAs, NSW DPI has removed the mandatory witness audit that was required before renewals could be approved.

Witness audits will only be required if NSW DPI believes there is a need to verify the skills, knowledge and/or competency of auditors or if the auditor voluntarily requests an audit.

In most circumstances, auditors will not require a witness audit and their accreditation as a regulatory Food Safety Auditor with the NSW Food Authority will remain current.

Renewal applications and invoices will be sent to TPAs a minimum of 42 days prior to licence expiry date.

What if you require an exemplar global witness audit?

NSW DPI continues to offer witness audits to TPAs who wish to maintain their Exemplar Global qualification. These witness audits can be arranged with the TPA administrator by emailing bfs.aduditadmin@dpi.nsw.gov.au any time throughout accreditation.

Can I request a witness audit to maintain my skills and knowledge?

Witness audits can be arranged throughout your accreditation to refresh your skills by contacting the TPA administrator. Witness audits are limited to once every 24-months, and subject to availability of auditor and audit facility.

For more information about this circular, including any question or concerns, please email bfs.auditadmin@dpi.nsw.gov.au.