

CERTIFICATION PROCESS WITH HALAL ITALIA

Excerpt from the R1 Certification Regulation

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Company requirements

Any company interested in obtaining halal conformity certification for its products, processes or services must have a document management system (handbook and procedures) in accordance with legal requirements, mandatory regulations and the relevant halal standards for the requested certification scheme and associated regulations.

Sending in the application form

The halal certification application form sets up initial relations between the company in question and Halal Italia. This initial phase is fundamental for:

- analysing the company's needs
- assigning a realistic certification contract and financial offer
- optimising the certification timeframe, also covering subsequent stages in the process

Signing the contract

Halal Italia will offer the company in question a three-year contract while halal certification must be renewed annually. The certification contract contains:

- a financial offer for the products, processes or services to be halal certified
- the costs of potentially extending certification to cover new halal products, processes or services
- the costs of further certificates in addition to the general certificate, such as per batch and export certificates
- a reference to the application form filled in by the company complete with relative attachments
- a mention of the appropriate halal standards and relevant certification schemes
- mention of the applicable Halal Italia regulations

A company can withdraw from the contract at any time by giving written notice, without having to pay a fine for early withdrawal. Halal Italia may revoke certification if the company fails to comply with certain contractual stipulations. The company and certification body are obliged to inform each other promptly about any changes affecting the certification contract. Either party may refuse to accept the proposed changes.

Certification regulations

General Halal Italia regulations applicable to all certification procedures:

- R1** – Certification Regulation
- R2** – Regulation on the use of Halal Italia logo and trademark
- R6** – Regulations for laboratory testing

Halal Italia regulations applicable for selected certification schemes:

- R3** – Regulation for certifying Islamic ritual slaughtering
- R4** – Regulation for certifying halal food products
- R4A** – Regulations for not permitted additives
- R5** – Regulation for certifying halal cosmetics and personal care products
- R8** – Regulations for halal certification of medical devices

Pre-audit

In case of companies with some of the following complex situations: multiple production plants, multiple production lines, special processing operations, critical ingredients or raw materials and slaughterhouse, Halal Italia carries out a mandatory preliminary audit to assess the potential feasibility of the certification process, draw up a contract and make a financial offer catering for the company's needs.

Documentary analysis

The company sends Halal Italia the official product/raw materials data sheets in the attachments with the application form, which are an integral part of the certification contract. An initial analysis of products, processes and services to be halal certified is then carried out by e-mail and telephone calls (stage 1). Only after the successful completion of this analysis can the subsequent audit proceed (stage 2). In addition, prior to stage 2, the company draws up **a procedure for the management of halal production** and selects a properly trained **halal team** from its staff.

Initial Certification Verification:

Stage 1 - Documentary assessment

Documentary analysis of technical aspects of products, processes and services

This stage in operations must be paid before moving on to the certification process.

Stage 2 - Audit at the production site

Direct survey at the company's production sites to assess whether the products, processes and services comply with the necessary standards

This stage in operations must be paid before moving on to the certification process.

Recognition of certificates issued by other certification bodies

Halal Italia accepts certificates that meet certain quality and food safety requirements issued by recognised certification bodies. For halal certificates, the body issuing them must have valid international Islamic accreditation for the production sector, the certification scheme and for the target market.

On-site audit

- A.** Halal Italia sets up an **audit team** and sends the company the names of the auditors who will carry out the certification audit.
- B.** Halal Italia auditors and technicians have knowledge and **expertise** in the following:
- Islamic doctrine on food, cosmetics and pharmaceutical
 - relevant national and international halal certification standards
 - relevant production industry
 - ways and methods conducting the audit
- Halal Italia requires its auditors and technicians to sign a form with a **confidentiality agreement** covering any company information they will be informed about.
- C.** Audit planning involves arranging the date of the audit with the company at least five days in advance. The **audit plan** is then forwarded by the audit team.
- D.** On-site audit, surveillance and supplementary audit are structured as follows:
- an initial meeting with the company's management team and directors to confirm the purpose and methods of the audit in relation to the audit plan of which they have already been informed
 - ratification of the procedures, processes and products for which certification is requested and which must be witnessed directly
 - further survey of the findings from the documentary analysis or previous audits
 - a final meeting to present the results and conclusions of the audit team to the company management and directors as regards the compliance of products, processes or services to the required standards, specifying any *Non-Conformities*, *Recommendations* and *Comments* found.
- E.** Within a few days after the audit, Halal Italia will send the company the **audit report** outlining the results of the audit including any *Non-Conformities*, *Recommendations* and *Comments* found. The company is required to sign the audit report for acknowledgement and acceptance and return it to Halal Italia.
- F.** Following the issue of *Non-Conformities* and *Recommendations*, the company must send Halal Italia, within the agreed timeframe and on an appropriate form, an analysis of the causes, actions and **corrective measures** emerging from the findings, indicating the timeframe for implementing them. The certification body assesses and approves the proposed corrective measures and, if it considers them inappropriate, informs the company in writing about the corrections that need to be made.

This stage in operations must be paid before moving on to the certification process.

Responsibilities and obligations

The company is responsible for compliance with laws applying to its products, processes or services, excluding any liability or guarantees on the part of Halal Italia. The company undertakes to ensure the completeness and truthfulness of any documents and information passed on to the certification body. Halal Italia is expressly exonerated from any responsibility for damages due to failure to pass on data (in part or full) or if the said data do not correspond to the actual state of the company.

Protection of personal and corporate data

Halal Italia guarantees the confidentiality and care of any data it may have knowledge of or be in possession of, which will be handled in accordance with current Italian and European privacy legislation (Legislative Decree 196/2003 and subsequent amendments) and in compliance with UAE.S 2055-2, GSO 2055-2 accreditation standard for Halal certification bodies.

Use of the Halal Italia trademark



The Halal Italia trademark can only be used exclusively for labels and communication materials that are linked to brands owned by the certified company and referred to in the relative contract. After the audit (stage 2), Halal Italia verifies an example of the packaging to be used for products bearing the certification trademark before deciding whether to issue certification. Only after certification has been issued is the company authorised to use and print the Halal Italia trademark on its products and materials.

Tips for avoiding common mistakes when using the Halal Italia trademark:

- it must not be bigger than the company brand or the product brand
- it cannot be used on company business cards or letterheads
- it must not be misshaped
- it must not include "halalitalia.org" website
- it must not be placed inside shapes that alter its structure and make it look like a different trademark
- stickers bearing only the Halal Italia trademark cannot be used

Issuing halal certificate

Audit outcome

In the absence of any *Non-Conformities* or *Recommendations* or following their due resolution, the company's documentation will be examined by the Halal Italia *Certification Decision-Making Committee* which will decide whether to issue the halal certificate.

Suspension

In the case of irregularities, the *Certification Decision Making Committee* may suspend certification for a fixed period of time. The suspension may only affect some of the certified products, processes or services.

Decision

A halal certificate of conformity is issued

- after the *Certification Decision-Making Committee* examines and approves the appropriate documentation
- upon payment by the company of the financial fees stipulated in the contract.

Renewal

Halal Italia certification is valid for one year from the date of issue shown on the certificate and is subject to surveillance audits to be scheduled annually at the company's production site.

Reinstatement

Certification can be reinstated if the causes that led to the suspension are dealt with, such as the settlement of outstanding payments or the resolution of any *Non-Conformities* detected.

Withdrawal

In cases where the company has not dealt with situations that led to the suspension of halal certification in the prescribed manner and time, certification is revoked by the *Certification Decision-Making Committee*. The contract between Halal Italia and the company will consequently be rescinded.

Appeals and complaints

Halal Italia will consider any requests and complaints coming from companies regarding decisions taken on granting, suspending or withdrawing certification as follows:

1. the company in question should send a letter to customer@halalitalia.org for the attention of Halal Italia's Quality Manager
2. the letter, signed by its legal representative, must include the company's contacts, the subject and reasons for the appeal complete with any attachments in support of the reasons given
3. a special appeals commission made up of members who were not involved in decision-making regarding the auditing and certification procedures will carry out all the appropriate inquiries, assess the company's claims and re-examine the measures taken by Halal Italia
4. at the end of the complaints procedure Halal Italia will send written communication to the company regarding the outcome of the inquiry and any new decisions made.