



The Review Process, New System of Feedback, and Sample Reviewer Comments

The Annual Accreditation Report (AAR) is an educational tool and annual touchpoint that supports ACA's shift from a *focus only on the site-visit* to one *on continuous compliance* with the standards and on-going quality improvement throughout the entire accreditation cycle. In every non-visit year, accredited camps must submit the **Annual Accreditation Report** to maintain accredited status; failure to submit the report will result in accreditation removal. Camps in a visit year do not submit an Annual Accreditation Report.

There are some enhancements and improvements to the AAR process that will benefit both camps and reviewers. The updates focus on the reviewer's comprehensive quality feedback to support the camp's on-going improvements and learning from this peer-review process. As with all aspects of accreditation, the AAR review is an educational process. The AAR review varies from an on-site visit where you may work with a camp through their compliance, while the AAR is about reflection on places that can make policies, procedures, and practices even stronger.

For the AAR review, we have implemented a "good, better, best" approach to strengthen your written comment. This approach allows for consistent and quick reference to the camp's response paired with a thoughtful and useful comment with your expertise on any feedback, improvements, or changes the camps should consider.

When reviewing your assigned AAR, you will see that each question has three feedback choices:

- *As described, the response **meets** the standards and intent of the accreditation program*
- **Unclear** from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
- *As described, the response **does not meet** the standards and intent of the accreditation program*

To support your feedback choice, reviewers must also provide a written comment for each answer as well. In this updated format, a reviewer will not need to ask open-ended questions, do follow-ups, or chase the camp for missing information. You will meet the camp exactly where they are and provide feedback and comment that will allow them to utilize your review in their continued compliance and improvement.

If for any reason, an AAR seems incomplete as submitted, if there are any issues, or if you have any questions, contact the [Standards Staff](#) for your region.

Understanding the Feedback Rating System:

The feedback options design allows reviewers to provide a consistent way to quantify a camp's specific response determining its quality and thoroughness. Please use the following parameters in helping to determine the feedback rating for each camp question response:

- **Select this choice: *As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program.***
 - If you feel confident that the camp director describes a thorough understanding of the standards as they apply to the question.
 - If the question was answered thoroughly and in its entirety.
- **Select this choice: *Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program.***
 - If you are unsure if the camp director understands the standards as they apply to the question

- If the question was not answered thoroughly or not in its entirety. (If there is missing information.)
- If when reading the camp's AAR response, you sought additional information (e.g., you went to the website to learn more, you skipped ahead to other questions to see if you could learn more).
- **Select this choice: *As described, response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program.***
 - If you find yourself shaking your head or saying, "hmm", or "what", or "I'm confused"
 - If the response does not apply directly to the questions asked
 - If information is missing from the response and the question is not fully answered
- **Select: *Not Seen***
 - If the question does not apply to the camps operations and you agree that their assessment that it does not apply is accurate.

Crafting Educational and Thoughtful Comments:

As an educational tool for the camps, this is your opportunity to provide feedback around their policies, procedures, and practices in a non-visit year. The goal is for your(comments to be useful for them. A great place to start is to use the related standards' contextual education to help formulate your feedback and comments. The referenced standards (in the AAR questions listed below) are from the Accreditation Process Guide (APG) v.2019. Remember, it is not the intent of the AAR to be a site-visit with yes/no scoring. Instead, the AAR is an **educational tool for the camp that emphasizes on-going improvement throughout the accreditation cycle.**

In crafting your comments, you will want to ensure they are worded as directives and not as questions:

Use directives...	...Instead of open-ended questions
<i>Consider adding...</i> <i>Remember to include...</i> <i>To meet the standards, you will want to...</i>	<i>How do you...?</i>

After using specific directives, make sure to reference directly back to the standard(s) that connect to the question. For example:

- This question is asking if you provide the guard for kayaking or does the rental group. A more comprehensive approach and to ensure compliance with the standard, you will want to clarify and add who will guard with your rental groups.

Sample Reviewer Comments:

Q1. Additional Modes: As you complete this Annual Accreditation Report please consider the changes in the modes that you will be operating at camp in 2021. The modes (Short-term Camps, Resident Camps, Day Camps, and Camps Serving Rentals) impact the way in which you answer the standards. Please list the modes which you will operate in 2021.

Note: When reviewing, take note of the modes of operation as they influence responses to the questions

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>While you may be decreasing your modes due to COVID-19, be sure to prepare for all possible modes of operation.</i>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>I see on your web site that you have a day camp; I don't see that you have mentioned that here. Be certain of which modes you operate as you manage your accreditation and ensure you are in compliance with all applicable standards.</i>

Q2. Annual Compliance Process: All accredited camps are required to have a legal representative of the camp sign the Statement of Compliance every year, even in visit years. This includes the confirmation that the camp is meeting all applicable mandatory and other standards for the camp and programs. Please provide the name and position of the staff member that is primarily responsible for making sure the camp is complying with the standards.

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>Congratulations on the retirement! Because someone new is coming into your position, check in with ACA Staff to make sure the camp's records and accreditation requirements are up to date.</i>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>I understand you may have some staffing changes and challenges with locating previous documentation related to your accreditation. If you need more time to accurately review your compliance, your statement of compliance must be in signed prior to your operation this summer season at the latest.</i>

Q3. Annual Compliance Process, cont.: Please describe the camp's annual process for reviewing, updating as necessary, and documenting that the camp is in compliance with all standards applicable to the camp.

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>Remember that annual compliance is a great opportunity for professional development for staff. Consider who else you might include. If you have other team members you can utilize to support aspects and areas of your accreditation it can help build a stronger culture of accreditation in your camp.</i>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>You say, "We review our materials every fall". This does not explain by whom and to what end. Be sure that you are taking the time to assess your policies and documents regularly.</i>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
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Comments:	<p>a) <i>You mention that a lot of your compliance materials are housed in your staff manual, which is great if it is distributed to staff. From your description, I am not clear what the process is for comparing this document to the standards to ensure everything is in compliance.</i></p> <p>b) <i>It's a good idea to make sure your organic documents (handbooks, manuals, policy manuals, etc.) are easily connected to the standards. Digital highlighting, bookmarking, tagging, etc. can help make this process efficient for this annual review and at the time of the on-site visit. Since you are using paper copies, consider using a highlighter, labeling the standard(s) which go with each page in your staff handbook, and copying the portion of the book which demonstrates compliance and putting it alongside the standard.</i></p>
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OR

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>From what you describe you are technically in compliance; however, it really benefits you, the visitors (at the time of an on-site visit) and the development of your culture of accreditation process if you can organize more finely.</i>

Q4. Staff Medication and Administration: The intent is to have staff medications secure and unavailable to anyone other than to whom it was prescribed or for whom it was purchased (over the counter). Consider potential locations where you could control access of medications. Identify and briefly describe one of these locations and then explain the camp's procedures to assure secured storage, control, and administration of **staff** medications specific to that location.

Possible Related Standards: **HW.13, HW.14**

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>You have identified how you store the medications for staff which sounds secure. I don't see that you have explained how you administer and manage the staff medications. Be sure you have a clear and consistent procedure for that.</i>

OR

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>Your method for storing medications is super smart and clever for your remote setting.</i>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>Your system is thorough and well described here for campers, however, the question is specific to staff medications. Be certain that you are as thorough around staff medications.</i>

Q5. Medication and Administration, Rental Groups: Please explain how and when you advise rental group leaders regarding your camp's expectations about medication storage.

Possible Related Standards: **AD.42, AD.43, AD.44**

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>While I understand that you advise rental groups about medication storage, make sure it is clear on when they receive this information.</i>

OR

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>Sharing your handbook with the rental group is a nice way for them to understand the overall culture of your programs and community, however, that is not enough to be sure they are clear on the specifics of medication storage while at your site. Be sure to clarify those details for them. I</i>

	<i>have seen some camps provides a handbook specifically for the rental group so that all your written documentation of policies and procedures are easily disseminated that are specific to them (and not your overall operations). This could also be done as part of the contract, or a memo of understanding (MOU).</i>
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OR

Feedback:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	Even though the "rental Group" is from within your organization, be sure to specify that they are responsible for medication storage while using your site.

Q6. Healthcare Policies and Provider Licensing: Healthcare policies are to be reviewed at least every 3 years by a licensed healthcare professional, and camps must also have access to a licensed provider based on type of camp mode. Identify both the person who last reviewed the camp's healthcare policy as well as the person who will be your healthcare provider, and types of licenses they hold and then: **(a)** Please describe how you will confirm that the licenses for both the policy reviewer and healthcare provider are current and valid within the state(s) in which the camp operates. What is your source for confirmation? If camp operates in multiple states, is the license reciprocal to all states? **(b)** What is the date of last review?

Possible Related Standards: **HW.9, HW.7, ST.2**

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>Take care when you look up health licensures in your state to confirm the expiration date, in case it expires during the camp season.</i></p> <p>b) <i>As a reminder, you are due for a review this year (at least every 3 years).</i></p>

Q7. Confidentiality of Camper Information: A parent has shared confidential information about their camper (for example: has night terrors, is highly anxious, and is allergic to peanuts). Please describe the system your camp will use to disseminate this information and to keep it confidential. Include **(a)** who decides on who receives information and what information; **(b)** how is the information disseminated; and **(c)** how the information is kept confidential.

Possible Related Standards: **HW.1, HW.8, HW.10, ST.30**

Rating:	As described, the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>The forms you use are a great idea! How you have it divided out so that the participant breaks out the info for you is brilliant. I have not seen that before where they provide info the health staff, info for the residential counselor, info for activity staff, information for the kitchen and information for everyone. That's an idea to share with others for sure.</i></p> <p>b) <i>You share the information differently with each group. That is a nice adjustment. You've customized how you share so the kitchen has the info in a notebook in the kitchen while counselor has it tucked away on an i-Pad. That's an idea to share with others.</i></p>

OR

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>It wasn't clear how you keep the kitchen information confidential. I understood that it is in a notebook which is kept in the kitchen. What wasn't clear is the physical set up of your kitchen area. To keep this information confidential, make sure your set up keeps the notebook accessible only to those authorized to see it.</i>

OR

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
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Comments:	<i>While I can understand that you may not deal with this often in your camp, there should be a plan in place for how and what you will share with who if the need does arise in your camp. I recommend that you strengthen this with a general policy that can be a starting point for managing camper information. You may also find it useful to create a list of information that is considered confidential and information that is now.</i>
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Q8. Aquatic Supervisor Verification: Watercraft activities include all use of small craft (e.g., canoes, sailboats, rowboats, kayaks, rafts, paddleboards, personal watercraft, motorboats, and fishing boats). It also includes boardsailing, tubing, waterskiing, rafting and so on. **(a)** Please list ALL the watercraft activities that you offer. **(b)** Please describe what written documentation you require for the supervisors of each watercraft activity, and **(c)** Please describe how you verify that documentation.

Possible Related Standards: **ST.11, ST.12**

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>Your web site shows people on paddleboards, I don't see that listed here. If you offer or will offer paddle boarding, be sure to identify that as a watercraft activity.</i></p> <p>b) <i>A resume helps you in the hiring process, however, it is not acceptable documentation to show a supervisor's qualifications. Instead you'll want a copy of the certification which is listed on the resume.</i></p> <p>c) <i>A copy of the certification or third party verification of experience will work to meet the standards related to qualifications.</i></p>

OR

Rating:	As described, the response does meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>Wow! You offer a lot of waterfront activities! How great!</i></p> <p>b) <i>Your system for storing and sharing your waterfront documents sounds meticulously organized. Your visitors will thank you immensely!</i></p> <p>c) <i>How easy that the vendor works with a lot of camps and gets to you those detailed documents and that they update it midseason in case they have had staff changes.</i></p>

Q.9 Daily Accountability of Campers: **(a)** Please describe how staff know daily who is in their activity or grouping. **(b)** Please explain how and when campers are accounted for daily and who performs this task. **(c)** Please indicate how frequently during the day this task is performed.

Possible Related Standards: **AD.23**

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>You state that staff are given a roster for the week which is what they use for attendance. Be sure to clarify how these rosters are updated when there is a change, so staff have an accurate attendance sheet for each day.</i></p> <p>b) <i>You account for attendance during activities, be sure to also clarify accountability of campers outside of the activity time periods such as meals or group activities.</i></p> <p>c) <i>I don't see that you have indicated how often you take attendance. Be sure to include that in your policies and practice.</i></p>

Q10. Accountability of Campers: If someone does not arrive to an activity or grouping, **(a)** Please describe what the counselor is to do next? (Response should include the care of other campers in group and details of who is informed and

how.) After it is determined that a camper's whereabouts are unknown, **(b)** please describe the steps prior to activating your full missing person search.

Possible Related Standards: **AD.19, AD.20**

Rating:	Unclear from what is written if the response meets the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>The fact that you have two staff at all activities works great for your system of sending a runner. To be prepared in case that does not happen, consider having a secondary way of communicating to the office if a camper does not show up at an activity or grouping. Have a secondary option.</i></p> <p>b) <i>You outline the staff's role, be sure to specify where the camper's go (or stay).</i></p>

Q11. Leased, Rented, or Chartered Vehicles: Camps who lease, rent, or charter vehicles need to communicate with the vendors used and obtain specific safety information and documentation. Consider your transportation vendor(s), the types of vehicles obtained, and the uses of those vehicles. **(a)** Please describe the type of written documentation obtained from the vendor that confirms their regular maintenance and safety checks for those vehicles. **(b)** If driver(s) are provided by the vendor, please describe the process and/or documentation used for verifying the acceptable driving record and experience of all drivers provided by the vendor.

Possible Related Standards: **AD.10**

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>The email from the vendor should be specific to show that it includes information about what they do to maintain the vehicles. To help get what you want as documentation, you might want to include the actual accreditation standards in your communication with them.</i></p> <p>b) <i>You've described the process, be sure to have this in written form.</i></p>

Q12. Behavior Communication: You have trained your staff in behavior management and discipline and the techniques have been tried. If a camper continues to act inappropriately (disturbing other campers) and staff involved are extremely frustrated. **(a)** Please list who they (the staff) turn to for support. **(b)** Please describe what the next step will be. **(c)** Please list any behavioral incidents, if any, result in the camp contacting a parent. **(d)** Please name the person and position of the individual who contacts the parent. **(e)** Please describe how and where this behavior incident is documented.

Possible Related Standards: **AD.14**

Rating:	As described, the response does meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>That is great that you have a behavior specialist on staff.</i></p> <p>b) <i>That is a great step you take to have the behavior specialist or director observe the behavior firsthand, if appropriate.</i></p> <p>c) <i>Your list is very specific and detailed. Thorough.</i></p> <p>d) <i>Because it could be the director or the behavior specialist or the health care staff who calls the parents, consider having a second person present as a witness to the conversation</i></p> <p>e) <i>Another great detail here in that you have the director sign the form to show it has been reviewed. That's a great idea and worth sharing.</i></p>

Q13. Health and Wellness: Parent Notification: Parents or guardians must have a clear understanding of the camp's policies for when they will be notified if their camper becomes ill or injured. **(a)** Please describe when and where parents/guardians are given your written policy on notification of situations involving an illness or injury to their camper.

(b) Please describe how they will be notified and by whom. **(c)** Please describe how this communication is documented. **(d)** For illness, please explain when a parent/guardian is notified. **(e)** For an injury, please explain when a parent/guardian is notified.

Possible Related Standards: **HW.14, HW.8, HW.3**

Rating:	As described, the response does meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>I understand that this information is in your parent handbook. With the culture of your camp, might it help your families if this was highlighted? Consider how to verify they understand when they will be notified or perhaps mention it in a communication specific to camp communication with families or post on the website or?</i></p> <p>b) <i>Glad to hear the ACA resources are helpful for you and that you use them for your documentation. Thanks ACA.</i></p> <p>c) <i>You might want to clarify a bit more about how this is carried on your adventure trips.</i></p> <p>d) <i>Your in-camp description is detailed and thorough, try to have your out of camp be just as specific.</i></p>

Q14. Watercraft Guard: Watercraft activities include all use of small craft (e.g., canoes, sailboats, rowboats, kayaks, rafts, paddleboards, personal watercraft, motorboats, and fishing boats). It also includes boardsailing, tubing, waterskiing, rafting, and so on. Many watercraft activities can be guarded by a certified lifeguard. However, an instructor rating in the watercraft activity is also acceptable. **(a)** Please share how you determine if a watercraft activity will be guarded by a lifeguard, current instructor rating in the craft or other acceptable method. **(b)** If rental groups participate in watercraft activities, please describe who is responsible for providing a certified guard/watercraft instructor, and **(c)** Please describe how this is communicated to the rental group.

Possible Related Standards: **ST.15, ST.17, AD.37, AD.41**

Rating:	As described, the response does meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<p>a) <i>That's great that all staff are lifeguard certified and that in addition you are able to find staff with the instructor rating for the craft.</i></p> <p>b) <i>This question is asking if you provide the guard for kayaking or does the rental group? Be sure to verify who will guard with your rental groups.</i></p> <p>c) <i>Perhaps you can add this detail to your rental group handbook or rental agreement.</i></p>

Q15. Watercraft Guard Rescue Skills Rehearsed: Please share your process for evaluating the rescue skills of your watercraft guards specific to each activity they are guarding (i.e., canoe rescues for those guarding canoeing, paddleboard rescues for those guarding SUP, water ski for those guarding at a water ski activity).

Possible Related Standards: **ST.15**

Rating:	As described, the response does meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>You verify the rescue skills at the start of the summer. Consider setting up regular rehearsals throughout the season.</i>

OR

Rating:	As described, the response does not meet the standards and intent of the accreditation program
Comments:	<i>You mention that you offer lifeguard training on site, however, that does not qualify as watercraft guard rescue skills rehearsed. You offer canoeing, rowing, and sailing. For each of those craft the staff who guard those activities need to have their boat rescue skills practiced on site and documented. Be sure to resolve this detail as rescue skills rehearsed is part of a mandatory standard.</i>