

ACA STANDARDS ASSOCIATE VISITOR/VISITOR — SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Overview

Visitors are the heart and soul of the ACA accreditation program. ACA cannot provide accreditation services to camps without them. ACA relies upon visitors’ commitments to participate in the visits to which they have agreed, and their communication and follow-through before, during, and after visits are completed. Visitors serve at two levels: associate visitor and visitor.

Associate visitors are those who have successfully completed the requirements of the Associate Visitor Course. They participate as second (or third) visitors on a visit team, conducting visits to verify a camp’s compliance with all applicable ACA standards.

Visitors fulfill the same responsibilities as Associate Visitors (verifying compliance with the ACA standards on the day of the visit). However, those who accept the role of visitor must also be capable of and willing to serve as lead visitors, including making final decisions on scoring for camp visits.

Prerequisites, qualifications, required training, desired competencies, and the approval processes for both visitor roles are outlined in the chart below. Both roles are critically important to the operation of the accreditation program.

	Associate Visitor	Visitor
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and acceptance of the Professional Code of Conduct for ACA Visitors • Complete current Accreditation Process Workshop • Submit the Associate Visitor Application • Current ACA membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and acceptance of the Professional Code of Conduct for Visitors • Active associate visitor status • Successfully complete the number of visits recommended by the Associate Visitor Course Instructor • Current ACA membership
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 21 years old • Maturity and good judgment • Knowledge of and administrative experience in organized camping, preferably in ACA-accredited camps • Understanding of the mission of ACA and the purpose of the ACA accreditation program • Basic knowledge of the application of ACA standards • Understanding of the role of a camp professional • Willingness to conduct at least one accreditation visit every other year 	Associate Visitor Qualifications, AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 25 years old • Thorough knowledge of the application of ACA standards • Willingness to accept the additional responsibilities of serving as a lead visitor when assigned to that role.
Required Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Visitor Course (including online pre-course) • Visitor Update training, at least once every three years, or as required by the NSC* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Update training, at least once every three years, or as required by the NSC*
Desired Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated strong oral and written communication skills, including demonstrated skill and comfort with technology • Demonstrated strong observation skills 	Associate Visitor Competencies, AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated understanding of the role of education in the accreditation process • Demonstrated understanding of the complexities of different types of camp operations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated flexibility, patience, and objectivity • Ability to respect, articulate, and understand different viewpoints and to put aside assumptions that their own camp's practices are the best or only way to comply with standards • Ability to work as a member of a team • Demonstrated ability to use positive conflict resolution steps and manage conflict • Ability to relate well to a diverse field of camping professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to lead a team and guide a process to a final result • Ability to interpret standards in multiple settings and clearly explain those interpretations • Ability and willingness to assume ultimate authority on standards applicability and compliance decisions • Ability to relate to people in a positive and supportive manner
Approval	<p>Annual approval of Associate Visitor status is given by the LCOL+/Board, based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful completion of required prerequisites and training • Recommendation of the Associate Visitor Course instructor(s) • Continued ACA individual membership 	<p>Annual approval of Visitor status is given by the LCOL+/Board, based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indication by the candidate that he/she is ready to assume full responsibility for making visit arrangements (including coordinating with the camp and other visitors) and compliance decisions on visits • Indication by the candidate that he/she is willing to work with new associate visitor as necessary • Successful completion of recommended number of visits as an associate visitor • Commitment to accreditation as evidenced by completion of training, timely follow-through, and effective communication • Demonstrated ability to assume full responsibility for making visit arrangements and compliance decisions on visits

*National Standards Commission
+Local Council of Leaders

Visitor Responsibilities

All Visitors:

1. Commit to the Visitor role, including prompt communication before, during, and after visits.
2. Be present at visits you've agreed to complete, or assist in finding a potential solution (substitute, date change, etc.) if a scheduling conflict arises.
3. Assist in the interpretation of the Accreditation Program's purpose, background, function, and process.
4. Immediately communicate any concerns and/or questions to the local standards chair or designated ACA staff member.
5. Provide information in the Review or Appeal Process, as needed or requested.
6. Complete an evaluation after the completion of each assigned visit.
7. Maintain active visitor status (*current ACA member, complete updates as required, and participate in at least one visit every two years or conduct an Annual Accreditation Review annually*).

When Serving as a Second/Third/Additional Visitor (whether Associate Visitor or Visitor)

1. Prior to the on-site visit:
 - a. Assist the lead visitor and camp standards contact in evaluating all aspects of the camp operation.
 - b. Assist the lead visitor in reviewing documentation for the Written Documentation Review.
2. Fully participate with the assigned visitor team in the on-site standards visit:
 - a. Observe all aspects of camp operation and interpret the standards as related to each camp visited.
 - b. Assist lead visitor with scoring each standard "Yes," "No," or "DNA" on the Score Form, and ensuring all comments are recorded.

- c. Inform the camp director/administrator of the responses as they are recorded.
3. When appropriate, provide feedback to aid the camp personnel in developing their own observation skills of as related to the standards.

When Serving as the Lead Visitor

Those who do not want the additional responsibilities of serving as a lead visitor should not accept the Visitor role and should remain as associate visitors.

1. Lead communication about the visit with the camp standards contact and other visitor(s).
 - a. Review the Camp Information Form and verify its accuracy with camp standards contact.
 - b. Arrange with the camp standard contact to complete the Written Documentation Review by the May 1 deadline.
 - c. Coordinate the date and details of the on-site visit with the camp standards contact and other visit team members, preferably within two weeks of receiving the assignment.
2. Lead the assigned visitor team during the on-site standards visit:
 - a. Determine how the visit will be conducted (e.g., with visitors viewing separate areas, as a team).
 - b. Observe all aspects of camp operation and interpret the standards as related to each camp visited.
 - c. Make final decisions on scoring and compliance decisions.
 - d. When appropriate, provide feedback to aid the camp personnel in developing their own observation skills of as related to the standards.
 - e. Ensure that each standard is accurately scored "Yes," "No," or "DNA" on the Score Form, and all comments are recorded.
 - f. Inform the camp director/administrator of the responses as they are recorded.
 - g. Review the score form with the camp standards contact and the other visitor(s), securing all required signatures.
 - h. When necessary, complete the ICA Response Form and follow through with the ICA process.
 - i. Immediately following the visit, mail all required visit materials using the provided envelope.

When Serving as a Document Reviewer for an Accreditation Visit (may or may not be a visitor who participates in the on-site visit)

1. Review the materials shared on the timeline agreed with the camp and all assigned visitors.
2. Contact the camp directly with any questions about the documentation shared.
3. Determine whether the documentation presented meets the standard for the written documentation or whether additional information is necessary to demonstrate compliance.
4. Share results with the camp standards contact and all assigned visitors, prior to the on-site visit, as soon as the review is complete.

When Serving as a Reviewer for the Annual Accreditation Report

1. Conduct the review of the report within two weeks of assignment or contact the ACA standards staff with whom you work member immediately if you cannot complete the review as assigned.
2. Immediately follow up with the camp contact if you have any questions that require additional information from the camp.
3. Understand the difference between the AAR and documentation used to verify compliance with the standards. The AAR is completed with a written narrative. Policies and procedures may be referenced or quoted but do not have to be shared in their entirety.
4. Confirm acceptance of the report when it has been satisfactorily completed.

Professional Conduct for Visitors