

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

- Visitor Gathering at National Conference
- We Need You!
- Decisions of the National Standards Commission
- Operational Changes to Accreditation
- New News
- Instructor Corner

THANK YOU!

WOW – over 1,125 visitors conducted 815 accreditation visits this summer! It was another banner year for ACA and this stellar program. We can't say it enough – without your dedication, support, passion, and commitment – this program would not exist.

We know that for many camp directors, ACA accreditation visitors are the face of ACA. You may be one of the only ACA members with whom that camp director has interaction. Thank you for helping make the connection a positive one. If you enjoy being a visitor, share the opportunity with others. As we like to say, it is one way to see the behind-the-scenes operations of other camps and is a great educational opportunity. THANK YOU!

VISITOR GATHERING AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE!

If you will be attending the 2016 ACA National Conference in Atlanta, February 9-12, mark your calendar for a Visitor Appreciation Gathering! It is happening on Wednesday evening February 10, Third Level Room 302 from about 8:30 –9:30 p.m. Join us for some fun, fellowship, updates on what's happening with standards and accreditation, and the opportunity to win some cool prizes. Please count on joining us!



WE NEED YOU!

As key volunteers and staff are in the process of making visitor assignments, it is critical you communicate your desire to serve as a visitor (or not). AND, if you agree to serve as a visitor – PLEASE follow through on that commitment. The camp and other volunteers are counting on you. Communicate with your assigned camps as you prepare for your visit and with your volunteer standards chair and/or the support staff should you need to change your assignments. THANK YOU!

DECISIONS OF THE NATIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

New Standard on 1:1 Camper/Staff Interaction Introduced – effective 2016 Season

HR.8.B.1: Does the camp provide training to all staff to minimize the potential of any staff member being in a one on one camper/staff situation when out of sight of others?

AND/OR

HR.8.B.2: Does the camp advise rental groups to provide training to all staff to minimize the potential of any rental group personnel being in a one on one camper/personnel situation when out of sight of others?

See [MANDATORY! One on One Camper/Staff Interaction](#) for the standard and Contextual Education.

Missing Four (4) or More Mandatory Standards

Any camp that misses four or more mandatory standards will be required to have a complete visit the following summer (even if the ICA is accepted). Why the change?

The National Standards Commission feels that as camps are fully aware of all mandatory standards and the need for these standards to be continually met, this is an appropriate action to help maintain and strengthen the integrity of ACA accreditation.

Change When Standards Become Effective

Over the past several years, the NSC has released any revisions to standards and/or new standards in the fall. Only mandatory standards were to be effective for all camps the following season. Non-mandatory standards became in effect at the camp's next visit.

Effective in 2016, when any change/revisions to standards are made (mandatory or not), the change/revision will become effective in the next season. As we move to a 5-year visit cycle, the NSC felt waiting five (5) years for a camp to come into compliance with any standards is too long.

Exceptions to the policy of when standards will be released (other than in the fall) include when changes to the standard effectively "lower" the standard (from mandatory to non-mandatory) OR when there is sufficient evidence the standard greatly impacts the health and safety of campers and staff.

Additional APG Updates – Make Sure Your APG is Updated (depending on when your APG was printed, some of these notes might need to be written in)

- **Page 95 HW.24** Health Screening for Resident Camp Staff - **Delete HW.24.1-B-3**, the requirement for healthcare staff to collect staff medication.
- **Page 126 HR.3** Hiring Policies - Clarify to whom standard HR.3.3 applies, and add mandatory requirement for criminal background check for year-round staff (every five years). Addition to Contextual Education.

NEW DNAs! (Initially shared on the ACA Website spring 2015)

- **PD.29.3** Does Not Apply (DNA) when climbing on a manufactured climbing walls that use an auto-belay system (Effective immediately - It is at the discretion of the camp should they use helmets on a wall with this type of belay system) Posted April 2015
- **PD 31.5** Does Not Apply (DNA) Ear protection for Air rifle and BB guns.

January 2016 NSC Decision!

The status of HW.23 (Staff Health History) is changed from MANDATORY to NON-MANDATORY. This is due to the complications in employment regulations that make meeting this standard in some regulatory areas difficult. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY!

OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO ACCREDITATION

By now you should have heard/read about the operational changes to ACA Accreditation. At the August ACA Board of Directors meeting, a recommendation put forth by the National Standards Commission to adapt the accreditation process was unanimously approved. The recommendation reads as follows:

In non-visit years, all currently accredited camps will complete/submit an Annual Accreditation Report, which will eventually include the Annual Statement of Compliance. This report will be reviewed by trained standards volunteers.

After a camp has successfully completed two accreditation visits, it will move to a five-year visit cycle. (The first accreditation cycle will be three years, and subsequent accreditation cycles will be five years.) All current, eligible accredited camps will move to a five-year cycle.

With the implementation of an Annual Accreditation Report (AAR), the American Camp Association is shifting from a focus only on the visit to a focus on continuous compliance with the standards. This shift will emphasize ongoing quality improvement throughout the entire accreditation cycle. In most years, camps will demonstrate their compliance with accreditation standards by submitting a narrative report (the AAR). At least every fifth year, they will demonstrate their full compliance through an on-site visit.

Field/Affiliate Offices included in the 2016 Phase of this change include: ACA, Great Rivers. ACA Indiana, ACA New England, ACA New Your New Jersey, ACA Northern California, ACA Southeastern, ACA Southwest, ACA St. Louis, ACA Virginias.

See more at: <http://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/accreditation-standards/future-accreditation>

If you are a Visitor in a Field Office/Affiliate Office that is not included in the 2016 Phase and would like to serve as a Reviewer of the Annual Accreditation Report, please contact Rhonda Mickelson at rmickelson@acacamps.org. This is another great opportunity for visitors who want to stay involved yet, for whatever reason, don't feel they can conduct an on-site visit in the summer. It is anticipated these reviews will take 30-45 minutes.

Opportunity for Digital APG and Update Your Information

In order to better support all visitors, ACA provides the opportunity for all current visitors to request a fully updated digital version of the Accreditation Process Guide. To obtain your copy:

- Start at: <http://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/accreditation-standards/standards-visitors/my-visits-tool>
- View the tutorials for use of My Visits, if you have not yet done so
- Sign in to My Visits
- Once you are in, go to Update My Visitor Information.
- Read and agree to the statement **I understand the PDF document of the APG from the My Accreditation tool has all-inclusive revisions to date and is for my personal use ONLY and is not to be shared with others.*
- A PDF version of the standards and the glossary will be emailed you immediately.

While at this site, take a few minutes to update/complete the additional information requested.

NEW NEWS

New Web Design!

If you have not already done so – please check out the NEW ACA Website. It is great! www.acacamps.org

INSTRUCTOR CORNER

As you prepare to teach/complete teaching a course, please remember:

- The MOST UP TO DATE resources for all courses can be found at: <http://www.acacamps.org/about/leadership/volunteers/standards-instructors>
- Make sure to take time to review all materials several days prior to your course!

- Once a course is complete, make sure the roster is sent to Jamie at jbox@acacamps.org
- Let us know if you have any questions! We're here to support you.

BY THE NUMBERS...

