

November 2025

**LIST OF CHANGES TO THE ACA
ACCREDITATION PROCESS GUIDE (2019)**

The following list indicates revisions/corrections to the standards as of November 2025.

Revisions/corrections are identified on pages with ****November 2025** in the footer, and specific text changes include a double asterisk (**). ***Bold italics*** indicate mandatory standards. This document is a complete revision/correction packet of all changes and includes the front/back of each page; this will allow two-sided printing of the document for easy replacement of the outdated pages in the APG.

Page 3	Acknowledgements	List of NSC members updated
Page 11	ACA	ACA's new mission and vision reflected
Page 17	Accreditation Process	Alliance for Camp Health's name change reflected
Page 22	Accreditation Process	Last paragraph revised
Page 23	Accreditation Process	Visitor and Visit information revised
Page 24	Accreditation Process	Review and Appeal paragraph revised
Page 80	AD.26.2	<i>Increased frequency of required background checks</i>
Page 81	AD.26	<i>Contextual Education and Compliance Demonstration revised</i>
Page 82	AD.27.1	Disclosure statement mandatory requirement removed
Page 82	AD.27.2	<i>Margin note updated</i>
Page 82	AD.27	<i>Contextual Education and Compliance Demonstration revised</i>
Page 136	HW.1.1.D	<i>Removed tetanus-specifying language</i>
Page 136	HW.1	<i>Contextual Education and Compliance Demonstration revised</i>
Page 152	HW.15	Removed tetanus-specifying language
Page 152	HW.15	DNA statement and Contextual Education revised
Page 161	ST.2	DNA statements revised
Page 163	ST.3	<i>DNA statements revised</i>
Page 224	PD.12.4	<i>Clarification added for downhill skiing</i>
Page 225	PD.12.4	<i>DNA statement revised</i>
Page 270		ACA's new mission and vision reflected

Acknowledgments

These standards reflect the cooperative effort of many . . .

The members of the American Camp Association (ACA) — who share ideas, suggestions, and, yes, complaints. All of these provide input for improvement. Members write, call, field test, and tell us what they want and need. These standards exist for them and because of them.

The local accreditation volunteers — visitors, facilitators, and committee members, whose incredible efforts accomplish more than 1,800 accreditation reviews and 600 visits annually, usually when they are the busiest, for they too are camp directors and camp staff!

The National Standards Commission — a small group of dedicated volunteers whose commitment to excellence in standards causes all of us to stretch professionally. A list of Commission members who contributed to this revision includes the following:

Nancy Hartmann, Chair
Kurt Podeszwa, Chair-Elect
Gabby Coburn
Mike Selep
Marie Schmid
Reid McKnight
Sarah Resch
Sandy Weaver
Tim Nielsen

The staff of the American Camp Association — and not just the staff of the accreditation team, but staff who serve affiliate offices and the staff of the ACA administrative office, the whole group who share in the work, provide understanding support, and work together to accomplish what no smaller team could accomplish alone.

Consulting Organizations:

Alliance for Camp Health (ACH)

To all of the aforementioned individuals and organizations, we give our thanks.

Disclaimer

The purpose of these standards, and of the American Camp Association (ACA), is to educate camp directors and camp personnel regarding practices and procedures followed generally within the camp industry. That educational mission is furthered to the extent that the standards provide a basis for accreditation of camps by ACA. It should be recognized that each part of every standard may not be applicable to all camps. Further, it is not the intention ACA to attempt to include every practice or procedure that might be desirable for or implemented by a camp since conditions, facilities, and the goals or objectives of all camps are not identical or uniform.

The accreditation programs of ACA are designed to be applied only to those camp programs that are consistent with the stated eligibility requirements of the identified designations. Programs outside of these criteria are not considered for accreditation.

In developing and applying these standards in the accreditation process, ACA and its local offices do not undertake to verify the continuous adherence by those camps or directors to every applicable standards or guideline; nor does the Association warrant, guarantee, or ensure that compliance with these standards will prevent any or all injury or loss that may be caused by or associated with any person's use of facilities, equipment, or other items or activities that are the subjects of these standards; nor does the Association assume any responsibility or liability for any such injury or loss. Similarly, the Association, as a nonprofit educational organization, does not warrant, guarantee, or ensure that adherence to these standards is sufficient to achieve compliance with applicable law in all jurisdictions. Camps should make themselves aware of all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and consult with legal counsel as necessary.*

Further, the American Camping Association, Inc. hereby expressly disclaims any responsibility, liability, or duty to affiliated camps, directors, camp personnel, and to campers and their families, for any such liability arising out of injury or loss to any person by the failure of such camps, directors, or camp personnel to adhere to these standards.

American Camp Association

MISSION AND VISION: The American Camp Association (ACA) believes in our mission and vision of empowering camps to create quality experiences that build a world of belonging and growth.**

The American Camp Association (ACA) is a community of camp professionals dedicated to ensuring the high quality of camp programs; fostering a greater public understanding of and support for the value of the camp experience; and expanding the number of children, youth, and adults of all social, cultural, and economic groups who participate in the camp experience. Established in 1910, ACA operates as a private, nonprofit, educational organization with members in all 50 states and several foreign countries. Its members represent a diverse constituency of camp owners and directors, executives, educators, clergy, businesspeople, consultants, camp and organization staff members, volunteers, students, retirees, and other individuals associated with the operation of camps for children and adults.

ACA provides professional development services including educational programs, a robust website, online tools and templates, conferences, and accreditation assistance and expertise; networking opportunities; monitoring of legislation at the federal and state levels; *Camping Magazine*; public relations efforts; and an online bookstore providing educational resources related to camping, conferencing, outdoor education, and youth development. ACA also serves as a resource to state and federal agencies associated with camps and youth development and to colleges and universities in the fields of outdoor education and recreation.

ACA is divided into geographic areas called “local offices.” These local offices are instrumental to program delivery, including the ACA accreditation program. Local and national officers and leaders are volunteers and serve without pay. ACA is supported primarily by the dues and contributions of its members, while other support comes from conference fees, the sale of publications, project grants, and fees for services.

ACA’s distinctive programs and diverse membership provides children and adults with the opportunity to learn powerful lessons in community, character-building, skills development, and healthy living. As a leading authority in youth development, ACA works to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience.

The American Camp Association accreditation program is a national program implemented by local volunteers within the ACA structure. The minimum criteria for accreditation are established and monitored by the National Standards Commission (NSC).

The NSC is a commission of the ACA Board of Directors of the American Camp Association whose key responsibility is oversight of the ACA's standards program. Its members are selected according to defined criteria and operate within an approved operating code. In the development or revision of standards, the NSC follows an approval process, which includes the involvement of authoritative sources, review and input by internal and external audiences, and a review by legal counsel.

The American Camp Association collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, the Alliance for Camp Health**, the Association for Challenge Course Technology, and other authoritative sources and youth-serving agencies to assure that current standards reflect the most up-to-date, research-based practices in the industry.

Content of the Standards

Accredited camps are responsible not only to meet state and local laws, but also to meet the requirements defined by the standards. Those sections of the Accreditation Process Guide include:

- *Core/foundational standards* — the goals and outcomes of the camp, respect for campers and staff, camper development, and general condition of facilities.
- *Administrative standards* — policies and procedures for which key administrative staff are responsible for writing and distributing. Topics include transportation, risk management, emergency procedures, policies related to camp staff and various program areas.
- *Facilities standards* — provision of adequate sleeping quarters in resident camps, safe playgrounds, storage of hazardous materials, and food service.
- *Health and wellness standards* — availability of first-aid equipment and personnel, the use of health histories and health examination forms, and the use of recommended treatment procedures.
- *Staff qualifications, training, and supervision standards* — qualifications for various staff roles, required staff training, supervision of camp staff, and camper-to-staff supervision ratios.
- *Program standards* — safety regulations and procedures for conducting both general and specialized activities, such as aquatics, horseback riding, challenge and adventure activities, and trip and travel camping programs.

Eligibility

The ACA accreditation program is appropriate for a wide variety of camp and out-of-school experiences. ACA accredits programs sponsored by various organizations. These organizations may be agencies, independently owned, faith-based, therapeutic, city or county governments, after school programs, or other organizations. Day camps, resident camps, and travel programs have achieved ACA accreditation status.

Camps and programs may operate on their own property or on property belonging to another entity. Programs taking place in rustic settings, well-developed settings in the woods, at neighborhood community centers, on college campuses, and K-12 schools are all eligible for ACA accreditation.

Operations that lease, rent, or otherwise make available their site and/or facilities to other program operators or sponsors who are responsible for their own staffing and programming may also seek ACA accreditation.

To be eligible for accreditation, an operation must:

- Deliver camp programs and/or provide camp facilities and services for other programs consistent with ACA's mission of enriching the lives of children, youth, and adults through the camp experience.
- Serve a primary audience with campers five years of age and older. *If the primary audience is children younger than five, accreditation through a different organization is most appropriate.*
- Conduct activities or serve camps and programs that conduct activities which:
 - ✓ *Utilize trained leadership.*
 - ✓ *Include planned and organized group interaction that contributes to participants' personal growth, which may include skills development as well as mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth.*
 - ✓ *Provide a sustained experience for participants attending for an established period of time.*
 - ✓ *Will often include the outdoors and the natural environment as a setting for activities that teach environmental stewardship and recreational skills.*
 - ✓ *Have a commitment to health, safety, and risk management.*

Programs that are only single-day and one-night/two-day programs are not eligible for ACA accreditation.

The ACA accreditation program is designed to be applicable to all types of camps, including:

- Camps that conduct seasonal or year-round operations
- Camps that are faith-based, private for-profit, government, or agency sponsored
- Camps that serve small and large populations
- Camps that operate on school or college campuses

- Camps that use paid and/or volunteer staff
- Camps that are at least three days in length
- Camps that offer day, resident, or trip/travel camp sessions
- Camps that provide facilities and services to groups
- Camps that have a decentralized or centralized program philosophy
- Camps that serve male, female, or coed individuals or groups
- Camps that provide general or specialty outdoor programs
- Camps that serve children and adults with special needs

For questions regarding the applicability of the standards to your camp or program, please call the American Camp Association at 800-428-2267.

Steps to Accreditation

Step 1 — Apply by completing the appropriate membership and accreditation application forms.

Step 2 — Remit dues and fees as described in current membership materials no later than March 1 for a visit in the summer. Non-summer programs should submit the materials a minimum of three months prior to the requested visit.

Step 3 — Complete an *Accreditation Process Workshop* that explains the process and describes the requirements for accreditation by March 31 for a visit in the summer. For programs occurring outside the summer season, consult ACA staff for training deadlines. At the time of the accreditation visit, an individual must be on the camp site who has completed the Accreditation Process Workshop and has participated in the development of materials for the visit.

Step 4 — Submit the Camp Information Form by the designated date (will vary depending on the date the application was submitted, but typically by February 1).

Step 5 — Prepare materials and written documentation required by the standards. Review and evaluate each area of camp operation, using the guidelines noted in the standards.

Step 6 — Submit the written documentation required in the Written Documentation Review by the requested date (typically by May 1).

Step 7 — Participate in the peer review, a visit by a team of ACA-trained visitors who will spend the day observing the camp and working with the director in the scoring process. This visit must occur when the camp is in full operation so that as many programs as possible can be seen in action during the camp's primary business season. Results of the visit will be reported to camps no later than October 31 for camps that were *visited in that summer*.

*Note: While a camp may be visited for accreditation during its first season of operation, accreditation is not achieved until confirmation** that all accreditation criteria are met. The "accreditation year" is November 1 through October 31.*

Because the key purpose of ACA accreditation is education, directors from currently accredited camps consistently reiterate the value of involving additional staff members in the preparation of materials necessary to verify compliance with ACA standards.

About the Visit

The Visitor

Visitors are volunteers, often with a background in camp administration, who have completed all applicable** training prior to conducting visits for ACA. Many visitors are camp directors themselves. They understand the importance of accreditation and the scope of laws, regulations, and procedures of camps.

The Visit

Accreditation visits occur on a typical program day (not the opening or closing day of a camp session) and often require a full day. Visitors typically arrive at camp during or shortly after breakfast and spend the morning touring, observing, and learning about the camp.

During the visit, visitors observe living areas; various program activity areas including aquatic activity areas; healthcare areas; vehicles used for transportation; maintenance and fuel storage areas; food preparation and dining areas; and sleeping accommodations for campers, groups, and staff. Throughout this observation, visitors should have an opportunity to interview staff and campers and observe program activities in action.

Once the camp tour is complete, visitors will meet with the camp director to assess compliance with each standard that applies to the camp. Some of the written documentation required by the standards may have been reviewed during the written documentation review; additional written documentation will be evaluated by visitors during the on-site visit. Visitors will score compliance with the standards as observed at the time of the visit.

To achieve accreditation (or reaccreditation), the camp must fully comply with each of the applicable mandatory standards and attain a passing score** in each applicable section of standards.

Notification of the Accreditation Decision

Camps visited in the summer will be notified of the results of the visit no later than October 31 of the same year. Camps visited at other times of the year will be notified between six (6) and eight (8) weeks following the receipt of the score form at the ACA, Inc. offices in Indiana.

The first accreditation cycle is typically three years; subsequent accreditation cycles will be five years unless circumstances dictate otherwise. After a camp has had two consecutive successful accreditation visits three years apart, the camp will be eligible to move to a five-year visit cycle.*

Annual Compliance

Every year, including the year of an accreditation visit, the camp must sign the annual Statement of Compliance indicating its continued compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and permit requirements. In every non-visit year, a camp director completes the Annual Accreditation Report,* an online set of questions, to show continued compliance with the standards.

Review and Appeal

If a camp fails to meet accreditation criteria, it has the right to a review and to question either the overall accreditation decision or the scoring of a particular standard. Should a camp fail a visit, they will be notified by ACA** to discuss the review process.

Differences in Some Requirement Levels

The camp standards represent basic expectations, which apply regardless of the varied types of camp programs and operations. These basic expectations, such as the provision of emergency exits in buildings and lifeguards for swimming, are to be applied to every camp seeking accreditation by ACA. There are instances where ACA standards and state laws or regulations may coincide, and others instances where they do not. Camps should always abide by the more stringent regulations, laws, or standards governing their specific camps.

Other standards vary based on who is delivering the program or services and who has responsibility for supervision of campers. For example, the requirements for the collection and maintenance of health information and for healthcare supervision may be different when the camp is operating a resident camp, versus when a weekend group rents camp facilities to run their own program.

When rental groups are responsible for their own care and supervision, camps must advise rental groups of limitations to the camp's responsibilities and the

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AD.25 NEW STAFF SCREENING (YEAR-ROUND AND SEASONAL)

Does the camp require screening for all new camp staff based on camp property (directors, counselors, administrative, and support staff; seasonal and year-round staff members; and paid, volunteer, and contracted personnel) that includes:

AD.25.1 A criminal background check for staff eighteen years of age and older? YES NO

AD.25.2 At least two reference checks and verification of previous work (including volunteer) history? YES NO

AD.25.3 A personal interview by the camp director or a designated representative? YES NO

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

MANDATORY

AD.25.1

Written
Documentation
Required

Contextual Education

Staff are considered “new” upon initial hiring and if there is a break in employment of twelve (12) months or more. Year-round staff, including directors, must be screened upon entry and thereafter according to the policy of the camp (See AD.24).

A criminal background check seeks information regarding additional criminal behavior, reported according to “levels” indicating the nature of the crime and the risk of repeat offense. The camp must have a specific plan for securing criminal background checks based on state laws, availability of data, cost, and type of staff. In many cases, a criminal record for minors may be available if a crime was committed in which the individual was charged as an adult. If a staff member is not eighteen (18) years of age at the start of employment, a criminal background check should be completed within three (3) months of the individual turning eighteen (18) if they are still employed by the camp at that time. Camps that hire international staff should take into account the screening practices of international placement agencies — in many cases, criminal background checks are provided through those agencies.

“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.

(cont.)

AD.25 NEW STAFF SCREENING (YEAR-ROUND AND SEASONAL) *(cont.)*

“Personal interviews” should occur face-to-face or by phone for all applicants, including international staff members. Even when initial interviews are conducted by a staff placement agency, camps should make their own contact with applicants before hiring to confirm language and communication skills, identify expectations for the job, determine the suitability for the specific job offered, and provide specific information about the camp program and location.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Screening procedures used
- Application or receipt for securing background checks

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of new hire screening process
- Director description of method used to verify work history

AD.26 SUBSEQUENT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

MANDATORY ALL

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: AD.26.2 does not apply if there are no year-round staff

Does the camp require a criminal background check for returning and year-round camp staff based on camp property (directors, counselors, administrative and support staff; seasonal and year-round staff members; and paid, volunteer, and contracted personnel) in the following time frames:

AD.26.1 For *returning seasonal staff*, an *annual* criminal background check for staff eighteen (18) years of age and older to be initiated prior to the arrival of campers or prior to the start of employment for any late hires? YES NO

AD.26.2 For *year-round staff*: A criminal background check for staff eighteen (18) years of age and older at least every three** years? YES NO

(cont.)

AD.26 SUBSEQUENT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS (cont.)

Contextual Education

All camp staff, paid and volunteer, employed and contracted; full-time, year-round, seasonal, and part-time; who are based on camp property 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 having contact with campers, such as food service, housekeeping, or 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. Camps that hire international staff should consider the screening practices of international placement agencies. In many cases, criminal background checks are provided through those agencies.

A criminal background check seeks information regarding additional criminal behavior, reported according to levels indicating the nature of the crime and the risk of repeat offense. The camp must have a specific plan for securing criminal background checks based on state laws, availability of data, cost, and type of staff. If a staff member is under 18 at the time of hire and remains employed upon turning 18, a criminal background check must be completed within three (3) months of their eighteenth birthday.**

Traditional background check services are single-point-in-time checks that only provide data available on the date the search is run. Some background check systems offer continuous monitoring or subsequent arrest notifications, in which the individual’s name remains active in the system and the organization is notified if a new offense occurs. Continuous monitoring or subsequent arrest notifications meet the intent of the background check requirement, even if the original check occurred more than three years ago provided the system actively tracks new offenses and notifies the camp of any subsequent criminal activity. Camps must provide written documentation that the monitoring remains active and applies to all relevant staff.**

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Application or receipt for securing background checks
- Documentation that background checks are completed for all applicable staff**

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of process used to complete background checks
- Director description of whether the background check system provides arrest alerts or is a single-point-in-time check, and how they manage follow-up screening accordingly.**

AD.27 ANNUAL STAFF SCREENING

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

MANDATORY AD.27.2**

Written
Documentation
Required

Does the camp require *annual* screening for all camp staff (18 and older) based on camp property (directors, counselors, administrative, and support staff; seasonal and year-round staff members; and paid, volunteer, and contracted personnel) that includes:

AD.27.1 A disclosure statement? YES NO

AD.27.2 A check of the National Sex Offender Public website or verification that a check of the sex offender registry of all fifty (50) states has been completed? YES NO

Contextual Education

All camp staff — paid and volunteer; employed and contracted; full-time, year-round, seasonal, and part-time — who are based on camp property 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, or 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.

The US Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW; a free service at nsopw.gov) will only reflect criminal sexual behavior. Camps must document that the sex offender registry has been checked annually and results evaluated in accordance with camp policy.**

A “disclosure statement” is a written document completed and signed by the staff member, separate from the form that authorizes a background check. A disclosure statement is a self-reported affirmation — it gives the staff member the opportunity to proactively disclose whether they have ever been involved in any criminal activity or behaviors of concern. The statement must include at minimum, attestation to the nonconviction of violent crimes and harm against children or other vulnerable populations.**

Camps are encouraged to consult legal counsel to ensure the language used in their disclosure statement is compliant with employment laws in their state including at what point in the onboarding or annual screening process the statement should be completed.**

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Screening procedures used
- Verification of completion of the check of the NSOPW (checklist acceptable)
- Blank copy of disclosure form

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of process used to complete the NSOPW check
- Director description of how and when the disclosure form is collected**

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Camps vary in their healthcare needs based on clientele, type and length of program, number of trained healthcare providers on the camp staff, and distance from professional medical facilities. Camps need to determine what type of healthcare provider and healthcare plan are in the best interest based on these factors.

All camps need a well-thought-out healthcare plan that provides for the needs of campers, staff, and rental groups. Potential health risks to the clientele need to be identified and evaluated, and plans for prevention and care need to be specified.

Depending on the type of programs and services the camp offers throughout the year, camps may need to address the requirements of standards for several types of camp operations. When a camp seeking accreditation provides day camp, resident camp, short-term resident camp, trip/travel camp, and/or leases to rental groups at any time during the year, the applicable health and wellness standards must be scored. (Note: Refer to standards in the Administration Section when rental groups are served.)

The American Camp Association standards define minimums in terms of staff, facilities, and procedures for healthcare. They also allow for flexibility in determining the specifics of healthcare planning.

Several designated standards are not scored for nonmedical religious campers or camps.

HW.1 CAMPER HEALTH HISTORY

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps

MANDATORY

Written
Documentation
Required

HW.1.1 Does the camp require each camper to submit a current, signed health history that includes all of the following information in relation to the activities in which the camper may participate:

- Record of allergies and/or dietary restrictions;
- Record of current medications, both prescribed and over-the-counter;
- Record of past health treatment, if any;
- A statement from the custodial parent/guardian attesting that all immunizations required for school are up to date (a physician statement, a government immunization report, or a school immunization report is also acceptable)**;
- Description of any current physical, mental, emotional, social health, developmental, or psychological conditions requiring medication, treatment, or special restrictions or considerations while at camp; and
- Description of any camp activities the camper should be exempted from for health reasons? YES NO

Contextual Education

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

The required signature serves as evidence that the adult camper or the custodial parent/guardian has supplied complete and accurate health information related to the camper’s participation in specific activities as outlined in AD.33.

Note: If camps have minors who do not have immunizations — for medical** or other reasons — camps may allow a signed waiver or refusal.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Copy of blank health history

Visitor Observation

- Verification that completed forms are available the day of the visit. Ensure that personal identifying info should be redacted.**

HW.14 RECORDKEEPING *(cont.)*

Contextual Education

An appropriate recordkeeping system should be developed by the camp that captures the information listed above and any other pertinent data (e.g., attempts to contact parents or contact with external healthcare providers on behalf of the camper or staff member). A bound book with preprinted page numbers and lined pages is frequently used to meet Part A of this standard. Such a system is particularly helpful when many people keep health records, or when records are kept by individuals without extensive medical training. Any system used should be reviewed by medical and legal counsel. Camps should keep separate records for campers and staff to meet OSHA regulations. Computerized records are acceptable under this standard only when there is a method of ascertaining when records have been altered.

The camp system should also include a method for capturing health records generated when a group is away from the camp's main health center.

The administration of medications on a daily, routine schedule to a number of campers and/or staff may be recorded on one form specific to that camp session and appended to the health records for that group or individual.

Regarding HW.14.2 of the standard, "professional medical treatment" includes all medical attention by or consultation with a licensed prescriber following an injury or incident.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Random logs and reports

Visitor interviews:

- Director/staff description of recordkeeping process

HW.15 STAFF HEALTH HISTORY

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term programs

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: HW.15.1 A and B**
do not apply to
short-term
programs.

HW.15.1 Does the camp request each seasonal staff member to submit a current, signed health history (and qualified medical personnel's statement if the camp requires a physical) that includes the following information:

- Based on the staff member's job description, clarification of any camp activities from which the staff member should be exempted or limited for health reasons as indicated by a qualified medical personnel (only required if the camp requires staff to have a health exam);
- A statement indicating if the staff member requires any medication that might impair their ability to perform the essential functions of their position (if so, the staff member must discuss details with the camp healthcare provide);
- Record of allergies;
- Whom to contact in case of emergency; and
- Permission to treat in case of emergency?

YES NO

Contextual Education

A "health history" is a current record of one's past and present health status that is completed and signed by the staff member (or by a custodial adult if staff member is a minor). "Current" means prepared specifically for the camp season.

The required signature serves as evidence that the staff member has supplied complete and accurate health information related to the job description.

Disclosure by the staff of a medical condition or medication that could impair his/her ability to perform the essential functions of the position may indicate that the staff member is entitled to a reasonable accommodation under the ADA. The camp should consult legal counsel with any questions and/or concerns. Such disclosure should also be treated with the strictest of confidence and be shared only on a specific need-to-know basis.

Note: If camps have staff members who do not have immunizations, for medical** or other reasons, a "record" can be a signed refusal or a signed waiver form.

If staff members 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.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Copy of blank health history

ST.2 HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Does the camp have a designated healthcare provider on site who:

ST.2.1 For day camps and short-term camps, is a licensed prescriber or registered nurse on site daily, or does the camp have access by phone or video to a licensed prescriber or registered nurse with whom prior written arrangements have been made to provide prompt consultation and other healthcare support to the camp?

YES NO

ST.2.2 For resident camps, is a licensed prescriber or registered nurse:

- A. On-site daily— either continually or at some point throughout the day to conduct in-person consultation with the on-site healthcare provider; or
- B. Available for a pre-arranged daily video “chat” with the camp healthcare provider to provide consultation and support?

YES NO

ST.2.3 For camp sessions primarily serving individuals with special medical needs, is the provider a licensed prescriber or registered nurse?

YES NO

ST.2.4 For nonmedical religious camps, is a provider an individual meeting qualifications specified in writing by the religious program?

YES NO

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: ST.2.1, ST.2.2, ST.2.3, and ST.2.4 do not apply if camp types specified are never applicable.

DNA: ST.2.1, ST.2.2, ST.2.3, and ST.2.4 do not apply for exclusively trip/ travel camps.

DNA: ST.2.1, ST.2.2, ST.2.3 do not apply for nonmedical religious camps.

Contextual Education

In ST.2.1, “access by phone” should be to a specific licensed prescriber or registered nurse who is familiar with the camp’s healthcare needs. Access to a 911 emergency phone system or “Call a Nurse” (or similar) does not qualify as access to specific medical personnel providing ongoing consultation to oversee camp health.

In ST.2.2, “daily consultation” should include checking current health concerns or recent treatments and reviewing the health log and incident/accident reports.

“On the camp site daily” or “daily video chat” refers to a time each day when a person so licensed is on the property or available via video to consult with the healthcare staff. This individual — someone with healthcare or medical training — will evaluate camp health practices, review the medication log, and consult about trends and concerns to provide advice and input on current health and wellness concerns to the designated healthcare provider in camp. The video chat can be through an established telemedical service or through another video chat service (Teams, Zoom, etc.) (*cont.*)

ST.2 HEALTHCARE PROVIDER *(cont.)*

Registered nurses and licensed prescribers are qualified to meet this standard *only if* they are permanently or temporarily licensed or recognized by the state in which the camp is located. As a general rule, professional healthcare staff trained abroad are not permitted to fulfill the functions of a doctor or nurse until they have completed state board examinations and are licensed in the state. If using video chat, it is important to confirm the licensing status of that individual to practice in the state in which the camp is located.

For camps primarily serving persons with special medical needs, provision must be made for similarly qualified substitutes when the licensed prescriber or registered nurse must be away from camp for more than twelve (12) hours in a resident camp, or more than one day in a day camp.

In nonmedical religious camps, there must be a person on duty designated to handle health and incident/accident situations who meets the qualifications specified in writing by the religious body.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Current certification cards or license of staff members meeting standard
- For ST.2.1: Written letter and/or agreement to provide consultation and support for day camps or short-term camps
- For ST.2.2: Written letter and/or agreement to provide consultation and support if using video chat for resident camps

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of healthcare provider coverage

ST.3 FIRST-AID AND EMERGENCY CARE PERSONNEL

Does the camp require an adult with the following minimum qualifications to be on duty at all times when campers are present:

ST.3.1 When access to the emergency medical system (EMS) is 30 minutes or less, certification by a recognized provider of training in first aid and CPR/AED (cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator)? YES NO

ST.3.2 When access to emergency rescue systems or EMS is more than 30 minutes, certification from a recognized provider of training in wilderness first aid and CPR/AED? YES NO

ST.3.3 For nonmedical religious camps, an individual meeting qualifications specified in writing by the religious sponsor? YES NO

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps

MANDATORY ALL

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: ST.3.1 and ST.3.2 do not apply if camp locations specified are never applicable.**

Contextual Education

“On duty at all times” means that the appropriately certified or licensed person is available in camp or on the trip, and staff or campers know how to contact them.

“Access to the emergency medical system (EMS)” means how long it would take before a person could receive a higher level of medical assistance at the site of the incident/accident.

When a camp offers trips (both short and long) off site, higher levels of certification may be required depending on the trips and anticipated access to emergency services. Camps should consider personnel requirements on all out-of-camp trips in relation to the distance requirements of this standard.

Camps should evaluate their location, clientele, and activities, and provide person(s) with a higher level of training to provide emergency first-aid coverage, if appropriate. CPR certification must be appropriate for the age of the campers served.

DNA: ST.3.1 and ST.3.2 do not apply for nonmedical religious camps.**

DNA: ST.3.3 does not apply to camp types other than nonmedical religious camps.**

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Current certification cards or licenses of staff members meeting standard

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of first-aid and emergency care personnel

ST.4 HEALTHCARE AWAY FROM MAIN CAMP

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps

DNA: ST.4.1 does not apply if there are never hikes, trips, or activity locations where the camp healthcare provider is not immediately available.

ST.4.1 For any out-of-camp trips or activity locations or situations where the camp healthcare provider is not present or nearby, does the camp require that a staff member with current first-aid and CPR/ AED certification be designated and immediately available who has been oriented to:

- Provide for routine healthcare needs for the designated group of participants; and
- Handle life-threatening emergencies related to the health conditions of the participants and the environmental hazards associated with the area?

YES NO

Contextual Education

This standard applies to overnights, out-of-camp trips, or activity locations some distance from help in case of an emergency, as well as to times when the camp healthcare provider is on a day off or is out of camp.

Orientation for staff members may include instructions concerning medications for group participants, any restrictions for group members, and general health instructions related to the activity (e.g., precautions and treatment for sunburn, dehydration, altitude sickness, and hypothermia).

“Life-threatening emergencies” refers to reasonably expected potential emergencies related to known health conditions of the participants for a particular activity. If a child has epilepsy, for instance, a staff member should be trained in how to handle seizures; if a child is known to be allergic to bee stings, a staff member should be oriented to deal with that need.

Compliance Demonstration

Visitor interviews:

- Director/staff description of healthcare coverage and orientation

PD.11 ATV SAFETY

PD.11.1 Does the camp implement policies for use of ATVs which include:

- A. ATVs operated by persons under the age of sixteen (16) are equipped with engines smaller than 90cc and steps have been taken to control the speed capability of these vehicles;
- B. No passengers are allowed; and
- C. ATVs are not operated on paved or public roads? YES NO

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: PD.11.1 does not apply if ATVs are never provided by the camp, vendors, or public facilities.

Contextual Education

Camps who use ATVs for programming (in camp, provided by a vendor, or at a public facility) should be familiar with safety studies and follow recommendations of manufacturers and safety groups such as the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Restrictions in size and power are required because young campers generally do not have the physical size and coordination to operate such vehicles safely, according to manufacturers. In addition, young campers may not have the experience and judgment necessary to operate a motorized vehicle.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- ATV use policy

Visitor observations:

- ATVs in use

PD.12 PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

MANDATORY ALL

DNA: PD.12.1 does not apply if bicycling activities are never provided by camp or vendors.

DNA: PD.12.2 does not apply if motorized vehicle activities are never provided by camp or vendors.

DNA: PD.12.2 does not apply to use of motorized vehicles for maintenance purposes. Does not apply to golf carts.

DNA: PD.12.3 does not apply if climbing, rappelling, spelunking, high ropes or vertical climbing wall/tower activities are never provided by camp or vendor. Does not apply to zip lines that end in a water source. Does not apply to manufactured climbing walls that use an auto-belay system.

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

PD.12.1 Activities involving bicycling? YES NO

PD.12.2 Activities involving any kind of motorized vehicle? YES NO

PD.12.3 For all active participants of* adventure/challenge activities that involve rock climbing, rappelling, spelunking, high ropes (including zip lines), or vertical climbing walls/towers? YES NO

PD.12.4 Activities involving boarding, in-line skating, downhill** snow skiing, and hockey? YES NO

Contextual Education

Helmets should be appropriately sized and designed for the specific activity, as helmet construction standards vary with different activities. This standard requires the use of helmets approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or UIAA. A helmet should fit the user comfortably, not obscure the user's vision, and be secured with a chin strap. Helmets may be supplied by the camp or by a staffed public facility, vendor, or may be the personal property of the camper or staff.

In PD.12.2: "Motorized vehicles" include motorcycles, motor bikes, go-karts, and ATVs.

In PD.12.3: An "active participant" is defined as:

- In spelunking, anyone participating in the activity,
- In any kind of climbing or high-ropes activity (including a zip line), the person climbing.

Camps are encouraged to define in their policy any additional situations in which other participants should wear helmets (e.g., belayers on natural rock walls, persons in the "drop zone," persons waiting on real rock walls) either for safety or to model good practice.

In PD.12.4: The term "boarding" refers only to boarding activities that take place on land — skateboarding, snowboarding, or mountain boarding. 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 or contained, smooth surface outdoor rink or ice skating. "Hockey" includes both roller hockey and ice hockey but does not include field hockey or floor hockey.

(cont.)

PD.12 PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR *(cont.)*

Compliance Demonstration

Visitor observations:

- Use of helmets on all activities

Visitor interviews:

- Camper description of helmets required

DNA: PD.12.4 does not apply if skateboarding, snowboarding, mountain boarding, in-line skating, downhill** snow skiing, or hockey are never provided by camp or vendor.

PD.13 SAFETY APPAREL

Does the camp require campers and staff to wear the following safety gear and apparel when appropriate to the activities offered:

PD.13.1 For skateboarding, mountain boarding, in-line skating, roller blading, roller hockey, or ice skating the use of knee pads, elbow pads, and wrist guards? YES NO

PD.13.2 For firearm activities, the use of ear and eye protection? YES NO

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

DNA: PD.13.1 does not apply if skateboarding, mountain boarding, in-line skating, roller blading, roller hockey, or ice skating is never provided by camp or vendor.

DNA: PD.13.2 does not apply if firearm activities are never provided by camp or vendor. DNA to ear protection for air rifles and BB guns and when “quiet” ammunition is used.

Contextual Education

Safety gear should be appropriately sized and designed specifically for the activity being conducted, as construction standards vary with different activities. Safety gear may be supplied by the camp, by the staffed public facility, provider, or individual user.

Quiet bullets are defined as those with a decibel reading of less than 85 dB(A), the noise level at which OSHA requires hearing protection in the workplace.

Compliance Demonstration

Visitor observations:

- Activities in action

Visitor interviews:

- Staff/camper description of safety gear required

PD.14 ANNUAL INSPECTION OF ADVENTURE/CHALLENGE COURSE ELEMENTS

Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term camps
- Camps serving rental groups

Written
Documentation
Required

DNA: PD.14.1 does not apply if the camp does not have a ropes course, challenge course, climbing wall, rappelling tower, zip line, or other such constructed adventure/challenge area for which they are responsible.*

<p>PD.14.1 Do qualified personnel annually inspect course elements for integrity of hardware, materials, and equipment and provide the camp with a written report including recommendations for repairs, replacement, and potential closure of an element?</p>	<p>YES NO</p>
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Contextual Education

“Qualified personnel” have current and documented experience in construction and evaluation of the type of course they are inspecting and are following authoritative sources and peer-accepted practices in construction and inspection. The expectation is that recommendations concerning the safety of the course and potential closure of an element will be addressed, including non-use of an element.

Compliance Demonstration

Written documentation:

- Procedures outlining inspection process
- Inspection report

Visitor interviews:

- Director description of qualifications of person



To the public, the ACA-accredited camp logo signifies the camp has voluntarily chosen to undergo a third-party, peer review. It serves as evidence of a camp's commitment to high standards for health, safety, and risk management and demonstrates the camp has gone to great lengths to be independently evaluated.

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