

**GUIDE TO REVIEW AND NATIONAL REVIEW**

Any camp that fails to meet the criteria for American Camp Association accreditation has a right to a review of its scores by its ACA local leadership and, if not satisfied with the review process, an appeal to the National Standards Commission (NSC).

The established criteria for accreditation are:

1. The camp must comply with all applicable mandatory standards;
2. The camp must have earned scores of at least 80% in each area of standards scored;
3. The camp owner/director must have paid appropriate dues and fees; and
4. The camp owner/director must have a current signed Statement of Compliance for camp accreditation on file at ACA.

**Review Steps**

The review occurs at the local level.

**Review Step #1: Notification**

The ACA Administrative office will notify the camp by email and/or certified mail that it has not met one or more of the established criteria for accreditation. The letter will contain instructions and a form for requesting a review.

**Review Step #2: Initiation of Review**

Once a camp is notified that it does not meet one or more of the criteria for accreditation, the director/administrator has 21 days to initiate a review. To initiate a review, the director/administrator completes and returns the *Camp Request for Review* form to the local standards chair or designated staff. The request should specifically indicate which standards or areas need to be reviewed, what outcome is sought, and the rationale. A copy of the request for review should also be sent to ACA, Inc. administrative office.

NOTE: A formal review may not be necessary if the only criterion the camp failed to meet was a mandatory standard that was corrected and properly documented within the given time frame. Utilizing the Immediate Corrective Action process automatically initiates a review of the mandatory standard(s) missed by the visitor and the local volunteer leadership. The camp will be notified by the local office if a formal review is necessary and will be given the opportunity to participate in a hearing.

Upon the initiation of a review, the camp's accreditation classification will revert to its status prior to the visit until the completion of the review.

**Review Step #3: Hearing**

The local standards chairperson will notify the camp of the date and place/method of the review hearing. The director/administrator has a right to be ‘present’ at that meeting but may waive that right. She or he may also request a hearing by telephone. During the hearing, it is the camp's responsibility to inform the local Standards Committee what actions it is seeking and why those actions are justified. It is to the camp's advantage to be very specific and to present as much documentation as possible that was **in existence at the time of the visit in writing.**

Following the hearing, the Standards Committee has three options it can recommend to the LCOL/Board:

1. *Recommend the camp not be accredited.* If the Standards Committee decides that the visitors scored the standards correctly, and there is no valid, substantive reason for an exception, a recommendation will be made that the camp not be accredited. Similarly, for mandatory standards missed, if the Standards Committee confirms the visitor's determination that documentation presented has not met the criteria for Immediate Corrective Action, a recommendation will be made that the camp not be accredited.
2. *Recommend the camp be accredited*. This option may be used if the Standards Committee has determined that the standard(s) were scored incorrectly and the recalculated scores from the administrative office confirm that the camp now meets all criteria for accreditation. It may also be used if the Committee confirms the visitor's determination that appropriate corrective action has been documented for a missed mandatory standard and all other criteria for accreditation are met.
3. *Recommend the review be referred to the National Standards Commission*. The Standards Committee may recommend to the LCOL/Board that the review be forwarded to the NSC as an appeal.

**Review Step #4: LCOL/Board of Directors' Action**

Upon the recommendation of the Standards Committee, the LCOL/Board will officially vote on the accreditation status for the camp, who will be informed of the LCOL/Board's decision in writing. If the camp is not in agreement with the action of the LCOL/Board of Directors, it may initiate an appeal to the National Standards Commission.

**National Appeal Steps**

An appeal is heard by the National Standards Commission.

**Appeal Step #1: Initiation**

Following local review, any camp that still does not meet the criteria for accreditation has a right to appeal the decision to the National Standards Commission. Appeals go to the NSC:

1. From the CAMP if it is not satisfied with the results of the local review process; or
2. From the LCOL/Board when the intent or applicability of a standard or area is in question, or when the local leadership is recommending that a standard or an area score percentage be waived.

The camp may initiate a national appeal by writing to the Director of Accreditation at the ACA administrative office. The appeal must be submitted within 21 days of receiving a decision following the local review. With rare exception, an appeal will not be considered by the NSC without a completed local review.

**Appeal Step #2: Research**

The chairperson of the National Standards Commission will appoint a member of the NSC to serve as a liaison, to research the appeal and to make a recommendation to the full Commission. The liaison will gather pertinent information from the camp director, visitors, and local standards chair and potentially staff. It is the camp's responsibility to provide the NSC, through the liaison, complete and accurate information.

**Appeal Step #3: Deliberation**

Deliberation on the appeal will occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the NSC. The Commission normally meets in September and January, and by phone as necessary. The camp director/administrator has the right to present the camp's appeal to NSC personally when the deliberations are held during a scheduled meeting. The camp is, however, responsible for all its own expenses to the meeting site. At the discretion of the NSC chairperson, an appeal may be handled during a telephone conference call or by mail.

**Appeal Step #4: National Standards Commission Action**

Based on information presented, the National Standards Commission will act on the Appeal. The camp and the local office will be informed of the Commission’s decision within 21 days of their action. The decision of the National Standards Commission is final.

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