

The NSC proposes that the following section replace the Additional Professional Practices section in the current standards book, incorporating its content and being located ahead of the standards to be scored. The standards proposed to be moved to APP have been included in this new section. The NSC is also proposing that the Foundational Practices be scored as a self-assessment (OM – X below), indicating that they have been reviewed at least every three years.

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Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services
A Self-Assessment Tool

In the long history of the development and application of standards to the camp industry, many of the practices have become so accepted as to be assumed by camp leaders and the public. They have become a part of the body of knowledge applied by seasoned camp professionals. A number of the health and safety issues addressed by previous standards have become regulated by local, state and national bodies. As former standards become generally accepted practice in the industry, or are commonly regulated by other bodies, they are moved to this educational resource for self-assessment.

In addition to the body of knowledge that has emerged from the camp industry itself, new guidelines are offered from the development of new products, research regarding safety, and specialists in areas related to camp activities. Many of these guidelines provide useful information to camp professionals for specific ways of enhancing their camp site and program. Guidelines from public sources or other industries applicable to camps in a specific way are included in the Foundational Practices that follow.

These items are named “foundational practices” because they are important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. They are a source of accumulated knowledge for new camps and new directors identifying the many individual considerations that must be addressed to develop a quality camp operation and program. They are valuable reminders to experienced directors of those matters that must be continually managed in the camp setting. They are also guidelines for parents, educators, youth development professionals, businesses serving camps and governmental bodies regarding norms in the industry related to the delivery of a positive camp experience.

The items listed below are foundational practices organized according to the sections of the standards. They are scored as one standard under Operational Management indicating that the camp has reviewed and responded as applicable to each item. The section is formatted to allow directors and staff to make notes related to the various recommendations as they consider how these foundational practices are and should be addressed in their camp setting.

Site and Food Service:

<p>1. Appropriate insect/weed control methods are in effect, and only approved pesticides or herbicides are utilized on the property as identified by state/local codes. <i>Considerations:</i> Are maintenance persons aware of banned substances or those that create problems for humans and animals? Are persons using chemicals provided with Material Hazard Sheets? Is the advice of local authorities and resources periodically sought and followed? Are appropriate insect control methods utilized in the dining hall?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>2. Erosion control methods are in practice where applicable. <i>Considerations:</i> Are appropriate control methods in effect on paths, around culverts and buildings, and elsewhere? Who has the responsibility to regularly evaluate camp areas to determine where erosion may be creating unsafe or impacting the environment? See Appendix ___ for more on the environment.</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>3. The site is free from observable evidence of a sewage disposal problem. <i>Considerations:</i> Is there standing water around sewage disposal areas? Is there a foul smell coming from these areas? Is there evidence that recommendations of local health officials are being implemented to correct any problems?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>

<p>4. Laundry facilities are available on site or nearby for campers and staff in long-term camps and for campers with special needs. <i>Considerations:</i> Are there campers with bladder control problems that may require frequent washing of bed clothes? How are you handling contamination from bodily fluids? Sensitivity to staff and camper needs often separates the good from the excellent. How are you evaluating these needs and addressing persistent complaints/comments?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>5. Adequate shelter for all campers and staff is provided during inclement weather. <i>Considerations:</i> Is there adequate space for program to continue in spite of the weather? Has appropriate shelter been provided/identified for use in case of tornado, flood, extreme heat, sun shelter, or other severe conditions? What future needs can you predict?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>6. Permanent, enclosed dining facilities provide protection from problem insects. <i>Considerations:</i> In areas where either types or quantities of problem insects could constitute a health problem, are all doors and screens in good condition?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>7. The site provides separate facilities to provide privacy and freedom from campers for staff during their time off. <i>Considerations:</i> Is there a place for staff to “get away?” What steps could be taken to provide staff with living areas, lounges, or places where they can relax with some privacy on their time off?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>8. Administrators using a non-owned site have a written agreement with the site owner specifying responsibility for the use of the site, facilities, equipment and services. <i>Considerations:</i> Is there a clear line of authority and responsibility for the above-named items? When was this contract last reviewed by legal counsel?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>9. Menus have been planned and/or approved by a nutritionist, dietician, or other person qualified to evaluate the nutrition and balance of the meals served. <i>Considerations:</i> Do menus include food items that reflect the cultural diversity and food preferences of your clientele? Who is this qualified person? When were menus last reviewed?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>10. Food service staff wear appropriate hair covers as required by state/local regulations, and wear clean, neat, practical clothing. <i>Considerations:</i> Local health departments are the source for current information on the hair cover requirement. What training might be available from local health departments or colleges to train food service staff?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>11. All water sources used for drinking or food preparation purposes meet state and federal drinking water standards. <i>Considerations:</i> Water quality is monitored by state and local regulations based on the Safe Drinking Water Act. Are you confident that every water source used by campers, whether a well or reservoir system, or a public water source, is tested for safety?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>12. Sleeping, dining, toilet, bathing and program facilities are available to persons with disabilities. <i>Considerations:</i> The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that the camp make “readily achievable” accommodations to assure that campers, wherever possible, campers with disabilities have the opportunity for full participation in the camp experience. Appendix ____ provides guidance on appropriate accommodations for persons with restricted mobility.</p>	Reviewed _____

<p>13. The camp provides toilets that meet the standards of regulatory bodies, applicable building codes and provide for comfortable use of the camp. <i>Considerations:</i> These are recommended minimum toilet ratios for camps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For resident camps, one seat for every 10 females, and one seat for every 10 males; • For day programs, one seat for every 30 females, and one seat for every 50 males. <p>Has the camp assessed its unique needs for toilets?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____ :</p>
<p>14. Hand washing facilities are located adjacent to toilets and meet the standards of regulatory bodies, applicable building codes and provide for comfortable use of the camp. <i>Considerations:</i> Minimum ratios of basins to toilets is –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For resident programs, one basin per 10 persons with a minimum of two basins for each toilet facility for more than 5 persons; • For day programs, one basin per 30 persons with a minimum of two basins for each toilet facility for more than 5 persons. 	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>15. Toilet facilities in the main area and living areas provide privacy for occupants. <i>Considerations:</i> Do your toilet facilities provide appropriate (a door or curtain) privacy to all staff and participants including persons with special needs?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>16. Pit and chemical toilets are screened or vented and equipped with toilet lids and self-closing doors. <i>Considerations:</i> Are these measures in place to control odors and prevent entry by insects and animals?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>17. The camp provides a minimum of one showerhead or bathtub for each 15 persons on site for all resident camps and short term resident programs. <i>Considerations:</i> The camp must comply with local health requirements and building codes. Has the camp assessed its unique need for showers and bathtubs based on its campers, facilities and services?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>18. For any playground area and apparatus, the camp has constructed the activity area according to accepted guidelines for safety, including an appropriate surface to cushion falls within the safety zone under and around the playground equipment. <i>Considerations:</i> Camps should design the playground areas – whether a single swing or a complex of playground elements – to match the age and ability of the campers, and according to guidelines developed by authoritative sources for safety. This includes installing a protective, shock-absorbing material in the safety zone identified by the height and construction of any element. See Appendix __ for additional details and references on playground safety and construction.</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>

Operational Management:

<p>1. Procedures are in practice regarding the use and release of any and all personal information related to campers and staff. <i>Considerations:</i> Do you obtain permission to release or print photos of individuals? Who has access to personnel records, financial records, medical records, and camper evaluations? To whom and under what conditions is information released to persons outside of the camp?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>
<p>2. Budgeting, bookkeeping and audit procedures consistent with good accounting practices are utilized annually. <i>Considerations:</i> Should your audit procedures be carried out internally or externally? Are auditors' recommendations sought and followed concerning record keeping and other financial matters?</p>	<p>Reviewed _____</p>

<p>3. Inventories of all facilities and equipment are reviewed and revised at least annually. <i>Considerations:</i> Are the inventories reviewed by camp administration in consideration not only of purchasing needs but also in light of insurance needs, equipment replacement schedules, depreciation schedules, and identification of equipment or supplies available for use?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>4. Arrangements for legal counsel have been made and such counsel is available as problems arise. <i>Considerations:</i> Has the advice of legal counsel been sought concerning review of application forms and contracts (camper and staff), risk management planning, and personnel policies and practices? Who is the camp's legal counsel? How can this person be reached?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>5. The camp has written strategic planning materials which assess current conditions and identify future needs for both the program and the operation. <i>Considerations:</i> How does your strategic plan reflect the camp's philosophy and mission? Is it comprehensive in scope – addressing program delivery, marketing, financial development and site management? In relation to site and facility management and development, does the camp have strategic goals related to environmental protection and accessibility? Has the site developed a plan for maintenance and development of facilities that reflects program and operational needs? See Appendix ___ for additional information on Strategic Planning.</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>6. The risk management plan for the camp includes identifying, analyzing and developing control techniques related to financial resources. <i>Considerations:</i> Does the camp have procedures for loss caused by inadequate financial controls concerning authority to purchase, payroll, vacation accrual, handling registration monies, meeting government tax and financial reporting requirements, inventory control, etc.? Has liability been assessed regarding contracts with groups, for service, related to program providers, employment agreements, insurance and other policies that bind the camp?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>7. Insurance is in place that protects the camp in all aspects of its operation and program. <i>Considerations:</i> Does the camp have general liability appropriate to its activities and business? Has the fire and extended risk coverage been assessed to assure that it covers true value? Does the motor vehicle insurance cover all owned, hired or leased vehicles and includes all non-owned vehicles? Does the camp have workers compensation for all eligible staff? Has the camp determined intentionally how or what to offer with regard to health and accident coverage for campers? Additional resources are available through ACA.</p>	Reviewed _____

Human Resources:

<p>1. The pre-camp training for camp program staff is of sufficient length to adequately prepare staff for their roles in programming and supervision. <i>Considerations:</i> The pre-camp training plan should take into account the variety of ways that staff are to be trained, the need for them to interact with each other and on the camp property for effective learning, and their previous experience.</p> <p>The following lengths of time should be expected to address the required training content in the standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For resident and trip or travel camp staff – 48 hours (6 days) • For day camp staff and short-term program staff – 24 hours (3 days) 	Reviewed _____
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Program Design and Activities:

<p>1. Contracts have been signed with all providers of program services such as aquatics, adventure/challenge, horseback riding and tripping that specify responsibility for meeting the intent of appropriate ACA standards. <i>Considerations:</i> Such contracts should identify items such as who is responsible to provide and maintain safety equipment or other gear used in the activity, responsibility for classifying and/or excluding campers from participation, establishing safety rules, providing emergency care in case of illness or injury, and other conditions established in the standards for the given activity. Have such contracts been reviewed by the camp's legal counsel?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>2. The program is designed to provide balance in the campers' activities. <i>Considerations:</i> Does the program provide opportunities for both quiet and active times during the day? Do campers have various opportunities to participate individually, as well as in small and large group activities?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>3. Campers participate in program planning in a variety of in-camp and off-season ways. <i>Considerations:</i> What deliberate methods have been implemented to identify and meet camper needs, interests and preferences?</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>4. The camp provides deliberately planned program activities designed to foster understanding of individual differences and group cooperation. <i>Considerations:</i> As our world "shrinks" and becomes a mosaic of individuals from various backgrounds, it is important for the camping community to be proactive in developing skills of understanding and cooperation.</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>5. Campers are free to practice their religious customs and to discuss spiritual matters in a manner that does not offend the rights and beliefs of others. <i>Considerations:</i> This statement does not require the camp to conduct religious services or provide religious instruction. Rather, it indicates that persons are free to practice their customs (e.g., prayer, recognizing religious holidays, etc.) or to discuss spiritual topics in an open, non-forceful atmosphere.</p>	Reviewed _____

Program – Horseback Riding:

<p>1. Camp has a policy limiting the maximum work day for a horse. <i>Considerations:</i> Recommended maximum hours for a work day are 6 hours for ring riding and 8 hours for trail riding. Camps should take into consideration the type of work and stress that a horse endures. Is there a place to record, for each horse, the number of hours worked and in what capacity (lessons, trail rides, vaulting, backriding, hippotherapy, etc.)?</p>	Reviewed _____
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Program – Trip and Travel:

<p>1. The camp pays appropriate fees and secures permits to access wilderness areas and parks. <i>Considerations:</i> The increased control on wilderness areas requires that trip and travel camps build into their budget required fees for permits. Some permits also require evidence of appropriate safety equipment and orientation to enter the area.</p>	Reviewed _____
<p>2. Water bottles carried on trips are clearly distinguishable by shape, color, size, style or marking from bottles containing liquids not fit for human consumption. <i>Considerations:</i> This is an important practice to prevent accidental consumption of liquids in bottles containing fuel, soaps, disinfectants, etc.</p>	Reviewed _____

Site and Food Service

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Site and Food Service found in Foundational Practices include:

(Items to be moved from current standards to this section, and added as new guidelines, are highlighted in red.)

- Use of appropriate pesticides and herbicides
- Erosion control
- Sewage disposal
- Laundry facilities
- Shelter in inclement weather
- Enclosed dining facility
- Separate facilities for staff travel
- Use of non-owned sites for programs
- Menus
- Food service staff dress
- Water testing
- Accommodation for persons with disabilities
- Toilet facilities
- Handwashing ratios
- Toilet Privacy
- Pit and Chemical Toilets
- Showers ratios
- Playgrounds

The standards below have been edited according to feedback. Changes from the most recent documents posted are highlighted in red.

SF-2 – Care of Hazardous Materials

DNA if no flammable, explosive, or poisonous materials are used or stored on site.

Does the camp require that gas and liquid flammables, explosives, livestock medications and other hazardous materials be:

1. **Handled only by persons trained or experienced in their safe use and disposal, and**
2. **Stored appropriately:**
 - a. **With access limited to trained persons,**
 - b. **In closed, safe containers that are plainly labeled as to contents, and**
 - c. **In locations separate from food?**

YES NO

Interpretation: The same plus added notation about livestock medications.....

Medications used for livestock are often very potent due to the size of the animals for which they are developed. They often are flavored or scented so the animals are more receptive to their use. To avoid accidental ingestion, unsupervised campers should not have access to these items.

SF-3 – Contact with Local Officials

Does the camp make annual contact with applicable local emergency officials to notify them of the camp operation and to verify appropriate emergency response information?

YES NO

Interpretation: Effective crisis response planning includes prior contact and arrangements with appropriate emergency rescue personnel. This may include fire, law enforcement, EMS, civil defense, homeland security, forest service, national park or other local officials – depending on the location and risk management issues of the camp and its program sites. Even in locations where the camp is automatically covered by municipal emergency services, the camp should notify

officials of the size and scope of the camp operation to assure that the camp's crisis response plan is consistent with local emergency procedures.

Compliance Demonstration: Director explanation of annual contacts and process to verify/update emergency response information

SF-4 – Fire Equipment Evaluation

Does the camp have written evidence that qualified personnel annually conducts a safety examination of applicable fire equipment in the following areas:

1. **Smoke detectors, CO detectors and other detection devices (i.e. location and working condition);**
2. **Fire extinguishers (i.e. type, location, and readiness);**
3. **Sprinkler systems, fire suppression systems (properly located, in working order);**
4. **Fireplaces, chimneys, and any open fire areas;**
5. **Storage and use of areas for flammable materials and fuel; and**
6. **Cooking areas?**

YES NO

Interpretation: "Qualified personnel" includes persons specifically trained and experienced in fire safety and equipment as verified by local statute or regulation (e.g. fire inspectors, insurance personnel). This may include camp personnel if they possess such qualifications. Different individuals are likely to conduct different aspects of the evaluation.

"Readiness" implies that all fire extinguishers have been inspected and are tagged, dated and operational.

"Written evidence" may include a receipt, a letter or memo, a log, a dated checklist, a notation signed by the staff or other written evidence that the inspection took place.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence of annual evaluations; director/staff description of procedures and individuals used to conduct the evaluation.

SF-7 – Electrical Evaluation

Does the camp have written evidence that an electrical evaluation is conducted annually by qualified personnel?

YES NO

Interpretation: "Qualified personnel" includes persons qualified by local statute or regulation, persons with training or experience in basic electrical evaluation, electricians, other appropriately licensed persons, or camp staff and maintenance personnel with appropriate training.

An evaluation should be conducted in all facilities with electrical service including the swimming pool, water pumps, living areas for campers and staff, program buildings, food service and storage areas, maintenance areas and dining halls.

The evaluation should include at least a visual observation of areas and facilities to check for damaged or loose wires or fixtures, electrical equipment needing repair or replacement, face plates and panel fronts in place, correctly sized fuses or circuit breakers, and appropriately grounded receptacles. Particular attention should be paid to facilities that have little or no use during some seasons or where damage from rodents or weather may occur or have occurred.

"Written evidence" may include a receipt, a letter or memo, a log, a dated checklist, a notation signed by the staff or other written evidence that the inspection took place.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence of annual evaluation; director/staff description of procedures and qualifications of the personnel used to conduct the evaluation.

SF-13 - Smoke Detectors

Retain "as is" in current standards.

SF-Y - Carbon Monoxide Detectors

DNA if 30% or more of the wall area is screened or open or if camp has no structures for sleeping.

DNA if no fuel-burning equipment is present.

Are all structures used for sleeping which have fuel-burning equipment within the building equipped with carbon monoxide detectors in working order?

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard applies ONLY to structures that are used for sleeping at any time.

The standard applies to all enclosed structures that contain a combustible fuel heat source (which is any kind of fuel that “burns” and does not include electric heat units). Yurts, RV’s and tents are included when they have a combustible heat source.

A CO detector should be installed on each floor of a building or structure used for sleeping, and within each bedroom if occupants sleep with a closed door. The detector should be installed according to instructions specified with the equipment. Note the recommendations referenced in the Appendix from the National Fire Protection Association (code 720) and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission regarding the type of detectors to purchase and locations for installation.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation and tests of CO detectors in randomly selected buildings of all types.

SF-17 – Hand washing Facilities

Are hand washing facilities adjacent to toilet facilities and readily available to areas where food is prepared and consumed?

YES NO

Interpretation: A “hand washing facility” is a supply of soap and fresh water OR the availability of waterless hand sanitizing products. “Where food may be consumed” includes areas used for regular meals (dining hall, self-cooking cabin, cookout area, etc.) as well as locations for occasional and informal consumption of food, such as, for example, picnics, snacks, barbeques, etc.

Note: The recommended ratios of hand washing facilities to campers in Appendix XX.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of hand washing facilities in relation to randomly selected toilet facilities and eating locations. Director/staff explanation of procedures for locations without access to water.

SF-XX - Playgrounds

DNA if camp does not have a playground or playground apparatus, or never uses an off-site playground.

Does the camp assure that the playground area and apparatus used by campers is in good repair by:

- 1. Regular observation and maintenance procedures conducted by staff on owned playground equipment, and/or**
- 2. Staff review of off-site playground equipment prior to use?**

YES NO

Interpretation: This standard applies to playgrounds on camp property and off-site.

A “playground” includes a single swing, tire swing or other “homemade” equipment and is any apparatus or area – constructed or natural – in which campers play in an unstructured way (as compared to gymnastics or initiatives activities in which the individual or group activity is structured).

The regular checks by staff of playground equipment, on the camp or off site, should verify, as examples, that all equipment is moving freely, structures are sound, that there are no sharp edges or points and that loose-fill materials are in place on the surface around the playground.

See Appendix ___ for additional information on playground safety and maintenance

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of condition of on-site playground area and equipment; staff description of maintenance system of on-site playground; staff description of review procedures for off-site playgrounds.

SF-25 – Dumpster Area

Eliminate – included in SF 10 – Clean Camp Site

Transportation

***TR-1 – Medical Emergency Transportation MANDATORY**

DNA to camps with no base site and to non-medical religious camps.

Does the camp have a system in practice that assures emergency transportation is available at all times by:

- 1. The camp or user groups, or**
- 2. Community emergency services with whom prior arrangements have been made in writing?**

YES NO

Interpretation: “Available” by the camp means that specifically designated vehicle(s) are in operational order with enough fuel to reach primary emergency locations and are not being used for other jobs.

“Arrangements ... in writing” may include notification letters to local providers of emergency transportation services, including those contacted through the 911 system. Notification should identify the primary usage dates and precise location of the camp or program.

If user groups are responsible for their own emergency transportation, this expectation should be identified in a contract or use agreement, or clearly specified in written procedures provided to groups. For additional safety, emergency numbers and directions to the camp should be posted or provided.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff description of system and options; visitor observation of designated vehicle(s) available; written notification to or verification from community emergency services; written procedures for user groups.

TR-5 - 19 – Applicability

Standards TR-5 through TR-19 APPLY to all group transportation of campers, staff, or user group members provided by, planned for, or arranged by the camp, whether in owned, leased, private, or commercial LAND vehicles. This includes, as examples:

- Camp-arranged transportation to and from camp
- Transportation to activity sites such as pools, stables, or lakes
- Transportation for day trips or field trips
- Transportation to trip sites and within the trip/travel program itself
- Group transportation in any kind of passenger vehicle – bus, van, SUV, car

These standards DO NOT APPLY to the use of regularly scheduled public transportation (e.g., trains, limos, buses, taxis, trams, etc.) or to watercraft transportation such as ferries – whose vehicles and drivers are monitored by local or other regulation.

These standards DO NOT APPLY to user groups providing their own transportation.

These standards are NOT SCORED for camp maintenance vehicles (tractors, trucks, golf carts, etc.) unless they are used to transport persons other than maintenance or administrative staff.

These standards are NOT SCORED for the occasional unscheduled transport of individual campers or staff in an emergency or medical situation. However, camps are advised to consider the requirements of the transportation standards when establishing guidelines for any vehicle use within the camp operation.

DNA TR5 through TR 19 if the camp provides no transportation.

TR-5 – Transportation Information for Parents

DNA if camp never provides transportation for campers between camp and home or pick-up/drop-off points.

Are parents or guardians of campers who are transported to/from camp provided written information that includes:

- 1. Pick-up and drop-off times,**
- 2. A system to communicate changes or emergencies that would affect campers’ pick-up or drop-off time or location,**
- 3. Pick-up and drop-off safety procedures, and**
- 4. Safety rules for van or bus travel if provided by the camp?**

YES NO

Interpretation: Safety procedures include safety regulations at the pick-up and drop off points as well as camp policies concerning responsibility of care of children before pick up and after drop-off.

Pick-up and drop-off points may be individual homes, central locations, bus depots, airports etc.

Examples of required notification include cancellation of a day camp session due to unsuitable weather, transportation delay of more than 20-30 minutes, illness of a child, or an accident requiring professional medical attention. A camp's procedures may include immediate contact with parents in some cases, or a means for parents and guardians to get additional information, such as a number to call if a bus is late.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written information to parents.

TR-14 – Leased, Rented or Chartered Vehicles with Drivers

DNA if no vehicles are leased, rented or chartered by the camp for transportation.

Does the camp have written evidence that the provider(s) of transportation vehicles:

1. **Implement a system of regular maintenance and safety checks on vehicles, and**
 2. **Verify the acceptable driving record and experience of any drivers provided by the vendor?**
- YES NO**

Interpretation: **The standard applies to vehicles leased, rented or chartered for any period of time.**

Written evidence may include appropriate policies from the leasing company, a record of regular maintenance procedures, and a signed statement indicating the requirements that must be met by all drivers hired by the company. These statements may be found in the leasing contract, in promotional materials for the company, or in a checklist for bids. Other written assurances from the company may include a letter or signature on a statement prepared by the camp.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence for all leased vehicles.

TR-16 – Safety Checks

Does the camp implement a written policy related to safety checks on vehicles used to transport persons that includes:

- A. Checking the tires for proper inflation and wear daily when in use?**
- YES NO**
- B. Establishing a frequency and process for checking all of these items –**
1. **Lights,**
 2. **Windshield and wiper condition,**
 3. **Emergency flashers,**
 4. **Horn,**
 5. **Brakes,**
 6. **Mirror, and**
 7. **Fluid Levels?**
- YES NO**

Interpretation: When checking tires for proper inflation, staff should be especially careful to determine the proper tire inflation by the tire type and size, or established by the manufacturer's guidelines for the vehicle.

Directors should check local codes for frequency of safety checks required for the items in B. Some states require safety checks prior to each use for certain types of vehicles. Written documentation of the check is required by some states or local jurisdictions.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written policy; director/staff description of policy's implementation.

TR-17 – Driver Requirements

Does the camp have written evidence of procedures in practice to verify that all drivers used for transportation meet minimum requirements, including:

1. **Driving records have been reviewed within the last four months for seasonally-hired drivers or within the last twelve months for year-round drivers to determine driver suitability, and**
2. **Drivers have the appropriate license for vehicles to be driven?**

YES NO

Interpretation: Driving records “reviewed” means check of state police records by the camp or the camp’s insurance agent. Review includes evaluation of past driving records for revocation or suspension of license, moving violations, accidents, or charges for DWI or DUI. The camp should have procedures for conducting reviews and evaluating the results of such reviews prior to driver assignments.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff description of procedures used; visitor observation of written procedures and/or written evidence of record and license checks.

Health and Wellness

***HW-2 - Health History MANDATORY**

Does the camp receive from each camper and seasonal staff person a current, signed health history, requesting all of the following information in relation to the activities in which the camper/staff may participate in camp?

1. **Description of any camp activities from which the camper/staff should be exempted for health reasons;**
2. **Record of past medical treatment, if any;**
3. **Record of allergies, dietary restrictions;**
4. **Record of immunizations including date of last tetanus shot;**
5. **Record of current medications, prescribed and over the counter, and**
6. **Description of any current physical, mental or psychological conditions requiring medication, treatment, or special restrictions or considerations while at camp?**

YES NO

Interpretation: A “health history” is a current record of one’s past and present health status that is completed and signed by an individual adult or the parent or guardian of a minor. “Current” means prepared for the camp season

The required signature serves as evidence that the individual adult or the parent/guardian has supplied complete and accurate health information related to the camper or staff participation in specific camp activities-. (Note Standard PD – 8.)

NOTE: If camps have staff or minors who do not have immunizations, for religious or other reasons, a “record” can be a signed refusal or a signed waiver form.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of randomly selected health history records.

HW-6 – Health Exam

Retain as written in current standards.

HW-7 – Permission to Treat

For minors, and adults needing cognitive assistance, does the camp have signed permission to provide routine health care, dispense medications, and seek emergency medical treatment; or a signed waiver refusing permission to treat?

YES NO

Interpretation: “Routine health care” may include, but is not limited to those treatment procedures addressed in standard HW-11.

Some states require parental permission for care-givers to dispense over-the-counter medications such as analgesics, cough syrup and other topical ointments. See Appendix for additional considerations on permission forms.

Although most camps are not subject to HIPAA (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act) privacy regulations, some camps have found it helpful to also have permission for the release of any records necessary for treatment, referral, billing, or insurance purposes.

If parents or guardians refuse to sign a permission-to-treat form, for religious or other reasons, the camp should have a signed form that specifies action to be taken if the person needs care or treatment, and releases the camp from liability if the parent or guardian cannot be reached in an emergency.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of randomly selected records.

HW-X – Health Screening for Resident Camps

DNA to day camps. DNA to non-medical religious camps.

Is a procedure in practice for a health screening of campers and seasonal staff within 24 hours of first arrival at camp that:

A. Is conducted by persons with the following qualifications –

1. For resident and trip or travel camps not primarily serving campers with special medical needs, a licensed medical provider or an adult following specific written instructions of a licensed physician;
2. For camps primarily serving person with special medical needs, a licensed medical provider?

YES NO

B. Includes procedures to:

1. Check for observable evidence of illness, injury, or communicable disease;
2. Verify and update health history information to identify any medication, changes in health status or special needs that may require further follow-up; and
3. Review and collect any medications to be dispensed during the camper's stay at camp?

YES NO

C. Includes written documentation of the results of the above screening?

YES NO

Interpretation: The purpose of the screening is to verify and update the health history received from each camper prior to participation in camp activities and to assure that the camp staff is prepared to respond to the particular health care needs of the campers.

Written documentation of the screening is simply to record that the screening took place and the results. It can be as simple as a check mark on the health form that verifies that information is current with notations regarding any changes. Obviously any significant finding during screening would require more detailed documentation. The documentation should be signed by the screening personnel and dated.

"Further follow-up" may include not only advising appropriate staff of specific needs, allergies, or restrictions but also contacting parents or health professionals to gather further information to help provide a successful camp experience. Additional health review and screening considerations for trip and travel camps are found in Standard PT – 9.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of the screening process; visitor observation of randomly selected records of screening completed for current campers and staff (with written acknowledgement of some kind).

HW-8 – Health Information Review for Day Camps

DNA to resident camps. DNA to non-medical religious-camps.

Are procedures in practice that require staff members to:

1. Review the health histories of campers and seasonal staff within 24 hours of the first arrival at camp;
2. Advise appropriate staff of limitations or health issues related to the camper's participation in activities; and
3. Collect any medications to be dispensed during the camper's enrollment?

YES NO

Interpretation: The purpose of the health history review of every camper and staff member is to identify any medical needs that affect participation in camp activities. Although not required by the standard, written verification of the review is recommended.

Compliance Demonstration: Director / staff explanation of health information review process.

NEW - HW-XX – Availability of an AED

DNA to non-medical religious camps.

Has the camp made an assessment of the need for an AED (automated external defibrillator) at the camp location?

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard requires that the camp determine the need for an AED in relation to campers and activities. Staff should take into account the age of campers on the site in all seasons, the nature of their activities, the location of the camp in relation to medical services, the logistics of storing and using the AED, and the advice of medical and legal authorities.

See Appendix for additional information.

Compliance Demonstration: Director description of process to decide about an AED.

Operational Management

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Operational Management found in Foundational Practices include:

- Use and release of personal information
- Good accounting practices
- Inventories
- Legal counsel
- Strategic Planning
- Risk management of financial resources
- Insurance coverage

OM-X – Review of Foundational Practices

Does the camp have written evidence of a policy in practice that the recommendations in the Foundational Practices are reviewed at least every three years?

YES NO

Interpretation: The Foundational Practices that precede the standards are specific processes and practices that have been associated over time with quality camp management. Most of the practices are former standards that have become commonly accepted by camp professionals and/or the public. Some are items that are commonly regulated by a governmental body. A few are recommendations by authoritative bodies related to specific issues in the camping field. This body of knowledge should be reviewed at least every three years, noting any changes or issues that need to be addressed to assure that these foundational practices are operable (as applicable) in the camp setting.

Written evidence may be check marks and notations in the document related to the Foundational Practices or other notations regarding the review of this body of knowledge.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/ staff explanation of review; visitor observation of written evidence of review.

OM-3 - Evaluation

Delete standard - combine with evaluation standard in Program Design section.

OM-4 - Risk Management

Has the camp developed written materials for risk management planning that include:

A. Identification and analysis of risk exposures to humans and property resources?

YES NO

B. Risk control techniques currently being implemented to reduce, control or prevent potential loss in identified exposure areas?

YES NO

Interpretation: While the requirements of the accreditation standards address many of the commonly identified risk management concerns in camp operations, camps need to evaluate their overall operations to identify areas that may be

site specific or not addressed by individual standards. Camp administrators need to evaluate risk exposure in three major areas:

1. Human Liabilities
 - Standard of care liabilities (tort or third party liabilities- injury to persons caused by negligence) – such as injuries related to health services, maintenance, vehicle operation, attractive nuisances, staff selection, staff and camper supervision, inappropriate actions by staff or campers, and other hazards related to the conduct of people;
 - Loss of human resources (participants, staff, and/or volunteers) – ramification of loss of a human resource on the operation such as loss of public credibility, loss of income, loss of campers or staff due to stress, injury, illness, death or other impairment;
2. Operational liabilities
 - Contract liabilities - includes, as examples, lease or rental contracts, contracts for service, program activity contracts, employment agreements, insurance and other policies that may find the camp, and
3. Property Resources
 - Property, buildings, and equipment loss – loss due to fire, collapse or other damage from natural disasters, breakdown of machinery or equipment, and other hazards related to facilities, property development, or the operation of equipment on the site and so forth.

Risk management materials should analyze risk exposure in all areas and specify techniques currently being implemented to reduce, control or prevent identified risks.

In part B, “risk control techniques” includes identifying which methods listed below are being utilized and what specific techniques or steps are being taken as part of that method. There are four general methods to control risk.

1. Transfer – placing all or part of the risk exposure in the hands of another party such as an insurance company; or by contracting with another party to assume risk exposure through contracts, waivers, or assumption of risk agreement.
2. Avoidance – eliminating a risk such as rerouting a road so it does not go through your camp, or not offering a specific activity.
3. Retention – retaining all or a portion of a risk and accept the consequences of the loss. Generally, risks are only retained when the cost is minimal (e.g. replacing screens) or when it’s too costly to transfer the total risk (e.g. insurance deductibles and ceilings).
4. Reduction – reduce the risk exposure by developing policies and procedures to keep the risk at an acceptable level. Reduction is usually used in combination with transfer and retention (e.g. reduce by training first aiders, but also by purchasing insurance)

Camps may follow the outline and process provided in the Risk Exposure Chart in Appendix ____, or may develop their own outline. In either case, the chart identifies many of the risk areas requiring consideration by camp operators.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written materials specific to the camp. Director explanation of process utilized; visitor observation of implementation of stated techniques, where possible.

OM-6 - Assessment of Standards Compliance

Does the camp have written evidence of a system in practice to verify, at least annually, that accreditation standards are being followed in applicable aspects of the camp’s operation?

YES NO

Interpretation: Continual compliance with applicable standards is expected by the accreditation system and is so stated in the annual Statement of Compliance, signed by the camp representative. Written evidence of a system in practice to assure that the standards are being followed may include, as examples, the dates of review by camp staff persons, notations regarding specific areas of compliance, **reports regarding the review system.**

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence of annual reviews.

OM-8 - Safety Regulations

Delete standard. Address in OM – 10.

OM-10 – Safety Orientation

Does the camp require that campers, staff, and user groups be oriented to established safety regulations and emergency procedures in the general camp area based on a written list that includes:

1. Identification of boundaries for living areas and general activity areas,
2. Expectations for appropriate behavior,
3. Precautions concerning natural or physical hazards of the site?

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of this standard is to address safety issues general to the camp operation and clientele served – not to duplicate safety regulations for specific program activities and transportation, which are covered in those sections.

Boundaries, behaviors, precautions and emergency procedures can be described verbally in an orientation, marked with posted signs and provided in information given to group leaders.

The written checklist may be bullet points on a memo, signs posted on the wall or a literal checklist. The intent is to assure that all points are covered with all groups, campers and staff.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written list of items to be included in safety orientation. Staff description of orientation procedures.

OM-9 - Emergency Procedures

Are written site-specific emergency procedures established to respond appropriately to reasonably foreseeable emergencies, including:

1. Natural disasters, typical of the area, such as storms, earthquakes, wildfires, floods; and
2. Building and site evacuations made necessary by such things as local threats or power outages?

YES NO

Interpretation: Emergency procedures should be specific to the site, staffing, type of camp operation, and clientele. Procedures would normally include what to do in case of storm, earthquake, fire, or power outage, as well as site or building evacuation procedures. The complexity of procedures will vary based on camp location, type of operation, staff responsibility for supervision of individuals, and availability and responsibility of staff when user groups are present.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written procedures.

OM-19 - Camper Security

Does the camp have written policies in practice that specify procedures and responsibility for minors, including:

A. Release of campers who are minors to a parent or to persons other than the legal parent or guardian?

YES NO

B. Checking on absentee campers at the beginning of the day or session?

YES NO

Interpretation: Part A includes procedures for releasing campers to authorized persons during camp (for example, a visit) or at the end of the camp session. These procedures may include the policy that the camp will follow if a minor is not picked up within a reasonable time (e.g. supervision and extra charges).

For Part B, “absentee campers” are participants who are not present when the camp expects to assume responsibility for those individuals. The policies should specify the time that the check is done. For example, day camps normally assume responsibility at the beginning of each day while resident camps assume responsibility for the first day of a session. The policies would also specify to whom the practices apply, for example, to campers transported by the camp but not to those who are delivered to camp by the parents.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written procedures; director/ staff explanation of procedures in practice.

Human Resources

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Human Resources found in Foundational Practices include:

- **Anticipated length of pre-camp training**

HR-3 - Hiring Policies

Does the camp have written hiring policies that:

- A. Identify appropriate application and screening processes for each job category?
YES NO
- B. Have been reviewed by legal counsel or human resources professional within the last three years?
YES NO
- C. Identify the policy adopted and in practice related to the periodic screening of year round staff?
YES NO

Interpretation: Developing hiring policies should include a review of the staff application form(s), job descriptions, interviewing requirements, and initial screening techniques to determine the appropriate content and steps for each type of position. The camp must determine, with the advice of a professional, which items are appropriate for each type of staff position and which may be required by law. For example, the screening process for a kitchen or grounds worker may be different than that for a cabin counselor or program specialist. Part B specifically alerts camps to the need to develop policies and practices with the aid of sound legal and professional advice.

The hiring policies must also specify the periodic screening process for year round staff with continuous employment by the camp, especially securing periodic criminal background checks. States and local entities have different requirements which may govern the practice. This policy should be set in relation to recommendations from the insurance company and legal counsel.

See Appendix xx for additional information and sample interview tools, reference forms, and hiring checklists.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written hiring policies; director description of review process, timing and professional used; staff description of application and screening process used for them.

HR-4 - Staff Screening

Does the camp have written evidence of screening for all camp staff with responsibility for or access to campers that includes:

*Part A - MANDATORY

- A. Annually for all camp staff, paid, volunteer and contracted:
1. A voluntary disclosure statement, and
 2. A check of the National Sex Offender Public Registry, or for residents of states not participating in the National Sex Offender database, a check of the sexual offender registry of any state in which the applicant resided?
- B. For new camp staff 18 years and older, paid, volunteer and contracted, a criminal background check?
YES NO
- C. For new camp staff, at least two reference checks and verification of previous work (including volunteer) history?
YES NO
- D. For new camp staff, personal interview by the camp director or a designated representative?
YES NO

Interpretation: All camp staff, volunteer, employed and contracted, full time and part time, who could have unsupervised access to children must be included in the screening process. This includes on-site operational personnel as well as staff members working from a central office who come to the camp as a part of their responsibility. “Contracted” staff working in a typical staff role with contact with campers, such as food service, housekeeping, maintenance personnel, or specialized program leaders, should be screened. Guest program specialists who provide leadership in a limited area and are never with campers in an unsupervised situation would not be subject to screening.

A “voluntary disclosure statement” is a signed statement at minimum attesting to the non-conviction of violent crimes and crimes against children. It may include further information about other criminal behavior, previous addresses, and other data relevant to the camp and position. It should be reviewed by legal counsel. (See ACA resources for sample forms.) The “voluntary disclosure statement” may be included on the application form or with the release of information form, or may be a separate document. The statement should be secured from ALL staff, including international staff. A statement must be signed by all staff annually regardless of previous or continued employment.

The US Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry (a free service at www.nsopr.gov) will only reflect criminal sexual behavior. A criminal background check seeks additional criminal behavior, reported according to “levels” indicating the nature of the crime and the risk of repeat offense. Criminal background checks are available through a variety of agencies and private vendors, each with its own level of coverage, accuracy, timeliness of providing information and cost. Criminal background checks are increasingly provided through the placement agencies for staff from other countries. In many cases, criminal records for minors may also be available if a crime was committed in which the individual was charged as an adult.

The camp must develop a specific plan for securing criminal background checks based on state laws, availability of data, cost and type of staff. The screening practices of international camp sending agencies should be taken into account as international staff are secured. See the Appendix for additional information and resources.

Securing a criminal background check, references, verification of previous work and interviews applies to the hiring of new staff, seasonal and year round. Staff are considered “new” upon initial hiring, and if there is a break in employment of one year (12 months) or more. Year-round staff, including directors, must be screened upon entry and thereafter according to the policy of the camp (See HR - 3.)

Some “seasonal staff” may be year round employees of the parent organization (agency staff, clergy, religious educators). These persons may be treated as “year round staff” PROVIDED THAT the parent organization has a policy in practice for screening and supervising that meets the criteria of the standard.

“Verification” of work history means evaluation of the timeframes of previous jobs to determine reasons for any gaps in employment and spot checking to verify that the applicant was employed or licensed as claimed. Standards in other areas such as transportation, aquatics, and program also call for specific kinds of records checks or documentation of skills which may be checked as part of the screening process. The standard does not require visitors to be given access to confidential files. “Written evidence of the screening process in practice” may include the application or receipt for securing background checks.

“Personal interview” means face-to-face or by phone for all applicants including internationals, conducted by the camp staff or a designated representative. In addition to interviews conducted by a staff placement agency, camps should make their own contact with applicants before hiring to confirm language and communication skill, identify expectations for the job, determine the suitability for the specific job offered, and provide specific information about the camp program and location.

See Appendix for additional information on screening practices related to international staff.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence of screening process in practice; director description of screening process.

HR – 9 - Camper Supervision Ratios **Retain current standard.**

Interpretation: Add to Paragraph 7 of the interpretation

In Part C, both for the sake of safety and to prevent situations with opportunity for child abuse, camps must consciously determine those occasions and locations where at least two staff persons are required to be present with camper groups, such as on overnights, in showers, and on trips.

HR-X – Child Protection Policy

Does the camp have a policy in practice, and does it advise user groups of these practices, to address issues of child protection?

YES NO

Interpretation: It is the responsibility of the camp to first and foremost provide a safe environment for campers, physically and emotionally. Many standards deal with safety measures within specific activities. The Child Protection Policy should specify the practices that are designed to protect both campers and staff in their relationships in all of the activities in camp -- staff to camper, camper to staff and camper to camper.

The Child Protection Policy should specify the number of staff needed in particular circumstances to protect against potential abuse, including occasions in which the ratios are different from the program norms. It should delineate practices and behaviors that add further protection to both campers and staff, such as, for example, locating program or sleeping groups within hearing distance of each other and always being within public view when talking one-on-one with a camper.

The policy should identify the training required on child protection as well as reinforce the screening practices for hiring staff. The policy should delineate the responsibilities and process for reporting suspected abuse.

See Appendix for additional information and sample policies.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of policies in practice.

HR-11 – Pre-camp Staff Training

Does the camp have written evidence of pre-camp training for all camp staff directly involved in camp programming and camper supervision that includes at least the following topics:

1. **Camp purpose/focus/mission/intended outcomes, and how implemented in camp structure and program activities;**
2. **Developmental needs of campers to be served and the resulting differences for program, structure, and behavior management.**
3. **Objectives, safety considerations, skills progression, operating procedures, and competencies required for program activities;**
4. **Behavior management and camper supervision techniques to create a physically and emotionally safe environment;**
5. **Clear expectations for staff performance and conduct, including sexual harassment policies;**
6. **Recognition, prevention and reporting of child abuse, child to child as well as adult to child, both outside of and during the camp setting; and**
7. **Emergency procedures and the role of staff in implementation?**

YES NO

Interpretation: Covering all of the topics listed, along with the other training needs of camps, will generally require at least three days for day camps and 5 – 6 days for resident camps. See HR – APP – x for additional guidelines on recommended training time for different types of programs and personnel.

The Appendix and Resource Pack provide additional materials for developing training modules related to outcomes, developmental needs of campers, competencies for program activities, behavior management techniques, staff performance, and emergency procedures.

The training related to “recognition, prevention and reporting of child abuse” should include information on the identification and prevention of all types of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional and verbal. It should cover abuse in all situations – camper to camper, camp staff to camper; other adult to camper, taking place outside or within the camp setting. Staff should receive training in the state’s child abuse laws including definitions of abusive behavior, reporting requirements and penalties.

Pre-camp training will necessarily include other topics appropriate to the camp’s program and clientele. Many other ACA standards require training for staff, much of which will be included in pre-camp training. The intent of this standard is to assure that staff are given comprehensive training and resources that focus on intentionally creating a positive camp experience.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written pre-camp training schedules, agenda and materials; director/staff description of training and resources provided.

HR-14 - Camp Staff Responsibilities for General Camp Activities

Are camp staff trained according to written policies and procedures for the supervision of campers in various types of general and unstructured camp activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: This standard covers the responsibilities of any staff person on duty with campers in the GENERAL activities of the camp day. These activities include EVERYTHING that is not considered a special program in which designated and trained program staff are responsible for campers, such as, but not limited to cabin time, night time, free time, playground, meal time, transitional periods, canteen and personal hygiene periods (i.e. showers, etc.).

Supervision policies and training should include a clear delineation of roles when several staff members are present; what to look or listen for that requires action; intervention techniques; how and where to get additional help; location while “on duty”; and monitoring responsibilities specific to the activities, areas and participants.

If staff share supervision responsibilities with user group leaders, procedures should specify expectations and responsibilities of the camp staff and the group leaders. Additional responsibilities specific to program specialists or program activities are noted in other standards.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written procedures and policies; director/staff explanation of practices and training.

HR-15 – Staff/Camper Interactions

Do interactions with and among campers reflect training provided for staff to:

A. Focus attention primarily on campers’ needs and interests rather than on other staff and themselves?

YES NO

B. Speak with and listen to campers in a manner that reflects respect for each individual, including those of different backgrounds and abilities?

YES NO

C. Create and support an environment that provides emotional safety?

YES NO

D. Guide group behavior in a developmentally-appropriate manner?

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of this standard is to be able to observe the results of the policies and training that intend to create positive staff and camper interactions. If the training is effective, persons should be able to observe staff --

- reflecting respect for campers by calling them by their name or preferred nickname;
- using language that is easily understood by campers;
- providing explanations for actions taken;
- speaking with campers at eye level;
- using techniques that do not intentionally embarrass or ridicule campers or groups of people;
- **discouraging and correcting behaviors that include teasing, disrespectful behavior, belittling or intimidation;**
- carrying out camp activities in different ways depending on the developmental level of the campers.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of camper/staff interactions; director/staff explanation of training.

HR-16 – Behavior Management and Discipline

Are camp staff trained in behavior management and discipline techniques that carry out written policies and procedures to:

A. Teach campers skills that achieve positive outcomes in areas of problem solving and interactions with others?

YES NO

B. Implement fair and consistent disciplinary steps, appropriate to the camper and the situation, and forbidding corporal punishment?

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of this standard is to create an environment in which the campers are involved, in developmentally appropriate ways, in setting expectations and rules for how people should treat one another at camp. Training should enable staff to develop competencies related to guiding group behavior to establish positive norms and employing appropriate problem-solving approaches.

Written policies and procedures should identify the general philosophy and approach to discipline when it is necessary, any progressive steps to be taken in disciplining a camper, as well as identifying inappropriate techniques. The policies and procedures should emphasize the consistent and fair enforcement of rules and forbid corporal punishment.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written policies and procedures related to behavior management and discipline; visitor observation of behavior management techniques when applicable; director/staff description of training provided.

HR-19 – Supervisor Training

Does the camp provide written guidelines and specific training for supervisors to help them:

A. Monitor performance of staff they supervise?

YES NO

B. Identify and reinforce, or correct, staff behavior, as appropriate?

YES NO

Interpretation: All staff need to know expectations for acceptable job performance and for appropriate behaviors. To effectively observe and evaluate, supervisors need to be able to identify the acceptable levels of job performance and appropriate behaviors of the staff positions they supervise. Acceptable job performance and appropriate behavior include, as examples, establishing positive role models for campers, enforcing safety rules, utilizing appropriate teaching techniques, encouraging positive interactions among campers, settling disputes, and so forth. Training for supervisors should include how and when to observe staff, what to look for, and how to communicate suggestions for improvement.

Supervisors also need to develop skills in identifying and addressing inappropriate staff behavior with campers or with other staff. Inappropriate staff behavior may include actions or attitudes resulting from immaturity, inexperience, stress, lack of knowledge, illness, fatigue, poor judgment, or expectations of the individual that were beyond his or her abilities. See Appendix for more information to help train staff supervisors.

See Appendix xx for sample performance indicator, behavior, and/or skill checklists that can be used, and for guidelines on using a problem-solving approach rather than a punitive approach to improve staff behavior.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written guidelines; director/ staff description of training provided

HR-20 – Staff Observation

Does the camp utilize a system that requires supervisors to regularly observe, provide feedback, and plan for improvement of the performance and behavior of staff?

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of this standard is to assure that observations of staff occur on a regular, systematic basis. The system should include specifications for how often observations should occur. This supervision should assist staff in the accomplishment of camper development objectives, provide support to staff, and help assure that acceptable job performance criteria are continually practiced.

Staff of varying experience and skill levels require different levels of supervision. This standard does not intend to require that all staff need the same levels of supervision. The camp’s system should provide for supervision of all staff at some level based on their skills, experience, requests for help, and previous evaluations by supervisors.

“Regular observations means on a schedule determined by the camp based on factors such as the complexity of the program, length of season, and background of staff.

“Regularly” depends on factors such as the complexity of the program, length of season, and background of staff, but initial observation should be within the first two weeks of camp. See Appendix xxx for sample tools and techniques for supervisors.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/ staff explanation of observation system used.

Program Design

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Program Design found in Foundational Practices include:

- Contracts with program providers
- Balance in camper activities
- Camper participation in program planning
- Fostering understanding and group cooperation
- Freedom to practice religion

PD-6 – Camp Goals and Outcomes

To help to provide a quality camp experience has the camp:

- | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|
| A. Established a written statement of overall goals for participants? | YES | NO |
| B. Identified in writing specific observable behavioral outcomes which address the developmental needs of campers? | YES | NO |
| C. Provided materials and training strategies for staff to help campers achieve established outcomes in the camp program? | YES | NO |
| D. Informed parents and campers of the goals of the camp experience? | YES | NO |

Interpretation: Goals express the purpose of the camp’s existence and operation. For some camps, this may be articulated in the mission statement. From these broad goals the camp can determine specific outcomes that are desired as a result of participating in the camp activities and experiences. If goals of a national organization are used, they must relate to desired outcomes for the specific camp and clientele. Outcomes for short-term programs may be different than those for a day or extended stay resident camp.

Outcomes are measured or observed changes in the behavior of the campers. For example, changes may be seen in camper’s relationship to other campers or in their initiative to take responsibility. Changes may be observed in attitudes, in values as expressed by choices or language. Behavioral changes may be observed at camp and they may be observed later by the parent of the camper.

Outcomes are the indicators or observable evidence of the achievement of a goal. For example, if the goal is “to develop the decision-making skills needed to succeed in a constantly changing world,” a desired outcome might be “campers practice making individual and group decisions.” Some indicators of meeting this outcome include that campers are able to choose the appropriate clothes to wear without help and that staff observe individuals participating in the planning for their cookout. For more information see Appendix U.

Parents and campers should be informed of the goals of the camp, and given some ideas as to the nature of the outcomes that might be observed, so they are able to evaluate the effect of the camp experience. This communication can be done through the promotion and registration materials as well as specific correspondence with parents and other adults working with the campers. In the case of religious or agency camps, it may be helpful to communicate the camp goals and expected outcomes to religious leaders and agency staff who will follow up with the camper after the camp experience.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written goals and expected outcomes and of schedules and materials used in training staff in this area; visitor observation of promotional pieces or specific communication to parents and campers regarding goals and outcomes; director/staff description of goals and outcomes desired.

PD-X – Camp Experience Evaluation

To improve the quality of the camp experience, does the camp have written evidence of multiple sources of feedback on the accomplishment of the established outcomes related to all aspects of program and operation?

YES NO

Interpretation: The system of evaluation should seek feedback from campers, parents and other stakeholders through a number of methodologies on both their satisfaction with the camp experience and evidence of achievement of the goals through observable outcomes. There are many ways that a camp can measure the achievement of outcomes, including the following, *as examples* –

- observing and recording behavioral changes;
- staff meetings
- camper and parent written evaluations (related to all aspects of camp – program, administration, facilities, food service, staff, etc.);
- conversations with campers/counselors/parents;
- camper council;
- focus groups;
- telephone interviews;
- on-line feedback;
- written surveys.

While any one of these sources of feedback will provide guidance to further improvement of the camp experience, a “system” of evaluation suggests that the camp uses more than one methodology in order to create the most accurate assessment of the achievement of the outcomes. “Written evidence” is documentation that the processes are being implemented (for example, date of focus groups, schedule defining camper council activity, staff meeting agendas) and does not refer to documentation of all of the feedback sessions.

It is important for the camp to receive feedback on its operational management issues (for example, quality of food, cleanliness of the facilities, efficiency of registration process) in light of their impact on program quality and the achievement of behavioral outcomes for the camper.

See Appendix ____ for more information on measuring outcomes.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written evidence of different methods in practice to evaluate outcomes; director/staff description of evaluation processes.

PD-16 - Supervision of Specialized Activity Areas

Does the camp have a policy in practice that controls access to all specialized activity areas except when a group is actively supervised by a qualified adult activity leader?

YES NO

Interpretation: Access to specialized equipment and areas should be limited to persons under the supervision of qualified activity leaders. This applies to both camper and staff use of equipment and areas. “Actively supervised” means that the qualified adult is present and monitoring the activity. “Qualified” means the activity leader at least meets the requirements of PD-13 and PD-14. Levels of qualification may vary due to the age of participants and content of the activity. Procedures to limit access may include such things as scheduling, posted regulations, physical barriers, or locked areas and equipment, as appropriate.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff and camper explanation of staff coverage and access control; visitor observation of activities.

PD-18 – Safety Orientation

Does the camp require that the staff provide to participants a safety orientation, based on written procedures, before engaging in specialized program activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: The safety orientation should include safety rules and regulations, proper use of protective equipment, safety signals and practices to be used as appropriate, and necessary information on the characteristics and boundaries of the area. When using staffed public facilities or providers, the camp may supplement the safety orientation of the facility with specific safety regulations for campers.

The safety orientation should be consistent with the operating procedures for any activity (see PD-17) and all rules should be covered in every orientation. "Written procedures" may be a posted sign, or a checklist or bulleted list of items used by staff in an oral orientation.

Compliance Demonstration: Staff/camper description of safety orientation; visitor observation of written procedures for safety orientation.

PD-20 - Additional Archery Safety

DNA if archery activities are never provided.

Does the camp require the following for all archery activities:

A. Archery range design that includes:

1. Arrow stop(s), and a supplementary backstop or specific safety zone behind the targets,
2. Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers, known to the entire camp population, and
3. Clearly defined shooting line(s)?

YES NO

B. Clear safety signals and range commands to control the activity at the firing line and during the retrieval of arrows?

YES NO

Interpretation: Establishing safety buffers and zones around the archery range is critical to safe operation of the activity. All persons who may be close to the area for any reason must be aware of and oriented to the safety zones and boundaries. Camps may use posted signs or warnings, physical barriers, or specific scheduling procedures to control access.

Safety signals and range commands are the specific commands and instructions utilized to assure the orderly and safe operation of the range. Participants must learn and follow commands to demonstrate proper respect for the potential danger involved with the unsafe use of archery equipment. See Appendix for design and activity management recommendations.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of activities; staff and camper description of procedures used.

PD-XXX – Additional Firearm Safety

DNA if firearm (i.e., rifle, pistol, shotgun) activities are never provided.

Does the camp require the following for all firearm activities:

*Part A, MANDATORY

A. When not in use, all firearms stored in a locked cabinet or closet, within a locked room or inaccessible area for redundant safety; and all ammunition stored in either a third location or container, requiring a separate key or access system?

YES NO

B. Shooting range design that includes:

1. A bullet trap, or a supplementary backstop and specific safety zone behind the targets,
2. Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers, known to the entire camp population,
3. Clearly defined firing line, and
4. A backstop system and plan to recover or contain spent lead bullets so they may be safely removed from the environment and disposed of appropriately?

YES NO

C. Clear safety signals and range commands to control both the activity at the firing line and during the retrieval of targets?

YES NO

Interpretation: “Redundant safety” for firearms can also be met by utilizing gun locks on each rifle within the gun safe or lock up.

Establishing safety buffers and zones around the shooting range is critical to safe operation of the activity. All persons who may be close to the area for any reason must be aware of and oriented to the safety zones and boundaries. Camps may use posted signs or warnings, physical barriers, or specific scheduling procedures to control access.

The backstop should also be designed to enable the camp to recover and dispose of lead bullets on a regular basis in order not to pollute the groundwater. Note additional information on methods for reducing the environmental impact from bullets in the Appendix.

Safety signals and range commands are the specific commands and instructions utilized to assure the orderly and safe operation of the range. Participants must learn and follow commands to demonstrate proper respect for the potential danger involved with the unsafe use of firearms.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of activities; director/staff description of shooting range design and plan for disposal of bullets; staff and camper description of safety procedures used.

***PD-21 – Protective Headgear – MANDATORY**

Does the camp require that helmets be worn by all participants (staff and campers) when engaged in:

DNA if bicycling activities are never provided.

A. Activities involving bicycling?

YES NO

DNA if motorized vehicle activities are never provided.

B. Activities involving any kind of motorized vehicle?

YES NO

Interpretation: Part A includes any activity on a bicycle, on the road or on trails, provided by the camp, the camper or a vendor.

Part B includes any activity involving motorized vehicles such as motorcycles, motor bikes, go-karts, ATV’s, etc.

Helmets should be appropriately sized and designed specifically for the activity being conducted, as helmet construction standards vary with different activities. Helmets may be supplied by the camp or by a staffed public facility or vendor.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of activities; staff and camper description of helmets required.

PD-YY – Boarding and Skating Safety Apparel

DNA if skateboarding, snowboarding, mountain boarding, in line skating or hockey are never provided.

Does the camp require campers and staff in all boarding, in-line skating and hockey activities to wear, at a minimum, the following safety gear:

***Part A - MANDATORY**

A. Helmets?

YES NO

DNA if snowboarding is the ONLY boarding or skating activity provided.

B. Knee and elbow pads?

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard refers only to boarding activities that take place on land - skateboarding, snowboarding, mountainboarding, etc. It does not refer to wakeboarding. “Skating” includes any kind of activity on wheeled skates, such as roller blading and in-line skating. It does not include roller skating in an indoor rink.

Hockey includes both roller hockey and ice hockey, but does not include field hockey or floor hockey.

Safety gear should be appropriately sized and designed specifically for the activity being conducted, as construction standards vary with different activities. Wrist guards and gloves are also recommended, although not required by the standard. Safety gear may be supplied by the camp or by the staffed public facility or provider.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of activities; staff and camper description of safety gear required.

PD-25 - Camper supervision with public providers

Are staff who accompany campers to specialized activity facilities off site or with public providers trained on their supervisory roles and responsibilities?

YES NO

Interpretation: When campers are at specialized activity facilities off site or with public providers who bring instructors and equipment to the camp, staff must know their supervisory responsibilities. Their training needs to clarify responsibilities for such things as location of staff, camper behavior management, communication, and health-related matters. Responsibilities of staff will vary depending on the location, type of activity, clientele, and staff provided by the facility or contracted service.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of training and supervision practices.

PD – 26 – Camper involvement in program planning

Does the camp encourage the involvement of campers in the program design through the following practices:

A. The camp program is flexible as evidenced by the willingness to modify schedule and by encouraging spontaneous activities?

YES NO

B. The camp provides intentional opportunities for campers to practice decision-making in program and group living activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: For Part A, staff must be trained to respond to “teachable moments” and to modify schedules both for weather and other unforeseen situations, as well as to take advantage of a learning opportunity for the campers. They need to know the level of freedom and boundaries for spontaneous activities.

For Part B, staff must be trained to help campers make developmentally appropriate choices in their activities and daily living experiences. Programs need to be structured to offer opportunities for campers to make decisions, appropriate to the camper’s capabilities and to the activity.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of training for staff, of opportunities for spontaneous programming and camper decision-making.

PD – 27 – Social development

Does the camp program provide specific activities that help campers develop socially?

YES NO

Interpretation: The camp community provides an exceptional opportunity for growth in social awareness and skills for campers. To be effective, the camp must identify social growth as a goal and foster specific activities or experiences to provide the greatest opportunity for age-appropriate social development to take place. Staff must be trained to lead the activities, and be aware of the observable outcomes that indicate that campers are increasing in social development.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of training for staff; description of opportunities for social growth to take place in the programs and living experiences.

Program Aquatics

PA-8 - Impaired Mobility Procedures

DNA if the camp never serves persons with any kind of impaired mobility near bodies of water (natural or constructed).

To protect campers with mobility impairment around bodies of water, including those who use wheelchairs, does the camp have written safety procedures in practice that include:

1. **The occasions when support equipment is removed from persons using a wheelchair. This may include straps, seatbelts, trays, or other devices that safely secure the person in the chair.**
2. **On docks, on pool decks or near any body of water, a specific means of preventing accidental access to the water?**

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of the standard is for the camp to design and implement precautions to protect the safety of all participants, regardless of mobility needs and level of independence.

The occasions when support equipment is removed from persons using a wheelchair would include when they are riding in a small craft, or when there is the possibility of entering the water. "Preventing accidental access to the water" may be accomplished through a physical barrier around the pool, on the dock, or adjacent to a natural body of water. It may also be accomplished through special staff supervision or other appropriate means.

The documented safety practices must be designed for the specific types of mobility impairment of the campers served. These should be included as part of the safety regulations (see standard PA-5) and given to user groups.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff description of procedures utilized and instruction to user groups; visitor observation when possible.

PA-13/14 - Aquatic Sites away from camp

DNA if camp never takes campers to aquatic sites away from camp.

Does the camp have written policies in practice for use of pools, waterparks or natural bodies of water away from camp that require:

A. The following conditions be met:

1. **Campers and staff are oriented to rules and boundaries,**
2. **Trained staff assess water and weather conditions to identify hazards and determine appropriate activities,**
3. **Camper access is limited, as appropriate, and**
4. **Facility and equipment appear to be in good repair?**

YES NO

B. Rescue equipment is readily available and in good repair?

YES NO

C. Camp staff accompanying campers are trained on their supervisory roles and responsibilities?

YES NO

Interpretation: Camp staff are responsible for instruction or guarding aquatic activities at pools, beaches, lakes, and rivers, and for general camper supervision according to written policies and procedures established by the camp. Rules, boundaries, schedules, responsibilities, communication, etc, should be reviewed with all persons prior to participation.

Trained staff must evaluate possible hazards in pools and other bodies of water and limit access and activities as necessary. Such hazards include waves, rip tides, currents, lightening, and winds.

"Controlling access" may include methods such as education and scheduling. For example, at a public beach, the camp may want to designate specific times for camp participants to be in the water.

"Facility and equipment" include things such as docks, ladders, secured rafts, diving boards, watercraft, life jackets, etc/ Camp staff may need to limit activities if equipment is in obvious disrepair.

In part B, "rescue equipment" should include items such as backboards, rescue tubes, reaching devices, or designated rescue crafts, as appropriate to the activity.

Written procedures for supervision of campers at aquatic sites away from camp need to clarify camp staff responsibilities for such things as location, behavior management, communication, and health-related matters. Responsibilities of staff will vary depending on location, type of activity, and clientele.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written policies/procedures; director/staff description of areas and procedures in use; staff explanation of training and supervision practices.

***PA-15 - Swim lifeguard certification MANDATORY**

To guard each swimming activity, does the camp provide, or is each user group advised in writing to provide, a person who has current certification as a lifeguard by a nationally recognized certifying body?

YES NO

Interpretation: This standard applies to both instructional and recreational swimming activities. Staff use of aquatic facilities during their free time is covered in standard *PA-16. SCUBA activities are scored in *PA-18. See Appendix for information on approved certifying bodies. This standard applies to all situations where the camp provides aquatic personnel.

Camps must note the 2007 Department of Labor ruling that lifeguards 15 years old or younger cannot guard at natural bodies of water.

This standard applies to non-staffed public facilities (e.g. hotel pool, state park beach etc). In these situations, camps use their own staff, who must meet the requirements of this standard.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of certification cards, documentation, and/or written instructions to user groups; director/ staff description of implementation; visitor observation of randomly selected swimming activities.

***PA-X - Swim lifeguard skills MANDATORY**

Must be scored for all day and resident camps.

DNA if camp only serves user groups who provide their own lifeguards.

Does the camp have written documentation that every camp lifeguard has demonstrated skill in rescue and emergency procedures specific to the aquatic area and activities guarded?

YES NO

Interpretation: The intent of this standard is to help assure that lifeguards can execute the skills represented by the certification, and to be sure that lifeguards have the appropriate training and skills to perform rescues in the type of water/location (e.g., pool, lake, ocean, river, whitewater, etc.) and specific to the activities guarded. In some cases, additional certification may be required, as in surf or whitewater conditions. These skills must be verified and documented by the camp aquatics supervisor. When lifeguards are trained at the camp facility, the camp may want to have the lifeguard trainer complete the skills checklist.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of completed skill checklists or certifications; director and staff description of skill verification process.

***PA-18 – SCUBA Diving Activities MANDATORY**

DNA if SCUBA diving does not occur.

Whenever SCUBA diving occurs, does the camp provide, or are user groups advised in writing to provide:

- 1. For any SCUBA activities involving non-certified divers, an adult with current SCUBA Instructor rating from a nationally recognized certifying body, and**
- 2. For SCUBA activities in which ALL participants are dive-certified, an adult with at least current Divemaster certification from a nationally-recognized certifying body?**

YES NO

Interpretation: Because supervision and rescue skills required for SCUBA diving activities are specialized and different than those for other aquatic activities, the certifications for the supervising adult must be appropriate to the activity. See Appendix for information on approved certifying bodies.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of certification card(s); observation of written instruction to user groups.

***PA-20 - Watercraft guard certification MANDATORY**

To guard each watercraft activity for day and resident camp programs and for youth groups, does the camp provide, or is the user group advised in writing to provide, a person who holds one of the following:

- 1. Current instructor rating in the appropriate craft from a nationally-recognized certifying body, or**
- 2. Current lifeguard training from a nationally-recognized certifying body, or**
- 3. Other acceptable certification or license?**

YES NO

Interpretation: All boating activities in day and resident camps must have an appropriately certified person on duty with rescue skills appropriate to the activity and the aquatic location. Because most lifeguard training courses are pool-based, camps must be certain staff also have appropriate boating training and rescue skills (See PA-XX).

“Current” means within the period of time designated for the certification or licensure by the certifying body.

“Other acceptable certification or license” includes certifications and licenses accepted by ACA to meet the certification requirements of this standard. For example, persons certified in white-water rescue are deemed to have acceptable certification for those activities which take place on white water. See Appendix for information on approved certifying bodies. See Appendix for guidelines to determine how many aquatic-certified persons are required when multiple aquatic activities are occurring at the same time, such as canoeing or sailing.

Youth groups include youth user groups as well as short-term residential programs provided by camp for youth. User groups should be advised in contracts or other written instructions of appropriate certification requirements for aquatic personnel.

This standard also applies to non-staffed public facilities. In these situations, the camp staff accompanying the campers must meet the requirements of this standard.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of certification cards/ licenses and/ or written instruction to user groups; visitor observation of randomly selected watercraft activities.

***PA-XX - Watercraft Rescue Skills MANDATORY**

Must be scored for all day and resident camps and youth user groups.

DNA only if camp serves all-adult or family user groups only.

Does the camp have written documentation that every camp watercraft guard has demonstrated skill in water rescue and emergency procedures specific to the type of water and activities conducted?

YES NO

Interpretation: “Documented skills and training” in water rescue and emergency procedures refers to the ability to execute rescue skills in the location of the activity (e.g. lake, ocean, river, etc.) and specific to the watercraft being supervised. Certification courses to meet lifeguard requirements may not include rescue and emergency training specific to the craft and location. Camps may need to provide or arrange for additional skills training. See Appendix for information on training courses appropriate to these requirements.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written documentation of skills and training for specific location and watercraft.

***PA-21 - Watercraft Safety for Staff, All-adult groups, Families – MANDATORY**

DNA to day and resident campers and youth groups.

DNA if watercraft are never available for use by staff, all-adult groups or families.

For STAFF, ALL-ADULT GROUPS, and FAMILIES with parent(s) present and supervising use of watercraft, does the camp have written evidence that participants are:

1. **Supervised by certified personnel (see standard *PA-20), or**
2. **Instructed to implement written procedures that specify:**
 - a. **PFDs be worn by all persons at all times,**
 - b. **Safety regulations be followed, and**
 - c. **A designated checkout system be utilized?**

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard requires that the procedures in either #1 or #2 are followed.

“Staff use of watercraft” is primarily a seasonal staff concern. The standard is not intended to regulate use of watercraft by year-round resident site staff and their families whose use occurs at times not connected to camp programming. “All-adult group” means every member of the group participating in the activity is at least 18 years of age. “Family group” means the parent or guardian is supervising his or her own children. When other people’s children are involved, standard *PA-20 must be met.

The purpose of the checkout system is to assure that a responsible staff person is aware that staff on time off, adult members of a group, or families are utilizing watercraft and the staff person checks to see that all persons are accounted for after the activity. The checkout system may identify the participants, the equipment in use, the approximate area of use and the time of return.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written policies, director/staff explanation of implementation.

***PA 23 – PFDs – MANDATORY**

DNA if watercraft activities never occur.

Does the camp implement a policy that PFDs which are safe for use be worn by all persons in watercraft activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard applies as follows:

1. Applies to all watercraft activities including staff guarding watercraft activities from any kind of watercraft.
2. Does not apply to staff lifeguarding swimming activities from a watercraft at a swimming area.
3. Applies to staff driving boats of any kind up to 26' in length.

PFDs (personal floatation devices) are to be worn by all campers and staff in all types of small craft such as canoes, kayaks, rowboats, sail boats, ski boats and water skiing, on sailboards, etc. PFDs must be appropriate for the type of water and the activity. Check ACA resources for further information.

“Safe for use” means that PFDs are:

1. Coast Guard approved;
2. of proper type, size, and fit for each user;
3. sufficiently buoyant to support designated weight; and
4. in serviceable condition (clasps, zippers, etc are in working condition etc).

PFDs must be worn on all watercraft under 26 feet in length. For crafts over 26 feet in length, regulations that are applicable as determined by regulating organizations governing the body of water in use should be followed. Local regulations may also mandate use of PFDs for certain types of watercraft or certain ages. When user groups provide their own aquatics personnel, they must be advised of camp policies on the use of PFDs.

Exception: Because PFDs interfere with correct technique of crew-shell rowing, competitive crew shells are exempt from this standard if the following conditions are met: a motorized safety craft carrying enough PFDs for all participants is within close proximity to the shell at all times; and if a non-swimmer is aboard a crew shell, he or she must wear a PFD.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of PFD use in randomly selected watercraft activities; director/ staff description of procedures and implementation.

PA-28 - Watercraft Maintenance

Does the camp have written evidence of regular maintenance and safety checks for watercraft, including as applicable:

DNA if no non-motorized watercraft and equipment is provided by the camp.

A. A schedule for reviewing the condition of canoes, rowboats, kayaks, sailboards, sailboats, rafts, and other non-motorized watercraft, and

YES NO

DNA if no motorized watercraft and equipment is provided by the camp.

B. Written evidence of regular checks and maintenance of ski boats, personal watercraft (jet skis), powered sailboats, bumper boats and other motorized watercraft?

YES NO

Interpretation: The procedures and schedule for maintenance will be established by the camp and will vary according to the type of equipment, use and other factors specific to the camp. Reviewing the condition of non-motorized watercraft must include additional equipment such as paddles and sails. “Written evidence” of regular checks and maintenance on motorized watercraft may include maintenance logs, safety checklists, written procedures specifying when and who has responsibility for maintaining and checking equipment, etc. See ACA Resources for sample checklists.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written procedures, checklists, or logs; visitor observation of watercraft; director/staff description of procedures.

Program Adventure Challenge

PC-8 - Activity Supervision

Does the camp have a policy in practice that any use of adventure/challenge program activity areas or equipment must be actively supervised by a qualified adult activity leader?

YES NO

Interpretation: Access to adventure/challenge equipment and areas should be limited to qualified activity leaders and applies to both camper and staff use of equipment and areas. "Actively supervised" means that the qualified adult is present and monitoring the activity. "Qualified" means the activity leader at least meets the requirements of PC-3 and PC-4. Levels of qualification may vary due to the age of participants and content of the activity. Procedures to limit access may include such things as scheduling, posted regulations, physical barriers, or locked areas and equipment, as appropriate.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff and camper explanation of staff coverage and access control; visitor observation of activities.

PC-13 – Safety Orientation

Does the camp require that the staff provide to participants a safety orientation, based on written procedures, before engaging in adventure/challenge activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: The safety orientation should include safety rules and regulations, proper use of protective equipment, safety signals and practices to be used as appropriate, and necessary information on the characteristics and boundaries of the area. When using staffed public facilities or providers, the camp may supplement the safety orientation of the facility with specific safety regulations for campers.

The safety orientation should be consistent with the operating procedures for adventure/challenge activities (see PC-5) and all rules should be covered in every orientation. "Written procedures" may be posted signs, or a checklist or bulleted list of items used by staff in an oral orientation.

Compliance Demonstration: Staff/camper description of orientation procedures; visitor observation of written checklist of safety procedures.

*PC-15 – Protective Headgear – MANDATORY

DNA if climbing, rappelling, spelunking, high ropes or vertical climbing wall/tower activities are never provided.

Does the camp implement a policy that requires the use of protective headgear by all participants when rock climbing, rappelling, spelunking, using high ropes course elements or a vertical climbing wall/tower?

YES NO

Interpretation: Leaders in the climbing community are strongly committed to requiring helmets when rock climbing. The use of helmets in all climbing situations is good training and additional protection for participants. A zip line is considered "high ropes", even if camps have no other high ropes course elements.

This standard is intended to apply to "all participants", which includes instructors and activity leaders.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of activities; director/ staff explanation of policy's implementation.

PC-17 - Camper supervision with public providers

DNA if camp never uses off-site facilities or public providers for adventure/challenge activities.

Are staff accompanying campers to adventure/challenge activity facilities off site or with public providers trained based on written procedures that specify their supervisory roles and responsibilities?

YES NO

Interpretation: When campers are at adventure/challenge facilities off site or with public providers who bring instructors and equipment to the camp, staff must know their supervisory responsibilities. Written procedures need to clarify responsibilities for such things as location of staff, camper behavior management, communication, and health-related matters. Responsibilities of staff will vary depending on the location, type of activity, clientele, and staff provided by the facility or contracted service.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written camp procedures; director/staff explanation of training and supervision practices.

Program Horseback Riding

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Program – Horseback Riding found in Foundational Practices include:

- Maximum work day for horses

PH-X – Staff Skill Verification

Does the camp have written evidence that the skills of each staff member teaching or assisting in horseback riding activities are verified and evaluated by the horseback riding director or supervisor?

YES NO

Interpretation: It is the camp's responsibility to verify skills, based on recommendations of authoritative sources, even of persons with certifications. Staff should be evaluated prior to leading any activities.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written documentation of skills evaluation.

PH-XX – Horse Medications

Are all horse medications:

1. **Handled only by persons trained or experienced in their safe use, and**
2. **Secured in an area away from camper access and locked when not in use?**

YES NO

Interpretation: Medications used for horses, ponies, and other livestock are very potent due to the size of the animals for which they are developed. They often are flavored or scented so the animals are more receptive to their use. To avoid accidental ingestion, unsupervised campers should not have access to these items.

Fly spray or wipes, commonly used for horses, can be a concentrated insecticide. While fly spray and wipes are not required to be locked, all users should be trained in appropriate use.

Compliance demonstration: Visitor observation of medication storage; director/staff description of handling procedures.

PH-9 - Safety Orientation

Does the camp require that the staff provide to participants a safety orientation, based on written procedures, before engaging in horseback riding activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: The safety orientation should include safety rules and regulations, proper use of protective equipment, safety signals and practices to be used as appropriate, and necessary information on the characteristics and boundaries of the area. When using staffed public facilities or providers, the camp may supplement the safety orientation of the facility with specific safety regulations for campers.

The orientation should be consistent with the safety regulations for horseback riding activities (see PH-8) and all rules should be covered in every orientation. "Written procedures" may be posted signs, or a checklist or bulleted list of items used by staff in an oral orientation.

Compliance Demonstration: Staff/camper description of orientation procedures; visitor observation of written checklist of safety procedures.

PH-1 (New number) – Pony Rides

DNA if camp does not provide pony rides.

If camp only does pony rides, DNA the rest of the section.

Does the camp have procedures in practice for the conduct of “pony” rides that:

***Part A MANDATORY**

A. Require the use of protective headgear specifically designed for horseback riding?

YES NO

B. Provide an adequate number of qualified persons assisting with mounting and dismounting, leading the horse or pony, and assisting riders, as necessary?

YES NO

C. Utilize sound horses or ponies, and equipment that is appropriate in size and type and is in good repair?

YES NO

Interpretation: ACA defines “pony” rides as activities in which the horse or pony is led at a walk by a trained individual other than the rider, or the animal is controlled by a mechanical device that leads it at a walk. At no time is the rider expected or allowed to control the horse or pony and the rider is usually lifted on and off the animal or mounts from a mounting platform.

“Qualified” means individuals who have been trained specifically to handle and control horses, to assess level of care and assistance needed for riders, and to respond appropriately to rescue or emergency situations. The number of staff or assistants required will depend on the activities, riding area, and clientele. For riders with special needs, specific therapeutic riding training should be required for staff. See Appendix X for resource information.

Compliance Demonstration: Director and staff explanation of activity procedures; visitor observation of pony ride activity.

***PH-12 Rider Apparel – MANDATORY**

DNA to vaulting activities on a lunge line

Do camp policies in practice require the following safety apparel be worn by campers and camp staff:

***Part A MANDATORY**

A. Protective headgear specifically designed for horseback riding?

YES NO

B. Shoes or boots which provide protection from:

1. Injury from being stepped on by horses, and
2. If stirrups are used, feet becoming wedged into the stirrup (when stirrups are not specifically designed to prevent this occurrence)?

YES NO

C. Long trousers.

YES NO

Interpretation: This standard does not require the camp to use a particular brand of helmet, but highly recommends one that is approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM- approved). In consultation with authoritative sources, the camp director should determine the appropriate type of helmet based on the type and level of activity. Most horsemanship organizations (see Appendix W, page 247) can supply lists of protective head gear that have undergone safety tests and have met minimum criteria for protection. A helmet should fit the rider comfortably, not obscure the rider’s vision, and be secured with a chin strap.

Vaulting is an activity in which campers perform a combination of gymnastics and dance routines on a moving horse. See www.americanvaultingassociation.org.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of horseback riding activity; director/ staff description of policy and procedures in practice.

PH-13 – Public Providers of Horseback Riding – no change from original standard

PH-14 - Camper supervision with public providers

DNA if camp never uses off-site facilities or public providers for horseback riding activities.

Are staff accompanying campers to horseback riding facilities off site or with public providers trained in procedures that specify their supervisory roles and responsibilities?

YES NO

Interpretation: When campers are at riding facilities off site or with public providers who bring instructors, horses, and equipment to the camp, staff must know their supervisory responsibilities. Written procedures need to clarify responsibilities for such things as location of staff, camper behavior management, communication, and health-related matters. Responsibilities of staff will vary depending on the location, type of activity, clientele, and staff provided by the facility or contracted service.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/staff explanation of training and supervision practices.

Program Trip and Travel

Foundational Practices for Camp Programs and Services

Over the history of the accreditation program, standards that were initially examples of best practices in the industry have become so accepted that they are considered foundational practices. Some have also been adopted as regulations and laws by local, state and national bodies. These practices continue to be important to the delivery of a positive camp experience. It is assumed that they are in practice *as applicable* in every camp. The regular review of these foundational practices is scored in standard OM-X.

Items related to Program – Trip and Travel found in Foundational Practices include:

- **Permits and Fees**
- **Water bottles**

PT-14 – Equipment Maintenance

DNA for travel programs without specialized equipment.

Does the camp implement written procedures specifying safety checks, maintenance, and replacement of equipment utilized on trips?

YES NO

Interpretation: This standard applied to all equipment utilized on trips, supplied by the camp or by participants. Equipment includes items such as watercraft, paddles, axes, tents, stoves, backpacks, saddles, life jackets, etc. Procedures should require equipment checks prior to and during the trip and procedures for replacement or repair, if necessary.

Compliance Demonstration: Visitor observation of written procedures; director/staff description of equipment checks and maintenance.

*PT-19 – PFDs MANDATORY

DNA for travel programs in which watercraft activities never occur.

Does the camp implement a policy that PFDs which are safe for use be worn by all persons in watercraft activities?

YES NO

Interpretation: The standard applies as follows:

1. **Applies to all watercraft activities including staff guarding watercraft activities from any kind of watercraft.**
2. **Does not apply to staff lifeguarding swimming activities from a watercraft at a swimming area.**
3. **Applies to staff driving boats of any kind up to 26' in length.**

PFDs (personal floatation devices) are to be worn by all campers and staff in all types of small craft such as canoes, kayaks, rowboats, sail boats, ski boats and water skiing, on sailboards, etc. PFDs must be appropriate for the type of water and the activity. Check ACA resources for further information. When contracted services are responsible to provide equipment, the camp should assure that appropriate PFDs are worn by all campers and staff, and used as required by the standard.

“Safe for use” means that PFDs are:

1. Coast Guard approved;
2. of proper type, size, and fit for each user;
3. sufficiently buoyant to support designated weight; and
4. in serviceable condition (clasps, zippers, etc are in working condition etc).

PFDs must be worn on all watercraft under 26 feet in length. For crafts over 26 feet in length, regulations that are applicable as determined by regulating organizations governing the body of water in use should be followed. Local regulations may also mandate use of PFDs for certain types of watercraft or certain ages.

Compliance Demonstration: Director/ staff description of procedures in use.