



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA-2021-D-0166]

International Council for Harmonisation Q12: Implementation Considerations for Food and Drug Administration-Regulated Products; Draft Guidance for Industry; Availability

**AGENCY:** Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing the availability of a draft guidance for industry entitled "ICH Q12: Implementation Considerations for FDA-Regulated Products." The International Council for Harmonisation (ICH) guidance for industry entitled "Q12 Technical and Regulatory Considerations for Pharmaceutical Product Lifecycle Management" and its Annexes (ICH Q12, May 2021) provide a framework to facilitate the management of postapproval chemistry, manufacturing, and controls (CMC) changes in a more predictable and efficient manner. ICH Q12 includes regulatory tools and enablers with associated guiding principles that should enhance industry's ability to manage postapproval changes and increase transparency between industry and regulatory authorities, supporting innovation and continual improvement. This guidance complements ICH Q12 by clarifying how its tools and enablers can be implemented within the U.S. regulatory system. This draft guidance is not final nor is it in effect at this time.

**DATES:** Submit either electronic or written comments on the draft guidance by **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]** to ensure that the Agency considers your comment on this draft guidance before it begins work on the final version of the guidance.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on any guidance at any time as follows:

*Electronic Submissions*

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to <https://www.regulations.gov> will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>.
- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see "Written/Paper Submissions" and "Instructions").

#### *Written/Paper Submissions*

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions): Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in "Instructions."

*Instructions:* All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA-2021-D-0166 for "ICH Q12: Implementation Considerations for FDA-Regulated Products." Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as "Confidential

Submissions," publicly viewable at <https://www.regulations.gov> or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, 240-402-7500.

- Confidential Submissions--To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states "THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION." The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>. Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as "confidential." Any information marked as "confidential" will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at:  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf>.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the "Search" box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852, 240-402-7500.

You may submit comments on any guidance at any time (see 21 CFR 10.115(g)(5)).

Submit written requests for single copies of the draft guidance to the Division of Drug Information, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), Food and Drug Administration,

10001 New Hampshire Ave., Hillandale Building, 4th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002; Office of Communication, Outreach and Development, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER), Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 71, Rm. 3128, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002; or Office of Policy, Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5431, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your requests. See the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section for electronic access to the draft guidance document.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ashley Boam, CDER, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 51, Rm. 4192, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 301-796-6341; Stephen Ripley, CBER, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 71, Rm. 7301, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 240-402-7911; or Andrew Yeatts, CDRH, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5510, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 301-796-4539.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

I. Background

FDA is announcing the availability of a draft guidance for industry entitled "ICH Q12: Implementation Considerations for FDA-Regulated Products." ICH Q12 provides a framework to facilitate the management of postapproval CMC changes in a more predictable and efficient manner. It includes regulatory tools and enablers with associated guiding principles that should enhance industry's ability to manage postapproval changes and increase transparency between industry and regulatory authorities, supporting innovation and continual improvement.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with ICH Q12, which this guidance complements by clarifying how the ICH Q12 tools and enablers can be implemented within the U.S. regulatory system. These guidances apply to drug substances and drug products that are the subject of new drug applications (NDAs), biologics license applications (BLAs), abbreviated

new drug applications (ANDAs), and supplements to these applications regulated by CDER and CBER. They also apply to combination products with device constituent parts that are the subject of NDAs, BLAs, ANDAs, and supplements to these applications regulated by CDER and CBER. This guidance provides considerations for implementation of ICH Q12 tools, such as established conditions, postapproval change management protocols, and the product lifecycle management document. The considerations provided follow the order of the sections in ICH Q12 and are specific to FDA's implementation.

This draft guidance is being issued consistent with FDA's good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). The draft guidance, when finalized, will represent the current thinking of FDA on "ICH Q12: Implementation Considerations for FDA-Regulated Products." It does not establish any rights for any person and is not binding on FDA or the public. You can use an alternative approach if it satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations.

## II. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

While this guidance contains no collection of information, it does refer to previously approved FDA collections of information. Therefore, clearance by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521) is not required for this guidance. The previously approved collections of information are subject to review by OMB under the PRA. The collections of information for the submission of NDAs and ANDAs in 21 CFR 314.50, 314.70, 314.71, 314.94, and 314.97, including supplements, have been approved under OMB control number 0910-0001. The collections of information in 21 CFR parts 210 and 211 have been approved under OMB control number 0910-0139. The collections of information for the submission of BLAs under 21 CFR 601.2 and 601.12 have been approved under OMB control number 0910-0338.

## III. Electronic Access

Persons with access to the internet may obtain the draft guidance at <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/guidance-compliance-regulatory-information/guidances-drugs>, <https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/guidance-compliance-regulatory-information-biologics/biologics-guidances>, <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/device-advice-comprehensive-regulatory-assistance/guidance-documents-medical-devices-and-radiation-emitting-products>, or <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Dated: May 14, 2021.

**Lauren K. Roth,**

*Acting Principal Associate Commissioner for Policy.*

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