THE VALUE OF **ACCREDITATION**

Professionalism and Accountability for Camps

**ACA Accreditation Is for You**
Overnight • Day • Private Independent • Nonprofit • Faith-based • Medical Needs • Sports, Music, Science, or Art • Camps that Rent to Others • Camps that Run on Public or Private Property

**Purpose of ACA Accreditation**
1. Accreditation educates camp owners and directors in the administration of key aspects of camp operation, particularly those related to program quality and the health and safety of campers and staff.
2. Accreditation establishes guidelines for needed policies, procedures, and practices.
3. Accreditation assists the public in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards.

**Value of Accrediting Your Camp**
1. Accreditation is evidence your camp meets industry-accepted and government-recognized standards.
2. Accreditation demonstrates the camp is taking responsible steps toward the health and safety of campers and staff.
3. Accreditation provides you with one additional marketing opportunity — to promote your achievement of excellence and the highest recognition from the only national accrediting body of camps.
4. The accreditation process creates guidelines and operating procedures for staff, providing consistency across seasons in the event of staff turnover.
5. Accreditation standards have been formulated to provide specific actionable guidance so you don’t have to guess.
6. Accreditation confirms you were successful in a peer-review process.
7. Accreditation is the standard in a court of law.
8. Accreditation can reduce insurance rates.
9. A growing number of grants and funding opportunities require or weight ACA accreditation.

**Since 1935,** the American Camp Association (ACA) has set the performance standard for camps. The ACA Accreditation Program has shown its excellence time and again as it has responded to changes in the camp industry, growing expectations of the public, and the challenges of operating a business in today’s highly regulated society.

**Ready to Get Started?**
Connect with ACA Staff
765-342-8456, press 1

LEARN MORE ACACAMPS.ORG
# Benefits of Accreditation

**Accreditation Addresses All Aspects of Camp Management and Operation**
- Goals and Outcomes of the Camp
- Condition of Facilities
- Food Service
- Risk Management
- Communication
- Emergency Procedures
- Staff Screening, Hiring, and Training
- Transportation
- Medication Storage and Administration
- Camper Health Information
- Healthcare Policies and Treatment Procedures
- Counselor to Camper Supervision Ratios
- Staff Qualifications
- Program Guidelines
- Equipment Maintenance and Inspection

## Your Commitment

- **Take an Accreditation Process Workshop** — At least one person from each camp must take this workshop. Courses are offered around the country, are in person, are 4.5 hours long, and are free.
- **Review Your Practices** — You and your team will undertake the process of reviewing your practices with the standards in mind, and writing policies, procedures, guidelines, and staff training materials.
- **Apply and Pay Fees Annually** — Camp fees are paid annually and relate to the camp’s operating budget. Camp fees are typically less than 1 percent of a camp’s operating budget.
- **No Hidden Costs** — There are no additional fees in visit years, or for training, mentoring, template documents, the Accreditation Process Guide, or the My Accreditation online tool, all of which will support your work.

## Your Timetable

ACA recommends the camp leadership expect a minimum of six months but more generally eight to 18 months preparation time. A nine-month schedule looks something like this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
<th>SUMMER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply and pay fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take an Accreditation Process Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Receive complimentary <em>Accreditation Process Guide</em> and access to My Accreditation Online</td>
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<td>Attend Accreditation Office Hours, one-hour Zoom meetings on specific standards topics</td>
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<td>Review, write, and update policies and procedures</td>
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**March** — ACA assigns your visitor; you communicate with the visitor

**May 1** — Your written documents for 26 pre-identified standards ready for review by visitor

**November 1 (following summer visit)** — Celebrate your success; announce your accreditation status to your camper families and the media

You host your visitors on a day mutually agreed upon.