

american **CAMP** association®

Standards Administration Manual

**A Guide for the Administration
and Implementation of the
ACA Accreditation Program
Fall 2018**

American Camp Association
5000 State Road 67 North
Martinsville, IN 46151-7902
Phone: 800-428-2267
Fax: 765-342-2065
accreditation@ACAcamps.org

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following individuals served as volunteer members of the National Standards Commission (NSC) during the revision of this manual. Appreciation for their faithful work as commission members is gratefully acknowledged.

Judith Bevan, Chair (2013 – Present), North Carolina
Nancy Hartmann, Massachusetts
Mary Anne Killeen, New York
Reid McKnight, Colorado
Kurt Podeszwa, Texas
Dan Reynolds, Ohio
Heather Stewart, California
Sandy Weaver, Pennsylvania

American Camp Association Staff Liaison to the NSC

Rhonda Mickelson, Director of Accreditation

Revised September 2018, September 2015, September 2011, October 2006, October 2003, and October 1998, for use with the *Accreditation Process Guide v.2019*, which is published by Healthy Learning and the American Camping Association, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface — THE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM 5
Nationwide in Scope 5
The Accreditation Program within ACA 5

Chapter I — OVERSIGHT 7
The National Standards Commission 7

Chapter II — LOCAL PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES 8
Responsibilities of the LCOLs and Affiliate 8
Responsibilities of the Standards Chair and Committee 9
Responsibilities of Visitors and Instructors 9
Importance of Consistency 10

Chapter III — TRAINING OF LOCAL PERSONNEL 11
Standards Training Courses/Workshops 11
Training Requirements for Camps 12
Training Requirements for Personnel 12
Training Levels for Standards Personnel 14
Schedule and Staffing of Training Courses 15
Training Materials and Costs 16
Training Reports and Applications 17
Evaluation of Standards Personnel and Process 18
Confidentiality of Evaluations 18

Chapter IV — SCHEDULING VISITORS AND VISITS / TYPES OF VISITS 19
Visit Consistency 19
Eligibility Criteria for Accreditation 19
Procedures for Scheduling Visits 19
Special Considerations 24
Multicamp Operator 24
Multisite Camp 25
Multisite Decision Chart 26
Courtesy Visits 27
Requests for Extension of Accreditation 27

Chapter V — VISITATION AND SCORING PROCEDURES 30
Visits 30
Visitation Expenses 30
Visit Procedures for Single Camp and Multicamp Visits 30
Visit Procedures for Multisite Visits 31
Revisit Procedures 32
Visits Conducted in the Nonsummer Months 32
Visit Procedures for Exclusively Trip/Travel Camps 32
Written Documentation Review Procedures 33
Scoring Procedures 33
72-Hour Rule 35

Immediate Corrective Action for Missed Mandatory Standards	36
Changes on the Score Form After the Visit	39
Camp Failure Flow Chart	40
Chapter VI — REVIEWS, APPEALS, LCOLS /AFFILATE BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES	41
Initial Score Report Screening	41
Purpose of Review Appeal	42
Local Review	42
National Appeal	43
Review Hearing	43
Guidelines for Written Documentation for the Review	44
Recommendation to the LCOL/Board for Camps in Review	45
Action of LCOL/Board for Camps in Review	46
National Standards Commission Appeal Procedures	47
Accreditation Status of Camps in Review and Appeal	48
LCOL/Board Responsibility to Accredite Camps Not Going through Review	48
Handling Common Questions from Directors of Camps that Failed	49
Chapter VII — ACCREDITATION ANNUAL REPORT	50
Purpose of Report	50
Annual Accreditation Report Guidelines	50
Chapter VIII — MAINTAINING REPORTS AND RECORDS	52
Custodial Responsibilities	52
Reports from the Local/Affiliate Office	52
Reports from ACA, Inc.	53
Reports Due to ACA, Inc.	54
Letters to Camps	55
Accredited Camp Certificates	55
Chapter IX — ADDITIONAL POLICIES / PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTRATION OF ACCREDITATION	56
Professional Conduct of Visitors	56
Conflict of Interest Statement for ACA Volunteers	56
Reinstating Accreditation Following Lapse in Payment of Dues or Fees	57
Reinstating Accreditation Following Lapse in Accreditation of More than a year	57
Handling Complaints	57
Complaint Resolution Flow Chart	58
Educating Camps on the Use of ACA Logos	59
Removal of Accreditation for Flagrant Advertising or Camp Fee Payment Violations	59
Removal of Accreditation for Violations of the Statement of Compliance	60
Chapter X — TECHNOLOGY	61
ACA Online Accreditation System	61
ACA Staff / CRM User	61

Preface

THE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Nationwide in Scope

While many programs of the American Camp Association (ACA) have considerable public influence, the national accreditation program is a primary vehicle for ACA to help camps have professional practices that can be recognized by the public. The strength and viability of the program is essential both to its member camps and to the public image of ACA as an association dedicated to enriching the lives of children, youth, and adults through the camp experience.

The Accreditation Program within ACA

The accreditation program is an integral part of ACA and is designed to:

- Educate camp owners and directors in the administration of key aspects of camp operation, program quality, and the health and safety of campers and staff;
- Establish guidelines for implementing policies, procedures, and practices; and
- Assist the public in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards.

The National Standards Commission's key responsibility is oversight of ACA's accreditation program. Its members are selected according to defined criteria and operate within specific guidelines and procedures approved by the Board of Directors of the American Camp Association.

The program is carried out by volunteers and staff at all levels (field office, affiliate, ACA administrative office). The entire field, which includes all ACA members, volunteers, and camp professionals, has the opportunity to provide input that shapes the standards that are developed/revised using a specific process. The process requires an environmental scan, consultation with authoritative sources, opportunity for public input, and legal review. The accreditation process is administered by volunteer visitors, instructors, local standards chairs, and standards committees supported by ACA staff. Camp directors participate voluntarily in the peer-review process called a "visit," which is the opportunity to verify the camp's compliance with the current standards.

Because of what the standards represent, and to maintain credibility as an evaluative tool, it is essential that the accreditation program provides:

1. Consistency in interpretation and application of standards for accreditation;
2. Stability by reducing the impact of changing leadership philosophies; and
3. Ongoing monitoring of standards for interpretive clarification, effectiveness toward objectives, and public response.

Consistency

To have consistency in interpretation and application of the standards requires that visitors be mature individuals with camp experience and insight. This means great emphasis should be placed upon quality control of personnel (ACA staff and volunteers), particularly in the training process.

Credibility

Consistency in interpretation of standards and adherence to policy is essential if the accreditation program is to have credibility both within the camp profession and to the public. A viable program cannot be established or maintained if the standards are interpreted and applied one way in one part of the country and in a different manner in another part of the country.

Adaptability

The visitor must adapt to various roles expected of him or her during the visit. On one hand, a visitor serves as a “learning enabler” — helping the camp to learn from the process. The educative attitude and role of the visitor is critical to this process. On the other hand, the visitor is a representative of the association. She or he is in the field verifying the camp's compliance with the standards.

Because the program is carried out by staff and volunteers across the country, it is critical that all persons participate regularly in educational workshops and trainings to keep abreast of the latest developments related to best practices in the camp industry. The training also provides those volunteers and camp administrators with well-defined procedures to conduct the accreditation program uniformly from all local offices.

The *Standards Administration Manual (SAM)* serves as an operating guide for both volunteers and staff in the administration of the accreditation program of the American Camp Association. The roles and relationships of personnel, and the policies and procedures for administering the program, are outlined here. Careful application of these guidelines will ensure the consistent implementation of a quality program.

Questions concerning these procedures should be directed to:

Accreditation Team
American Camp Association
5000 State Road 67 North
Martinsville, IN 46151-7902
800-428-2267 phone
765-342-2065 fax
accreditation@ACAcamps.org
ACAcamps.org

Chapter I

OVERSIGHT

The National Standards Commission

The National Standards Commission (NSC) is charged with the oversight of the Association's accreditation program. The purposes for which this program exists, and to which the NSC is committed, are:

1. To fulfill the ends of the American Camp Association:
 - A. There will be greater public understanding of and support for the value of the camp experience.
 - B. An increasing number of children, youth, and adults of all social, cultural, and economic groups will have a camp experience.
 - C. The camp experience will be of high quality.
2. To deliver a rigorous but accessible accreditation program based on standards and an accreditation process that:
 - A. Provides an educational tool for camp directors and staff. The role of ACA standards as an educational tool is foremost to the accreditation program.
 - B. Focuses on health, welfare, and risk management related to the camp experience.
 - C. Is administered through a team effort of camp staff, ACA volunteers, and ACA staff.
 - D. Establishes benchmarks by which the public can judge the commitment of a camp program to high standards.

To implement these purposes, the NSC meets periodically to:

1. Develop policies and procedures necessary for the implementation of the accreditation program for both the present and the future.
2. Develop procedures and guidelines for the conduct of the accreditation program at all levels, including but not limited to:
 - A. Roles and responsibilities of local standards chairs, committees, visitors, and instructors.
 - B. Selecting, developing, and teaching trainers and instructors.
 - C. Providing input regarding the development of the training curricula and procedures for all standards visitation and instructional personnel.
3. Maintain oversight of the standards instrument including but not limited to:
 - A. Interpreting individual standards for clarity and consistency of application.
 - B. Evaluating the effectiveness of the standards instrument and recommending revisions.
 - C. Recommending new standards and/or accreditation designations as needed.
4. Function as the final appeals body for standards interpretations, visitation results, and accreditation issues.

Chapter II

LOCAL PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Local Councils of Leaders/Affiliate Boards of Directors (LCOL/Board)

The following duties and responsibilities belong to the LCOL/Board. Normally, it will be the responsibility of the local volunteer standards chairperson and staff to assist the local leadership to see that these are accomplished.

1. LCOL/Board appoints/selects a standards chair. (See the ACA website for standards chair service description.)
2. Standards chair recommends standards committee for appointment and approval by the local leadership. Often this group is made up of standards instructors and experienced visitors.
3. LCOL/Board/Staff determines who provides supervision to the standards chair to verify that the committee fulfills its responsibilities as outlined in Responsibilities of the Standards Chair and Committee.
4. LCOL/Board annually verifies accuracy of the visitor list, which indicates each visitor's status (associate visitor, visitor, etc.), and submits the approved list by March 1. Submission of the report indicates that the LCOL/Board is aware of those who are serving as visitors and of their assigned status. The recommendation for this list should come from the local standards chair (with assistance from staff). The list should not contain individuals who do not meet the requirements to serve as visitors at their designated level (due to lack of training, length of time since they have conducted a visit, etc.). Changes to visitor status can be made throughout the year as newly trained associate visitors and/or visitor statuses are approved. Changes are recorded in the ACA database by ACA staff.
5. LCOL/Board acts on any recommendations from the standards committee for extensions and/or revisits (See Chapter IV, section on Requests for Extension of Accreditation).
6. In mid- to late September or early October, the LCOL/Board meets to approve the accreditation status of *all* camps from which they receive fees. A report of the actions taken must be filed with the ACA administrative office **by October 15** of each year. **Prior to November 1**, each camp served through that office and visited the previous summer shall be notified in writing of their accreditation status as voted on by that LCOL/Board.
7. Camps not accredited due to a failed visit or refusal of a visit should be notified of their accreditation status (accreditation removed or not granted due to failed visit or removal of accreditation due to refusal of a visit) by certified mail, return receipt requested, and reminded by the local office (volunteer or staff) of the policy regarding the use of logos, signs, etc. ACA staff normally take the lead on sending this communication.

Responsibilities of the Standards Chair and Committee

The LCOL/Board is responsible to see that the local standards committee, under the direction of the local standards chair and support from staff, carries out its responsibilities in the following categories:

Training of Local Personnel (See Chapter III)

This includes scheduling courses for camp directors and visitors as well as the recruitment, training, and evaluation of standards personnel. Training must follow standardized curricula and procedures as approved by the National Standards Commission. If an area wishes to make changes to the curricula, please contact the ACA training manager.

Scheduling of Visitors and Visits (See Chapter IV)

This involves the planning and logistics of matching visitor teams with camps due for a visit. Each local office must visit at least 90 percent of the camps due and requesting a visit each year. At least 90 percent of the visits each year must be conducted by at least two approved visitors. ACA staff (Inc. or affiliate) should not be scheduled to conduct visits.

Handling Reviews (See Chapter VI)

Any camp not meeting the accreditation criteria may request a hearing, according to established guidelines. The committee then makes a recommendation to the LCOL/Board for accreditation or non-accreditation. This hearing is called a review at the local level and an appeal should it be sent to the NSC.

Maintaining Reports and Records (See Chapter VIII)

This includes maintaining local records according to the guidelines established by ACA, Inc. through the ACA administrative office and submitting reports to meet requirements established by the NSC.

Mentoring Camps

Mentoring camps involves working with new camps, camps that have failed visits, and/or camps that may lose accreditation.

Responsibilities of Visitors and Instructors

The service descriptions for associate visitors/visitors and instructors are posted on the ACA website.

Importance of Consistency

It is not unusual for visitors to relocate or for camps to receive services in the winter months through a different office than the one in their geographical area or that conducts their standards visits. For these reasons, it is critically important that everyone follows the policies outlined here that have been developed by ACA staff/volunteers and the NSC.

It is acceptable for the LCOL/Board to develop policies on local administration in addition to national policy **with the approval of the NSC**. Such policies must be applied to all camps served by that office and must be fair and reasonable. This refers only to policies that exceed those expectations of the NSC. As long as there are adequate opportunities for this to occur, and the policy is administered equally, the NSC would likely approve such a local policy.

Local offices (staff or volunteers) do not have the authority to modify national policies without the approval of the NSC, nor do they have the authority to make interpretations to specific standards or sections of standards different than those presented in the *ACA Accreditation Process Guide*.

Chapter III

TRAINING

Training Courses/Workshops

All courses directly related to the standards and the accreditation program have these guidelines:

1. The purpose and outcomes for the curricula of all training courses will be approved by the National Standards Commission.
2. All training courses must be based on those curricula and must cover all content and objectives included.
3. Courses must be of the designated length for the training to be officially recognized.

The following courses are or may be offered by ACA.

Accreditation Process Workshop — Available in person and online, approximately 4–5.5 hours of instruction time. The purpose is to prepare camp directors and administrators who have *not* previously been involved with the process for their standards visits and to serve as an introduction to the accreditation program for persons interested in becoming visitors.

Accreditation Process Workshop Update or Refresher Course — Available in person, via webinar, and online, approximately 1–2 hours of instruction time. *Updates* are required; *refreshers* are highly recommended. The purpose is to update currently trained standards personnel who have been previously involved with the process regarding changes in standards and/or procedures as a result of a standards revision or revisions to the visit process. If the standards personnel associated with and responsible for the camp's visit is a current visitor, at least at the associate visitor level, the Visitor Update/Refresher can be completed in lieu of this course.

Associate Visitor Course — Total of 12–14 hours of instruction time (most of which is in person), which includes completion of an online course to be completed prior to the in-person course. The purpose is to prepare persons to serve as associate visitors in the accreditation program. Participants *must* have attended the current Accreditation Process Workshop and, if necessary, an Update Course *prior* to attending the Associate Visitor Course. Upon successful completion of this course, the individual may be assigned to conduct a standards visit.

Visitor Update or Refresher Course — Available in person, via webinar, and online, approximately 1–2 hours of instruction time. *Updates* are required; *refreshers* are highly recommended. The purpose is to serve as an update/refresher for all associate visitors and visitors. It is required of all personnel at least after major standards changes, or as otherwise directed by the NSC, to maintain active status as a visitor.

Instructor Course — Approximately 14–16 hours of instruction time, which includes completion of a one-hour online course completed prior to the in-person course. The purpose is to prepare persons experienced in the accreditation program to serve as instructors for standards courses for camp directors and visitors. Participants must have at least two years’ experience as a visitor and be recommended by their local leadership to attend.

Instructor Update Course — Time frame varies depending on the purpose of the update. The purpose is to update currently trained instructors and associate instructors on revised standards. This course is usually offered only for one to two years following major standards revisions. Instructors not updated in that time must repeat the Instructor Course.

Training Requirements for Camps

The intention is to have at least one individual associated with each accredited camp (and those camps working for accreditation) who has completed a current Standards Course, is actively involved with the preparation of materials, and is on site the day of the visit. It is also expected that someone with current standards training is actively involved with the camp during nonvisit years.

The following chart helps determine who and when someone should attend a standards course.

WHO ATTENDS WHICH COURSE	ACCREDITATION PROCESS WORKSHOP	UPDATE or REFRESHER COURSE
Individual going through an accreditation visit as the “lead” for the first time, whether the camp is currently accredited or the camp is new to accreditation	Yes	
Prior to any on-site visit of a currently accredited camp, when the person responsible has assisted in recent visit preparations		Yes

In-person courses are strongly recommended for first-timers. When that is not possible, the online course is an option, followed by a discussion with a designated standards volunteer using a facilitation guide provided by the ACA standards team.

Training Requirements for Standards Personnel

Visitors and Associate Visitors

1. Individuals interested in becoming standards visitors must complete an **application**, the **Accreditation Process Workshop**, and the **Associate Visitor Course**.
2. Currently trained and approved visitors and associate visitors must complete the **Visitor Update Course** after any major standards change, and as required by the NSC.
3. The NSC strongly recommends an annual review/refresher and knowledge assessment for all visitors. This will be available in webinar format and as an online review/refresher.

Instructors and Associate Instructors

1. Individuals interested in becoming standards instructors must complete an **application** and the **Instructor Course**. The candidate must also have the endorsement of his or her local leadership to attend the training.
2. Prior to instructing, current instructors and associate instructors must complete the **Instructor Update Course** after a major standards change and meet all criteria required of current visitors.

Standards Chairs and Committee Members

1. Standards chairs are expected to complete scheduled leadership training sessions offered for all standards chairs. When a standards chair begins his or her role in a year when in-person training is not offered or is unable to attend, arrangements for individual training will be made. ACA staff should ensure this occurs within three months of appointment to this role.
2. Ideally, all standards committee members will be current ACA visitors. Any individuals who serve on the standards committee must, at minimum, complete the **Accreditation Process Workshop** for the current set of standards and any subsequent updates.

Training Levels for Standards Personnel

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION BASIS	TO MAINTAIN
ASSOCIATE VISITOR*+	Complete application process, Accreditation Process Workshop, and Associate Visitor Course. Perform minimum of two supervised visits with a lead visitor. Remain as an associate visitor until willing to, and capable of, assuming ultimate authority on a visit. Local leadership approval is required.	Current ACA member. Complete at least one on-site visit every other year and an update as required by the NSC. Annual refresher course is strongly recommended.
ANNUAL ACCREDITATION REVIEWER	Complete the Associate Visitor application process, Accreditation Process Workshop, and Associate Visitor Course. Perform a minimum of two supervised visits with a lead visitor.	If an individual chooses to serve only in the role of an Annual Accreditation Report (AAR) reviewer or to only review written documentation for a camp: Current ACA member. Review at least two AARs or written documentation every two years.
VISITOR+	Previous level, plus visits at associate level as required by local leadership. Self-evaluation and mentor evaluation on readiness to become a visitor.	Current ACA member. Complete at least one visit every other year and an update once every three years or as required by the NSC. Annual refresher course strongly recommended.
ASSOCIATE INSTRUCTOR**	Previous level, plus serve as a visitor for at least five visits over a minimum of two years. Complete application process and Instructor Course. Local leadership approval required.	Current ACA member. Same as the previous level, plus assist with a course at least every other year.
INSTRUCTOR**	Visitor for at least five visits over a minimum of two years. Complete application process and Instructor Course, and fulfill requirements as noted by trainer. Local leadership approval required.	Current ACA member. Maintain visitor status, plus teach course every other year.
TRAINER	Previous level, plus in-service training during an Instructor Course for a mutually agreeable time/number of courses.	Maintain instructor status. Teach once every other year, plus complete periodic updates for trainers.

*It is acceptable for volunteers to retain associate visitor status for as long as they wish. The only people who should be visitors are those who are willing *and* capable of assuming full responsibility for visits and scoring decisions. All visitors should be willing to serve as lead visitors (taking care of the administrative responsibilities). Some visitors may serve as mentors, participating in the further training of new associate visitors.

+An associate visitor/visitor who has not performed a visit as outlined above may be approved as an associate visitor and would *not* be required to repeat AV training if the lapse in service is less than five years. Requirements to continue to serve may include completing any relevant update courses and serving at the associate visitor level for a specified number of visits. The person may be approved as a visitor (if they wish to fulfill this role) when the specified requirements have been met.

** An association instructor/instructor who has not taught as outlined above may be approved as an associate instructor and would *not* be required to repeat training if the lapse in service is less than five years. Requirements to continue to serve may include completing any relevant update courses and serving at the associate instructor level for a specified number of courses. The person may be approved as an instructor when the specified requirements have been met.

In years when a Visitor Update is required, no one should be allowed to serve as a visitor until the Visitor Update Course, as mandated by the NSC, has been completed.

If a non-updated visitor completes a visit, the visit will be recorded as a single-visitor visit. Taking the Visitor Update Course after the visit will not change the status of the camp visit.

Scheduling and Staffing of Training Courses

The **Accreditation Process Workshop**, the **Associate Visitor Course**, and **all update courses**, are scheduled and normally led by local trained personnel, although most are available in an online format as well.

All courses must be conducted by a current standards instructor, preferably with at least one additional instructor, associate instructor, or experienced visitor. Any Accreditation Process Workshop with more than ten participants should have two instructors. Update courses with more than 15 participants should have two instructors, and all Associate Visitor Courses must have two instructors. Local offices should post scheduled courses on the events calendar of the ACA, Inc. website.

Locations, dates, and times of courses should be varied to accommodate needs of directors and visitors. Ideally, local offices will schedule at least two Accreditation Process Workshops each year, with one prior to January 1, if possible, to give directors ample opportunity to attend. Generally, courses should not be scheduled after April 1 for camps being visited during the summer.

The local office is *not* obligated to visit any camp that refuses to send a representative to the appropriate course, as long as an adequate number of courses are offered and the responsible camp personnel has been made aware of the online course option.

There may occasionally be extenuating circumstances that make it difficult for a director to attend a course. In that case, an online course is available. *A conversation with an instructor or designated person is required as part of this course.*

When possible, the **Associate Visitor Course** should be held in a camp setting, at least for the mock visit portion of the training. Local offices may want to collaborate to sponsor a joint or regional course for potential visitors.

Updates and Refreshers are often more successful when held in conjunction with local meetings or events due to their shorter length. Update courses are also available online. Updates are *required*. *Refresher* courses are highly recommended.

Instructor Courses are arranged by ACA, Inc., generally once a year. Instructor courses will be held in various parts of the country on a rotating basis. Trainers are assigned by ACA, Inc. staff based on a variety of factors.

Training Materials and Costs

ACA, Inc. and ACA Affiliate Offices are responsible for providing the following training materials.

For Instructors (all levels)

- Current printed *Accreditation Process Guide* upon request
Printed curricula, if requested by an instructor (ACA, Inc. — through the administrative office — will provide each instructor with a digital version of the standards curricula upon training.

For Camps

- A printed *Accreditation Process Guide* upon first payment of camp fees at the accreditation level
- Access to all updates via the website
- Opportunity to download a digital copy of the standards through the My Accreditation site, inclusive of all revisions to date.

For Visitors

- A current *Accreditation Process Guide* (separate from the one they receive as a camp director)
- Associate visitor training and/or Updates/Refresher courses (courses offered free of charge to participants)
- Access to all updates via the website and opportunity to request printed packet of standards updates
- Opportunity to download a digital copy of the standards through the My Visits site, inclusive of all revisions to date

A local office may not charge a fee for standards related courses (this includes the actual course or complimentary offerings). If additional expenses (such as a provided lunch) are incurred, those charges may be passed on to the attendees. Costs for any Associate Visitor Course are to be covered by the local office (inclusive of room/board/meeting space/course materials).

Costs for an Instructor Course are to be covered by the local office. The cost estimate is shared prior to the opening of registration.

Training Reports and Applications

The following chart shows who maintains the records and tracks the attendance at various courses. All reports sent to the ACA administrative office should be submitted within one week of the training. Reports and applications can be submitted electronically or via postal mail. See the ACA website for sample forms to use to submit this information.

TYPE OF TRAINING / ACTION TAKEN	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE MAINTAINS / RECORDS	LOCAL OFFICE MAINTAINS / RECORDS
Visitor Update Course attendance roster	Yes	
Associate Visitor Course roster <i>and</i> signed/approved applications	Yes	
Lists of associate visitors promoted to visitor	Yes	
Accreditation Process Workshop (APW) attendance roster	Yes, ACA, Inc. (Affiliate sends copy to ACA, Inc.)	Yes, Affiliate Offices
APW Update attendance roster	Yes, ACA, Inc. (Affiliate sends copy to ACA, Inc.)	Yes, Affiliate Offices
All online standards-related training	ACA, Inc. tracks registration and completion. Reflected in CRM and on reports.	

When submitting attendance rosters or lists to ACA, Inc., be sure they are legible, that they include the member numbers of participants, and that the date, location of training, and names of the responsible instructors are included.

LCOL/Board approval is needed for newly trained associate visitors. The instructor will indicate on the associate visitor application the minimum number of visits required before an individual is eligible for visitor status.

LCOL/Board endorsement is required for any instructor or associate instructor candidates approved by national trainers. “Instructor” is a designation conferred by a trainer. To change the status of an associate instructor, the individual must have co-taught a certain number and/or type of courses, as recommended by a trainer who led their instructor course/update. Once the associate instructor has completed the follow-up identified by the trainer, the LCOL/Board can approve the change in status from associate instructor to instructor.

Evaluation

ACA staff and volunteers at all levels have the responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of visitors and instructors involved in the standards program, as well as the overall program and process.

Recommendations regarding changes in status from associate visitor to visitor and on continuation of current visitor and/or instructor status should be based on evaluations and feedback collected from those who have interacted with those volunteers. While most evaluation is completed at the local level, there may be times when input and evaluation is requested by ACA, Inc.

To facilitate the evaluation process, these evaluations are available through Survey Monkey and may be used by Local Offices or Affiliates:

ACA Accreditation Visit Evaluation for Camps
ACA Accreditation Visit Evaluation for Visitors
ACA Standards Training Course Evaluation

Contact an ACA, Inc. standards staff member for access to these evaluations.

Confidentiality of Evaluations

Whatever system of evaluation is used within the local office and/or by the ACA administrative office, everyone must be sensitive to confidentiality issues. For example, the individual names of visitors or camps should be removed before sharing problems or issues with all visitors at a Visitor Update/Refresher or meeting.

Chapter IV

SCHEDULING VISITORS AND VISITS/TYPES OF VISITS

Visit Consistency

All camps must be visited under the same criteria by use of:

- The same basis of measurement — *Accreditation Process Guide*.
- The same type of visitation program and system — Visits conducted by at least two similarly trained visitors as scheduled.
- The same evaluation — A consistent national scoring system and standardized criteria for accreditation.

Only by implementing uniform and objective procedures can ACA accreditation be administered consistently across the country and carry the same meaning to the public.

Visits must be **conducted** when the camp program and site services are operational and when the greatest number of standards can be observed and verified. Observing as many specialized activities and aquatics activities as possible is especially important. Generally, this means that visits will need to be conducted during a camp's primary day or resident camp programs. However, a visit should not be scheduled on the first or last days of a session, or on a day when typical camp programming does not occur.

Eligibility Criteria for Accreditation

The eligibility criteria for camps to seek or maintain ACA accreditation are listed on the ACA website.

Procedures for Scheduling Visits

To schedule visits, the local standards chair working with ACA staff should:

1. Determine which camps are to be scheduled for a visit.
2. Contact camps to be visited.
3. Contact volunteer visitors in the local area.
4. Establish visit teams.
5. Notify visitors of camp visit assignments.
6. Notify camps of visitor assignments.

Step #1: Determine which camps should be scheduled for visits

- 1. Camps to be scheduled** for visits include:
 - A. Camps visited previously but not accredited due to failing scores.
 - B. Camps seeking accreditation for the first time.
 - C. Camps due a visit in the normal three- or five-year cycle.
 - D. Camps that were granted an extension in the previous visitation year.
 - E. Camps that lost accreditation in a previous year (they had accreditation removed by local leadership).
 - F. Camps for which a courtesy visit has been requested by another local office.
 - G. Camps requiring a revisit as a result of the Immediate Corrective Action process during visits the previous year.
 - H. Camps that missed four or more mandatory standards on their visit the previous year.
 - I. Camps designated by the LCOL/Board for revisit (e.g., complaints related to standards exist against the camp).

- 2. LCOL/Board may use their discretion** in requesting that visits be scheduled before the end of the three- or five-year cycle due to any of the following. Thorough discussion and documentation are required for all decisions to request an out-of-cycle visit:
 - A. Camps that have changed directors. It is required that all new on-site directors complete the Accreditation Process Workshop at the earliest possible date before the main season for their camp/program. Full visits should be scheduled at the discretion of local leadership (LCOL/Board).

Questions to ask in making determination and potential actions to be considered:

- *Is there continuity within the other camp leadership team members?*
- *Has the person at the camp with responsibility for accreditation changed?*
- *Is the new director primarily the one responsible for accreditation?*
- *Has the new director been involved with ACA accreditation process in the recent past?*
- *If the Annual Accreditation Report was completed by the prior director/administrator, the new director should complete the same year's AAR within a specified time. The LCOL/Board determines the specified time. It is recommended that the new camp director is allowed at least three weeks.*
- *If an out-of-cycle visit is determined to be necessary, it can occur during the upcoming summer or the following summer. Timing of the out-of-cycle visit is a function of when the decision is made. That is, if the decision for an out-of-cycle visit is made prior to March 15, a visit the upcoming summer is recommended (same calendar year). If the decision is made after March 15 and the camp is not already scheduled for a visit in the upcoming summer, the visit may occur in the next summer (next calendar year).*

COMMENT: The NSC does not necessarily recommend an out-of-cycle visit when a director changes if the supervisor and other members of what is considered the leadership team remain in place. OR, when the new director has been actively involved with the ACA accreditation process in the recent past. It is important to look at the entire leadership team and ask the previous questions to assist in the decision.

- B. Camps that have changed or added location.
 - *If using an accredited site, no out-of-cycle visit may be necessary.*
 - *If not using an accredited site and no out-of-cycle visit is requested, consider requesting written documentation be submitted for review by the standards chair (or appointee) specific to the following standards (if the standard does not specifically require written documentation, the camp should explain how the standard is met):*
 - *SF.3/AD.1 Contact with Local Officials*
 - *SF.11/FA.10 Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors*
 - *TR.1/AD.2 Emergency Transportation/Emergency Medical Transportation*
 - *OM.1/AD.13. Risk Management specific to the new location/site*
 - *OM.7 Intruders*
 - *OM.8 Emergency Rehearsal*
- C. Camps that have changed ownership that results in a change in key leadership and staffing who are directly and actively involved with the camp.
- D. Camps that have added a mode (e.g., day camp, resident, or camps that rent to others) to their operations. The local leadership should determine if the new mode represents a significant change in operation that has not been previously evaluated in the accreditation process of the camp.
- E. Camps that have complaints against them when the complaint is related to ACA standards.
- F. Camps that did not successfully complete the Annual Accreditation Report per the requirements.
- G. Camps that have extenuating circumstances.

Actions taken by the LCOL/Board specific to out-of-cycle visits and extensions should be documented on the appropriate form and submitted to accreditation@ACAcamps.org within 14 days of the action.

3. **LCOL/Boards may choose to not visit** a camp that has not submitted the required written documentation for review by May 1 or mutually agreed upon date.

Step #2: Contact camps to be visited

Standards personnel should make initial contact with camps due a visit in the upcoming season as soon as is reasonably possible. Most camps can be contacted in the fall or early winter with follow-up communication in late winter/early spring. Standards chairs may access a list of camps to be visited on the standards chair web portal:

mx.acacamps.org/acacustom/standards/standardschair/standards.aspx

New camps may apply for accreditation until March 1. For applications received after March 1, the local office will be contacted to determine whether scheduling a visit for the summer is feasible.

Notice to camps should include the following:

1. Need for someone involved with the visit to complete current standards training.
2. Availability of the current *Accreditation Process Guide* and any updates/revisions since its publication.
3. Availability of an electronic version of the standards and other resources available via the My Accreditation online tool.
4. Request for a completed Camp Information Form.

Step #3: Contact volunteer visitors in the local area

Standards chairs may access a list of active visitors through the Standards Chair web portal (see Step #2). Contact visitors late in the calendar year to determine their availability and desire to conduct visits in the coming months.

Step #4: Establish visitor teams

1. Assignments for each visit include:

- A.** One lead visitor who has the administrative responsibility to schedule the visit and the functional responsibility to assume ultimate authority on the visit (must have visitor classification at a minimum); and
- B.** At least one additional visitor (associate visitors may be assigned to this role).

No visit may be scheduled for two associate visitors, or for only one visitor.

To avoid any conflict of interest, an ACA staff member who is an approved standards visitor should not be given a visit assignment. A staff member may serve as a visitor *only* in the event of a last-minute cancellation or schedule change when no other volunteer visitor is available.

2. Questions to consider when assigning visitors:

- A.** Did this person visit the camp for its last visit? Don't assign someone who visited the camp last time.
- B.** Does the visitor team reflect experience in a similar type of camp (day, travel, etc.)?
- C.** Does the visitor team reflect experience with the primary program activities offered at the camp (horseback riding, gymnastics, rock-climbing, serving those with special needs, etc.)?
- D.** Is the visitor team comprised of people without conflicts of interest?
- E.** Is the visit located within reasonable travel distance for the visitor?
- F.** Have the physical needs related to the visit been considered when assigning visitors?

NOTE: Camps *do not* have the option to choose their own visitors.

Step #5: Notify visitors of camp visit assignments (See the ACA website for what to include in this message.)

Ideally, visitors should confirm that their assignments are reasonable before camps are notified of their visitors.

Step #6: Notify camps of visitor assignments

Visitor assignments should be made as early in the year as possible, and no later than March 15. Visitors should receive their visit assignments immediately, so the visitor can contact the appropriate individual from the camp to determine the method to be used for the Written Documentation Review. While most communication with visitors is conducted electronically, score forms and other visit materials will be mailed to each visitor from the ACA administrative office in late spring. Visitor resources are also available on the ACA website.

Once visitor assignments have been made, ACA staff will enter the information in ACA's database (CRM) providing the assigned visitor with access to the camp's "My Accreditation" site through "My Visits." If a camp chooses to use this tool, the visitor should as well.

1. Lead Visitor Information

A. Via email, generally:

- Contact information for the camp director/standards contact.
- Contact information for all visitors.
- Method to access the Camp Information Form (or the form itself).
- Method to access the Written Documentation Review (WDR) Worksheet.
- Reminders of procedures, deadlines, or policy changes.
- Contact information for standards chair(s), staff members, or others to contact for assistance with any questions or concerns regarding the visit.

B. Via postal mail:

- Score form, Immediate Corrective Action Form, and return envelope.
- Current year's *Standards Visitor Reference Guide* (booklet).
- Any general instructions or reminders (Code of Conduct, etc.).

C. Following the visit, via email, generally:

- Information regarding the evaluation forms for camp directors, visitors, and/or mentors. Evaluations are available electronically.
- Information regarding reimbursement for visitor travel expenses.

2. Additional Visitor Information

D. Via email, generally:

- Contact information for the camp director/standards contact.
- Contact information for all visitors.
- Method to access the Camp Information Form (or the form itself).
- Method to access the Written Documentation Review Worksheet.
- Reminders of procedures, deadlines, or policy changes.
- Contact information for standards chair(s), staff members, or others to contact for assistance with any questions or concerns regarding the visit.

E. Via postal mail:

- Current year's *Standards Visitor Reference Guide* (booklet).
- Any general instructions or reminders (Code of Conduct, etc.).

F. Following the visit, via email, generally:

- Information regarding the evaluation forms for camp directors, visitors, and/or mentors. Evaluations are available electronically.
- Information regarding reimbursement for visitor travel expenses.

Lead Visitor Responsibilities:

1. Contact the camp and additional visitors to determine the method for the Written Documentation Review (documents to be submitted before May 1) and the date of the on-site visit (during camp operations).
2. Using the Camp Information Form as a guide, discuss with the camp director and determine, prior to the visit, which camp modes and specialized activities will be scored.
3. Prepare for the visit by reviewing the standards, paying attention to the mandatory standards, the written materials required, and the modes and activities to be scored by the camp.
4. Communicate with the other members of the visit team regarding the visit, including plans for completing the Written Documentation Review. When possible, include other visitors in this review process so all visitors see this is a great opportunity for newer visitors to learn. At minimum, share how the review will occur.
5. Visitor should share when the WDP is completed and the date of the on-site visit with the ACA staff member for their area.

Visitors should communicate with their assigned camps several times prior to the visit! Visitors and camp representatives have the responsibility to notify the standards chair(s) or ACA standards staff immediately if the visit cannot be arranged or completed. The chair or staff member will contact the camp or the visitors to clarify the situation and determine the next steps. Sharing this information as soon as it is known is critical.

Special Considerations

Multicamp Operator

- Many organizations have more than one camp. If these camps operate in different modes or have different supervisors, the organization is considered a multicamp operator. Each camp has its own camp ID number.
- If separate programs or sites associated with the operator include geographic distinctions or leadership distinctions (e.g., are in different regions of the US or on-site directors have authority or autonomy to make hiring, firing, or policy decisions unique to their program/site), *these camps should be accredited separately, and each camp should have its own camp number.*
- If day camps and resident camps are operated by the same organization but occur at different locations, each camp will have its own camp ID number and separate accreditation.
- If day camp is held at the same location as resident camp, both modes of operation can be included under the same camp ID number, be visited at the same visit, be scored on one score form, and be part of the same accreditation.

All of the above scenarios require a separate visit for each entity (camp ID number = visit = score form = accreditation).

Multisite Camp (see flow chart)

Criteria for Multisite Camps:

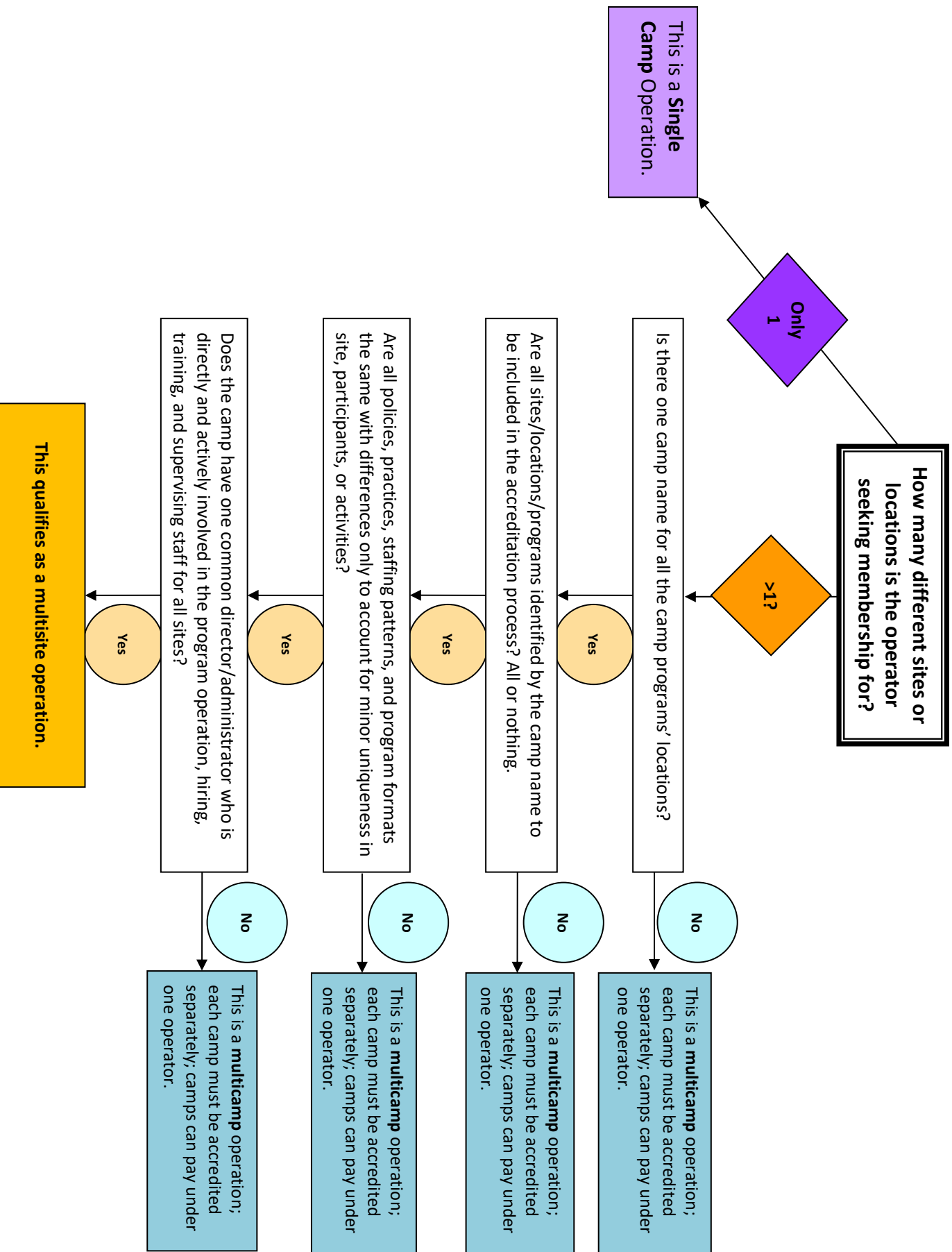
- One camp name identifies the camp program. One camp name is used for advertising/marketing, and all the locations are known as one camp program, in the same camp brochure, same website, etc.
- All programs/sites/locations identified by that name are included in the accreditation process — all or none. If a national organization with multiple camps is divided into regions and each region is seeking accreditation, then all programs/sites/locations identified by that name in that region are in the accreditation process — all or none by region.
- Policies, practices, staffing pattern, and program format (including modes of operation) are the same, with differences only to account for minor uniqueness in site, participants, or activities.
- Camp has a common director/administrator for the camp program who is directly and actively involved in the program operation and in hiring, training, and supervising staff for all sites. Sites/locations/programs can have separate managers or on-site directors. The organization chart reflects this supervisory relationship.
- As a result of meeting all the criteria, these sites will all share the same camp ID number and will be visited in one visit, with one master score form.

Multisite, Short-Term Day Camps

A multisite, short-term day camp is a program under the auspices of one administrative sponsor, operated on several sites for a period of five hours/day for five days or fewer at any one site (e.g., Girl Scout one-week day camps run by volunteers throughout the community). The day camps may be considered as a single operation for camp accreditation purposes if all the criteria listed for multisite camps above are met.

Other Joint or Multisite Operations

Multisite operations such as day and resident camp on the same site, neighboring brother/sister camps, and camps that operate on multiple sites (e.g., weeklong specialty camps, such as medical specialty, technology, or sports camps that utilize different sites) may be considered as a single operation for camp accreditation purposes if all the criteria listed for multisite camps above are met.



Courtesy Visits

To minimize travel time and expense or bring a special visitor's skill, a local office may occasionally request the assistance of another local office or affiliate to conduct a visit for a camp that is physically located outside its geographic boundaries. This is known as a courtesy visit.

Please make the request for a courtesy visit in writing to the standards chair or ACA standards staff member for the local office that would assign the visitors, as early as possible. If that office is unable to fulfill the request for a courtesy visit, the office to which the camp belongs remains responsible for conducting the visit.

The office to which the camp belongs is responsible for travel reimbursement for the assigned visitors and will handle Immediate Corrective Action (ICA) responses, review, or appeals if necessary. **After a courtesy visit is completed, the LCOL/Board of the office to which the camp belongs approves the camp's accreditation status.**

Requests for Extension of Accreditation

To maintain accreditation, camps must be visited three years after their first accreditation visit and every five years thereafter. Occasionally, camps may contact the local office and request that their visits be postponed for a year.

The LCOL/Board may, in extenuating circumstances, extend the accreditation of a currently accredited camp for *one* year. Because the visit cycle is five years, this should be rarely done and only after a thorough discussion.

Extensions *should not be granted routinely (especially due to the length of time between visits)* but may be considered in unusual circumstances such as the death or serious illness of a director, a major fire destroying records or buildings, or evacuation due to a natural disaster. Camps that are currently accredited should already have most of the documentation available and will have signed an annual Statement of Compliance, which indicates continued compliance with the standards.

Because the public relies on ACA's system for accreditation, the LCOL/Board should have assurances that any camp whose accreditation has been extended is continuing to comply with accreditation requirements. In all cases, reassure the camp director or administrator that although preparing for a visit may be challenging, the integrity of their reputation to their constituency and the integrity of the ACA accreditation program relies on uniform implementation of that system.

Any extension of accreditation must have the LCOL/Board approval because it will affect the overall percent of camps visited for the year. (Visiting 90 percent of camps due a visit in any year is a requirement of the ACA Accreditation Program.) Camps should be advised that any requests for extension should be made in writing, as early as the request is known (preferably prior to the camp season), and should include the rationale for the request.

Checklist of issues for standards committees and LCOLs/Boards to consider before granting an extension:

- ✓ Is the reason given an unforeseen circumstance?
 - Serious illness or death, earthquake, or major fire are unforeseen circumstances, and are not related to the camp's normal compliance with best practices.
 - Construction on the site is foreseen and not a qualified reason for an extension. If camp can operate, it can be visited.
 - Change of personnel is *rarely* a reason to grant extension. Such a change may, in fact, be a reason to require the visit to be sure the new director knows and is following standards.
 - Consider whether the camp can reasonably be expected to host a visit. Perhaps at a date later in the summer?

- ✓ What assurances does the LCOL/Board have that this camp is continuing to operate in compliance with standards?
 - Are directors or key administrative staff members trained in standards?
 - Has the camp had major changes in its operations? Major staff turnover?
 - Is there any reason for the public to be concerned that this camp is not being visited on cycle?

- ✓ What is the accreditation history of the camp?
 - Have there been several changes of director in recent years?
 - Is there any pattern of requesting extensions?
 - Were there any challenges during previous visits?
 - Has the camp changed its ACA local office? What was the reason for the change?
 - Are there new standards since the last visit? Have modes been changed or added, requiring additional preparation? Have new scoreable programs/activities been added?

Requests Received Prior to the Camp Season

1. The camp must submit a written request (email is fine) that can be shared with the standards chair, Standards Committee, and LCOL/Board. Contact the camp to get further information if needed.
2. Advise the camp that ACA accreditation requires a visit every five years, with few exceptions.
3. Encourage the camp to proceed with visit preparations, offering support and assistance when possible. (For example, a new director or administrator may need training to better understand the standards. You may want to assign a mentor.)
4. The Standards Committee should make a recommendation to the LCOL/Board and share the request for consideration.
5. If possible, the LCOL/Board decision should be made and communicated to the camp prior to the summer. Then, if the LCOL/Board votes not to extend the accreditation, the camp can still be visited.
6. Notify the camp of the decision *in writing*, first by email and then, if no response, by certified mail with return receipt requested.

Requests Received during the Camp Season

Occasionally, a camp may cancel a scheduled visit after the season has begun and then request an extension. In such cases:

- Advise the camp that the request for extension will be acted on as soon as possible and that the sharing of information and approval/denial of the request will likely be conducted electronically.
- Determine whether a decision can be made in time to notify the camp of the approval of extension during the visit season OR the need for the on-site visit to occur if the extension is denied.
- Strongly encourage the camp to proceed with visit preparations. Remind the camp that it will lose its accreditation if the extension is denied and the camp is not visited.
- Notify the camp of the decision *in writing*, first by email and then, if no response, by certified mail with return receipt requested.

A camp must have a current Annual Statement of Compliance on file to be granted an extension.

Requests for Extension beyond One Year

LCOLs/Boards have the authority to extend accreditation for one year only. Any request for extension of accreditation beyond one year must be considered by the National Standards Commission at its next scheduled meeting. Requests to extend for more than one year are rarely granted, except in highly unusual circumstances, as six years between visits is already well outside our accreditation criteria. A camp should be advised of the possibility of losing its accreditation if the request is denied.

Chapter V

VISIT AND SCORING PROCEDURES

Visits

Visitors must observe a program in operation and interact with staff and participants. An on-site visit should be on a regular (typical) day of programming when the most program offerings are happening. Visitors should spend at least two hours directly observing the program and engaging with staff and participants. Depending on many factors, the on-site visit can last from four to ten hours.

Visit Expenses

Per ACA, Inc. policy, ACA reimburses visitors for the expenses they incur in the course of completing visits, including meals, mileage, occasional postage, and other necessary expenses. Reimbursement requests can be submitted online. Visitors have the option to be reimbursed, or to make a tax-deductible donation for all or part of, the amount they spent. Mileage is reimbursed at the standard IRS rate. Receipts are required for expenses \$25 or more. Visitors should be provided with guidelines for travel arrangements, including ACA's negotiated rental car discounts, if needed.

Camps may not be charged for visitors' expenses or for one paper copy of the *Accreditation Process Guide* each visit cycle.

Visit Procedures for Single Camp and Multicamp Visits

Each camp in a multicamp operation will be treated as its own operation for visit purposes. All camps in a multicamp operation are not required to have a visit in the same year. Follow all standard procedures related to director completion of course, scheduling visits and self-assessment review, scoring, and annual Statements of Compliance.

Multicamp operators may have organization-wide policies and procedures for human resources, administration, and other areas that can be used by all camps in the organization. If a multicamp operator has several camps being visited in the same year, it may be possible to have common documentation reviewed by one visitor team and the results shared with the visitors for all the organization's camps. The camp is asked to identify the standards for which common documentation will be used prior to May 1.

Visit Procedures for Multisite Visits

- Completion of the Accreditation Process Workshop Update Course (if appropriate) is required for overall director/administrator as well as all site/program/location managers or directors. It is important for the on-site director to be aware of the ACA standards and accreditation process.
- The Written Documentation Review must be completed for all documentation that is common to all programs/sites/locations. Site-specific materials will be reviewed only for the sites being visited.
- The visitor is required to review documentation that is common to all programs/sites/locations. Site-specific materials will be reviewed only for the sites being visited.
- Camp director/administrator must sign the current year Annual Statement of Compliance indicating all sites/locations/programs are complying with standards, even those not visited.
- The following number of on-site visits should occur for sites associated with the same camp:
 - 9 sites or less – 50 percent of sites (25 percent for short-term day camps)
 - 10 – 15 sites – 33 percent of sites (25 percent for short-term day camps)
 - 25 sites and over will be determined based on the programs offered, locations, etc. Contact the Director of Accreditation who will work with the National Standards Commission.
 - ACA reserves the privilege to visit new or existing sites as often as necessary to verify compliance is maintained annually.
- When selecting sites to be visited, consideration should be given to those offering specialized programs, sites not seen during a previous visit, new sites, etc.
- When all sites are within the boundaries of an area served by a single local office, the local office standards committee determines locations to be visited, with consideration given to specialized activities offered. Site/program plans for the upcoming year shall be submitted to the local office by March 1 of each year.
- When sites are in geographic areas different from the local office where they receive services, ACA, Inc. will work with ACA local offices/leadership involved to determine the visit plan by March 1 of each year.
- The camp's trained, designated director/administrator must be involved with the camp self-assessment and documentation review and at all site/location visits. When the director/administrator is not present at the site visit, the manager or on-site director must be able to reach him or her by telephone. The manager or on-site director for each site/location/program must also be available during the on-site visit.
- Since multisites share a common camp ID number, score forms are completed by assigned visitors for each site visited, and then combined onto one master form by a predetermined lead visitor. Any "No" taken at any site/location is reflected as a "No" on the score form for that standard for the program. The designated director/administrator should be provided the opportunity to review and sign the master form.

Revisit Procedures

Camps failing an accreditation visit are eligible for a revisit no sooner than six months after the initial visit, and it must occur when the greatest number of standards can be verified and scored. Many standards that address specialized activity programs (e.g., aquatics, ropes course, and horses) will need to be observed. Usually, the revisit will need to wait until the next year for the camp's resident/day camp season.

Visits Conducted in the Nonsummer Months

Because visits must be scheduled when the greatest number of standards can be observed and scored, most visits will occur in the summer months during day or resident camp sessions. However, some visits may occur at other times.

Visits conducted between late September and mid-May may be forwarded to the accreditation department at the ACA administrative office for scoring at any time. The local office standards committee should make its recommendation to the LCOL/Board after scores are received. LCOL/Board action and notification of status should be sent to the camp within ten days of such action.

Visit Procedures for Exclusively Trip/Travel Camps

When a visit occurs for a resident camp that is exclusively trip/travel, it is often difficult for the visitor to see many of the camp's activities in action. General guidelines for these visits include:

- A majority of written documentation is reviewed prior to the camp season – often in the “camp office.” This may be done by the same visitors as the on-site visitors or a different visit team – depending on schedules, locations, etc.
- The visitors should schedule the on-site visit when they are able to see as many aspects of camp as possible in action. This might include:
 - Visiting the camp at a location where orientation and activities can be viewed (if possible, try to view specialized activities)
 - Observe camper arrival/departure to activities (transportation)
 - Visiting the camp at the beginning of the day to see activities and through a meal
 - When the camp is a true trip camp, the visitors might need to conduct the visit at the beginning or end of the session due to access, yet should plan to spend enough time to view as many activities as possible.
 - It is preferable to view activities that the camp conducts vs. those offered by others (vendors). If specialized activities are only offered by vendors, visit those with the best potential for the visitor to engage with campers/staff.
 - It is important to view vehicles, food service, and health-care practices/procedures.
 - Visitors should verify the written procedures are in practice.
 - For those activities not seen, a detailed conversation should occur so the visitor is comfortable in scoring standards for those activities.
 - It is important to view written documentation specific to the various sites the group visits (emergency procedures, various staff roles with vendors, transportation procedures if different, etc.). This is true for programs occurring in the US and abroad.
- If the trip/travel camp has more than one program occurring in the US, at least two of the programs should be visited.
- Scoring should be done on one score form.

Written Documentation Review Procedures

Verifying compliance of written documentation prior to the on-site visit and before the start of camp is an educational process for directors and allows visitors more time during the on-site visit to observe camp operations and talk with campers and staff. It also helps confirm that the camp is ready for its accreditation visit. The documents to address the standards included in the Written Documentation Review (WDR) are to be submitted by May 1 and ideally reviewed by the assigned visitor(s) within two weeks.

Evaluation of documentation by approved visitor personnel can be done in several ways:

- Use of the My Accreditation/My Visit site provided by ACA
- During a one-on-one meeting with the camp director or administrator
- At a locally scheduled meeting for camps and visitors
- By mail or other electronic means prior to the on-site visit

Written Documentation Review Worksheet (See ACA website for a Sample – Accreditation Information and Forms)

A visitor should use the Written Documentation Review Worksheet to record review of and compliance demonstrated by the required written documentation. If a score form is available and all required compliance demonstrations for a standard have been met, the standard can be scored during the Written Documentation Review. When all compliance demonstrations cannot be met at the Written Documentation Review, the visitors at the on-site visit will need to make observations or conduct interviews on the day of the visit before scoring the standard. Reviewed documentation that does not meet the requirements of the standards can be revised prior to the on-site visit and reevaluated during the visit. *All of the written documentation requested for the Written Documentation Review should be available for visitor review prior to the scheduled WDR.*

The Written Documentation Review may be done by visitors other than those assigned for the on-site visit. It is always recommended that the on-site visitor(s) familiarize themselves with the camp's written policies and procedures to assist in confirming compliance, but it is not expected that the previously reviewed written documentation be reviewed again by the on-site visitors during scoring. Ideally, written documentation will be available to all visitors for their review electronically prior to the on-site visit.

If a Written Documentation Review (WDR) is not completed prior to the start of the camp's summer staff training, the LCOL/Board should be informed of actions taken regarding the camp's scheduled visit.

Scoring Procedures

1. Scoring may occur only when all the required compliance demonstrations for a specific standard have been met. For some standards, this means the standard can be scored when the written documentation is reviewed (e.g., insurance policy documents have been seen and they demonstrate compliance with the standard).
2. Currently, the typical visit occurs from late May through early September. Visits must be scheduled when the greatest number of standards can be verified. It is especially important to see specialized activities in operation, including aquatics. If the camp operates day or resident camp programs, the on-site visit must be scheduled during one of those sessions.

3. Modes of operation and programs that cannot be observed should be discussed with the staff responsible for those modes or programs and noted in the comment sections of the score form as “not observed.” Written documentation should be verified, equipment or facilities observed where possible, and staff interviewed.
4. The score form is to be filled out in the presence of the camp director and signed by the camp director and the visitors. If different visitors conduct the Written Documentation Review, their names should also be recorded on the score form. The score form contains designated spaces for signatures of two visitors and the name of an additional visitor who completed the Camp Self-Assessment (CSA) review. However, if additional visitors are part of the visit, they should sign the score form as well.

The *director* may make a copy of the final score form *MINUS* the front page (which indicates “DO NOT COPY”) for his or her records. The *visitor should not* make a copy of the score form. Please encourage the director to make a copy, if possible – this is useful in the rare event that a score form is lost in the mail.

5. Scoring decisions may be made only by visitors who are on file at ACA, Inc. as “current and approved visitors”:
 - Those who have completed training and/or any required refreshers,
 - Those whose membership is current, and
 - Those who are approved by their LCOL/Board.

Current visitor codes are dependent on training reports and approved visitor lists submitted in a timely manner by the local office.

6. Completing the score form:
 - A. Score forms change each year – be sure to use only the score form for the current year!
 - B. All questions in applicable sections must be marked “Yes” or “No” or “Does Not Apply (DNA).” In some cases, one DNA box covers a group of standards, and in these cases only, it is not necessary to mark each individual standard in the group.
 - C. Standards that do not have a “DNA” option may NOT be scored “DNA.” They must be scored “Yes” or “No.” (In the rare event that the *Accreditation Process Guide (APG)* indicates that a DNA option is available and the score form does not, please contact ACA, Inc., for clarification.)
 - D. The director or the visitor should use the comment section to communicate difficulty in applying a standard in a given situation.
 - E. An entire section should never be left blank. If no such activity occurs in the camp, the section must be marked DNA.
 - F. If a satisfactory health inspection report is used to meet the identified standards in the Facilities Section (FA), a comment should be made indicating, “Satisfactory health inspection seen.”
 - G. Make sure to provide the ACA camp ID number and camp name of the host camp if the program is held at a camp that is currently ACA-accredited.
 - H. Errors made in scoring should be corrected using correction tape or circling the correct response on the score form and, if necessary for clarity, noting in the comment section (e.g., “HW.3.1 is scored YES”).

- I. An explanatory comment must be made for any standard scored “No.”
 - J. Score forms should be mailed immediately to the ACA, Inc., administrative office in Martinsville, Indiana. The mailing address is printed on the score form.
 - K. Notify the standards chair and/or designated ACA staff member when the visit is complete.
7. It sometimes becomes evident that the camp is not prepared for the visit. Should this occur, the visitor is encouraged to strengthen the educational process by helping the camp staff understand what they need to do to be prepared for a standards visit the following year.

A visitor should not terminate a visit without full consent of the director (which should be put in writing in the comment area on the score form and signed by both the director and the lead visitor), regardless of how unprepared the visitor feels the director might be. It should also be noted that if the scoring cannot be completed, the director must be made aware that accreditation will be denied in the current year. The camp should be scheduled for a visit the following summer to earn or regain accreditation.

On rare occasions, the visitor may terminate the visit without the consent of the camp director if the visitor feels that he or she is being abused by the camp director and no longer feels safe, or if the visitor encounters an extreme personal emergency. In the event such a situation occurs, the visitor should immediately contact ACA, Inc. staff, who will work with the local standards committee to determine an appropriate course of action. An explanation of the termination should be noted on the comment form, with rationale and the standard at which the visit stopped, and should be signed by both visitors and the camp director (or noted if he or she will not sign).

8. There are no partial visits (e.g., visit to only score one section of standards) — ever. If a camp is being revisited because of an area of concern from a visit the year before, the entire program is to be rescored — not just the area of concern.

72-Hour Rule

The visitor may allow the camp to locate existing documents and provide them to the visitor with a postmark not to exceed 72 hours from the conclusion of the visit. Proof that the documentation was in existence at the time of the visit or was prepared by others outside the camp operation prior to the visit is absolutely necessary for the score to be changed to “Yes.”

The intent is that external documents (e.g., insurance policies or other documents clearly in existence prior to the visit) may be accepted after the fact. The standards and compliance demonstration statements clearly identify items required to be in writing and in practice at the time of the visit. The visitor may *not* accept copies of written procedures, policies, plans, etc., that were not in existence at the time of the visit.

When allowing such “late documentation,” the lead visitor should retain the score form until the documentation is received or the 72-hour deadline is passed. Once the deadline is passed and any changes have been entered on the score form, it should be sent to the ACA administrative office.

This is the only time the score form is not mailed immediately following the visit.

When the visitor has received the required documentation and corrects the score form, use Wite-Out on incorrect marks or circle the correct response and completely fill in the correct answer/score. Make additional comments regarding all corrections and material received.

Immediate Corrective Action for Missed Mandatory Standards

The mandatory standards are considered essential to the operation of an accredited camp. Noncompliance with just **one** mandatory standard can cause a camp to fail to achieve or fail to retain accreditation.

For currently accredited camps, camp accreditation will become *conditional* upon completion of a camp visit during which one or more mandatory standards have been missed.

Full accreditation may be restored to a currently accredited camp, or granted to an applicant camp, *if* all other accreditation criteria are met and *if* the camp takes immediate corrective action to come into compliance with the missed mandatory standard(s). Documentation of the correction must be postmarked or sent electronically to the ACA administrative office, ACA, Inc. *within seven days* following the visit.

Failure to immediately correct missed mandatory standards in the stated time period will result in immediate withdrawal or denial of accreditation. In the situation where a mandatory standard is missed and not corrected within the required time frame, the camp may request a review (and subsequent appeal). The request for a review must be made within 21 days of the notification of removal of accreditation. However, accreditation will be conditional until a decision is made, at which time accreditation may be reinstated or removed until a successful visit has occurred.

*The Immediate Corrective Action process may be used only for missed **mandatory** standards.*

If, during a visit, a camp is not in compliance with a mandatory standard (this process is used even if a camp comes into compliance with a missed mandatory standard during the visit.):

VISITOR will:

1. Score the standard “No” on the score form (*even if corrected during the visit*).
2. Specify on the comment form the reason for scoring “No.” What is the problem? Why is it a “No?”
3. Complete the Immediate Corrective Action (ICA) Notification Form (see the ACA website for sample form), *clearly* specifying action(s) the camp must take and documentation required to verify compliance *within seven days* to come into compliance. See Examples of Possible Corrections for Missed Mandatory Standards on the visitor’s page of the ACA website.
4. Submit one copy of the ICA Notification Form with the score form to ACA, Inc. The camp will retain the second copy.

ACA, Inc. will:

1. Review ICA forms as they arrive in the office with score forms to be sure they are clear and appropriate.
2. Contact the lead visitor if there is any question on the action specified.
3. Copy documentation submitted by the camp and send it to the lead visitor, along with a copy of the ICA form, the score form, and an ICA Response Form. (See ACA website for sample form.)

VISITOR will:

1. Evaluate whether the action taken corrects the noncompliance with the mandatory standard. Since the visitor(s) scored the mandatory standard “No” based on observations and discussions on the day of the visit, the visitor(s) should evaluate whether the action taken brings the camp into compliance with the standard.

Sometimes, the required immediate action may involve a change in policy or procedure, or perhaps the camp is very near the end of the season, with little opportunity to operate in compliance with the mandatory standard. In such cases, the visitor may recommend to the local office that, in addition to immediate action specified, some documentation of continued compliance the next season should be required.

2. Complete and sign the ICA Response Form and send it to the standards chair along with the score form and all documentation related to the missed mandatory standard(s).
3. If the visitor does not accept the correction submitted to meet the missed mandatory standard, he or she should **immediately** notify the standards chair and ACA staff working with that area for additional action to be taken. This might be an immediate review of what was requested to “correct” the missed mandatory as well as what was submitted to provide the camp with the opportunity for a full review. This process should occur as quickly as possible, as camps not in compliance with all applicable mandatory standards are not eligible for accreditation.

LOCAL STANDARDS CHAIR should:

1. Review all the ICA documentation immediately upon receipt (both the ICA form from the visitor and documentation submitted by the camp to confirm compliance).
2. Determine if what the visitor requested in the “fix” will bring the camp into compliance with the mandatory standard. Contact the visitor to ask for clarification. If the questions are not resolved, additional steps need to be taken, or if you have questions, immediately contact the ACA staff with whom you work to help determine next steps.
3. If what was submitted to meet compliance was accepted by the visitor, but you are concerned it does NOT bring the camp into compliance, again, please contact the visitor to ask for clarification. If the questions are not resolved, additional steps need to be taken, or you have questions, immediately contact the ACA staff with whom you work to help determine next steps.
4. If what was submitted to meet compliance does indeed bring the camp into compliance with the mandatory standard, no additional action is needed at this time. Please complete the ICA Response Form to be shared with your standards committee.

LOCAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE will:

1. Make the accreditation recommendation to the LCOL/Board, based on the visitor's recommendation indicated on the ICA Response Form.
 - A. If the visitor indicates "Yes," the camp achieved compliance with the missed mandatory standard(s), the local standards committee will recommend accreditation in the same manner as they would had the camp met all mandatory standards at the time of the visit.
 - B. If the visitor indicates "Yes," but recommends documentation of continuing compliance the following season, the standards committee may recommend that the LCOL/Board:
 - Accredite the camp (assuming all other criteria are met).
 - Accredite the camp and require documentation of continued compliance with missed mandatory standard(s) the following season, for accreditation to continue.

For example: The camp had just two trips, both completed before the visit. Both trips were led by staff members who had training but no certification in first aid. The visitor required the camp to submit a signed statement that all future trips would have a properly certified leader. The local office may want to ask for documentation of certification of trip leaders before trips go out the next season.

- Accredite the camp but require a full visit the following season.

For example: During a visit the last week of camp, the camp missed four mandatory standards. They subsequently corrected all of them, but the local office may feel that a full revisit the next season is justified.

- C. If the visitor indicates "No," and the documentation submitted does not indicate that the camp has achieved compliance with the missed mandatory standard(s), the standards committee should recommend that the camp not be accredited. *This situation should not be a "surprise" to the camp.*
- D. If the visitor determines "No," the documentation submitted does not indicate that the camp has achieved the missed mandatory standard(s), and the standards committee determines that the documentation satisfied what the visitor has asked for on the ICA, then the standards committee, after consulting with the visitor, may change the "No" to a "Yes" and recommend accreditation.
- E. If the visitor indicates "Yes," the documentation submitted indicates that the camp has achieved compliance with the missed mandatory standard(s), but the standards committee determines that the documentation did not satisfy what was asked for on the ICA and does not bring the camp into compliance with a mandatory standard, then the standards committee, after consulting with the visitor, may change the "Yes" to a "No" and recommend that the camp not be accredited.
- F. If the visitor indicates "Other," the local standards committee may review the information and make an appropriate recommendation to the LCOL/Board.
- G. If the camp has missed four or more mandatory standards, the camp will be required to be visited the following summer. This should be noted on the Final Score Report.

2. Notify the camp of the decision made by the LCOL/Board, and if necessary, inform the camp of the Review and Appeal Process.
3. Complete and sign the ICA Response Form and send it to ACA, Inc. with the final score report by **October 15**. Local offices must not retain any documentation once the ICA decision has been made. Documentation for corrections that have been approved may be returned to the camp or destroyed. Documentation supplied for any ICA that is *not* approved should be forwarded on to ACA, Inc. immediately following the review.

Changes on the Score Form after the Visit

Once the score form has been signed by the parties, no changes shall be made except for the following circumstances.

1. The camp provides written documentation **that was in existence at the time of the visit** but was not available at the visit. Such documentation shall be received, postmarked, or sent electronically to the visitor within 72 hours of the visit.

The visitor shall review that documentation and may change the score of the standard from “No” to “Yes” if the documentation verifies that the standard has been met. Note the change in scoring on the comment section of the form.

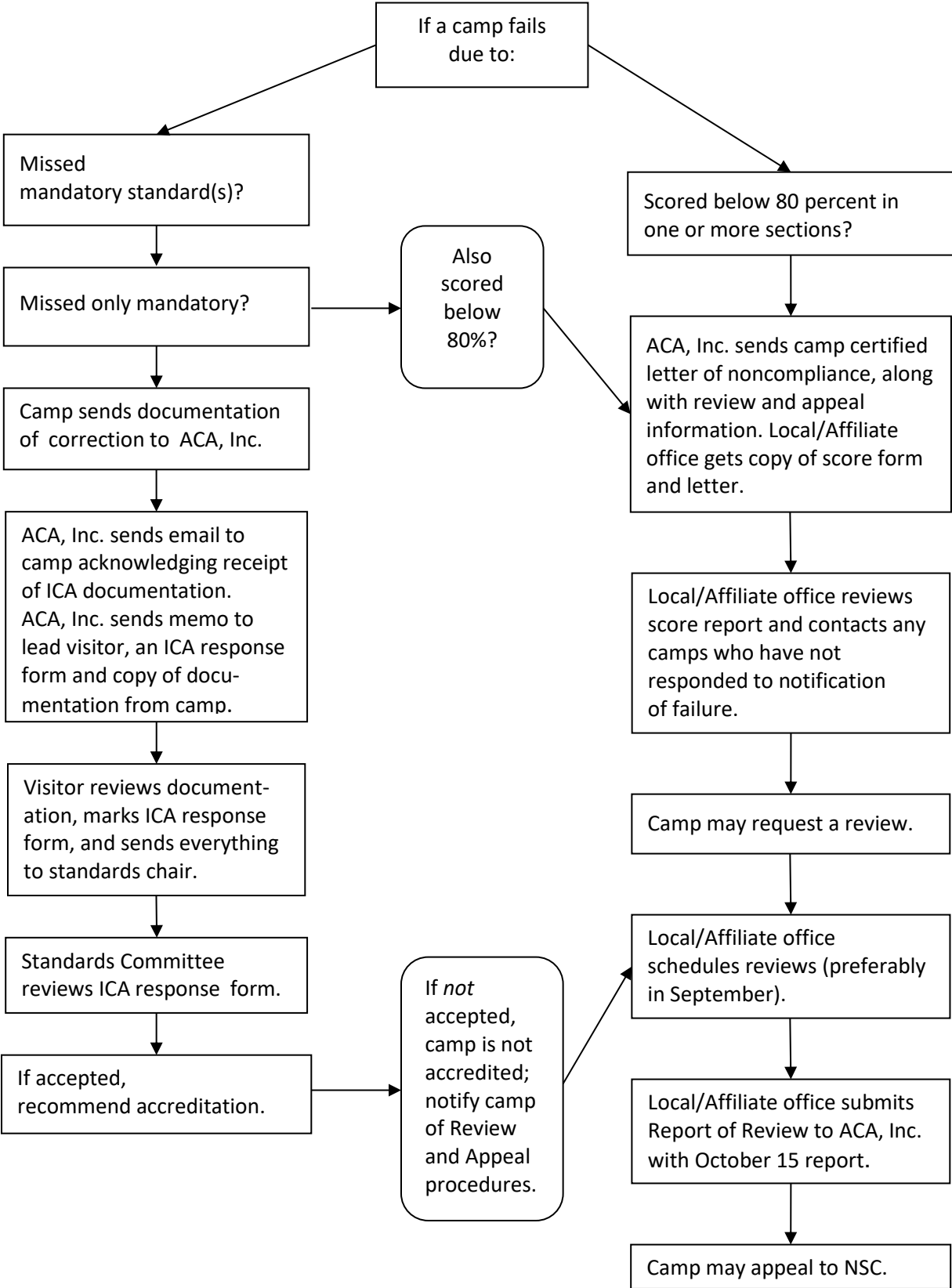
2. The ACA, Inc. staff discovers visitor errors on the score form when reviewing it in preparation for scoring. Such errors generally are due to:
 - Standards scored with more than one response.
 - Blanks — standards inadvertently not scored at all.
 - Standards scored “Yes” on the score form, but the comment form clearly indicates the standard should be scored “No.”
 - Modes, services, or activities listed on the Camp Information Form that appear to not have been scored during the visit.
 - Inconsistencies on the score form (such as boating standards scored, but personal flotation device standards marked DNA).
 - No comment listed for standards scored “No.”

The staff shall review such situations with the visitor, giving them the opportunity to correct any errors. Documentation of any changes made to the score form shall be maintained with the score form for permanent record keeping.

For all such changes, the opinion of the visitor shall be reflected on the score form, and the camp director shall retain the right of review and appeal.

Any other changes that either the camp or the visitor feel should be made on the score form shall be made only in the local review when the opinions of both the camp and the visitor are considered in the review process.

Camp Failure Flow Chart



Chapter VI

REVIEWS, APPEALS, LOCAL COUNCIL OF LEADERS/AFFILIATE BOARD OF DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Initial Score Report Screening

Standards score reports are sent to local offices from ACA, Inc. beginning in early August. The local standards chairperson or designated standards committee member or staff is responsible to review score reports as they are received to:

1. Review camps with scores to be sure they are camps that were on the list and expecting to be visited. If an error is suspected, please contact the accreditation team in the ACA Administrative office immediately.

In addition, if scores do *not* appear for a camp that had expected to be visited, the ACA administrative office should be contacted to see if the score form has been received from the visitor. Occasionally, a visitor fails to mail a score form immediately, or a form may be lost or delayed in the mail.

2. Review the report and highlight camps that have not met the accreditation criteria. The camps that have failed are those that may request a review.

Camps whose scores don't meet the minimum 80 percent criteria will receive an email or letter from ACA, Inc., along with a copy of the score form, alerting them to their noncompliant scores. The letter also includes guidelines for pursuing a local review and an official form on which to respond. Local offices and standards chairs will receive copies of all notification letters, along with copies of score forms for those camps.

Camps that missed *only* a mandatory standard and have submitted immediate correction documentation do *not* receive a failure notice.

See Camp Failure Flow Chart (at the end of Chapter V), which illustrates what happens when a camp doesn't meet the minimum criteria. The ACA website includes sample notification letters and response forms and a copy of the guide to local review and national appeal.

3. It is strongly recommended that someone from the local office contact any camp that has failed the visit to verify if the camp wishes to have a review or not.

Purpose of Review/Appeal

The National Standards Commission has established the following procedures for local review and national appeal as a mechanism for resolving reviews and appeals quickly, fairly, and consistently. Each camp that does not meet the established criteria for accreditation must be offered a review of its scores by the local office and must be granted an opportunity to submit an appeal to the National Standards Commission (NSC) if the results of the review are not satisfactory.

It is the local office's responsibility to remind the camp of its rights for review and appeal, but it is the camp's responsibility to initiate the process. The local review process must include an opportunity for a hearing before the standards committee or a designated review panel. The camp has a right to have personnel present (or otherwise be involved) at the review, and must be made aware of this right and notified of the meeting date and time. The camp may choose to only submit written documentation and/or submit information by phone or email.

The camp may initiate a local review at any time within 21 days of notification of noncompliance with the criteria for accreditation. Information must be gathered from the camp *and* from the visitors. This may be in person (at a hearing), by phone, or by written/electronic correspondence.

A local review and LCOL/Board action must be completed before the national appeal process can be initiated.

Local Review

The purpose of the local review is to:

- Review visitors' scoring decisions and correct any errors.
- Gather facts on standards in question.
- Consider the process or circumstances of the visit.
- Examine any differences in interpretation of the standards between the visitors and the director.
- Determine the acceptability of documentation or other evidence of compliance that was not available on the day of the visit.
- Recommend action to the LCOL /Board. See the section "Recommendation to the LCOL/Board for Camps in Review from the Standards/Review Committee" later in this chapter for possible recommendations.

Even though local leadership does not have the authority to make certain decisions at the local review, the local review process needs to be followed because:

- The camp needs to know the local standards committee recommendation for its situation.
- Facts are most easily gathered at the local level.
- The local office might be able to talk with people in person. (The NSC member reviewing an appeal will be able to gather information only by phone.)
- The NSC depends on information presented in writing to make a determination.
- The NSC needs to know what the local leadership thinks about the situation.

National Appeal

The purpose of the national appeal is to:

- Establish the intent of standards in question and/or determine if the camp's procedures met that intent.
- Establish the applicability of the standards in question.
- Grant waivers for individual standards or for minimum score percentages or address issues with mandatory standards.
- Determine the accreditation status of the camp.

Review Hearing

Target Date: September

Each camp that has not met the established criteria for accreditation is entitled to a review before the local standards committee or its review panel. Under no circumstances should a score be changed without the input of the camp director and the visitors.

Reviews are not required when mandatory standards that have been corrected to the visitor's satisfaction are the only thing preventing accreditation. If the visitor does not accept the correction for a mandatory standard, the camp must be given the opportunity for review of that decision.

Reviews may be scheduled for the same meeting where the standards committee formulates its annual recommendations to the LCOL/Board, or a special meeting or conference call may be scheduled.

During the Review

1. The views of the visitors and a representative of the camp must be represented, either in person or via a presentation by a member of the standards committee on their behalf. Where distance or time is a factor, the standards committee may choose to assign a member of the committee or the review panel to gather information from the visitors and the camp to present to the committee.
2. The issues related to the standards that kept the camp from meeting the accreditation criteria should be clearly identified.
3. It should be determined what the camp feels is incorrect or not applicable to their situation.
 - Was the score form filled out incorrectly?
 - Was an individual standard scored incorrectly or inappropriately?
 - Was an entire section scored incorrectly or inappropriately?
 - Were there extenuating circumstances that prevented the camp from complying with the standard(s) in question?
4. The camp should be given guidance in determining what information is needed to resolve the questions. For instance, if the camp missed personnel standards dealing with age, educational background, and ratios of campers to staff, have them present in writing the names, positions, ages, education, and age group served for all staff along with the numbers of campers served in each age group.

5. All information presented by the camp must be presented *in writing* so that it can be forwarded to the National Standards Commission in case of appeal and so that accurate records can be kept.

Guidelines for Written Documentation for the Review

The NSC has affirmed that any written documentation presented after the day of the visit must be verified as having been in existence on the day of the visit.

Acceptable

Written documentation that *may* be considered at the time of review:

1. Certification document or dated document from outside source that could not be provided to the visitor within the 72-hour time limit because of extenuating circumstances.

Examples: Insurance policy; water test not yet back from the state.

2. Document, seen at the time of the visit, upon which the visitors and director disagree on whether it meets the requirements of the standard.

Examples: Transportation procedures or health-care procedures that the camp believes are adequate, but visitors felt were incomplete.

3. Documentation of staff qualifications that was not available at the time of the visit, and which is not a certification but is “documented evidence” of qualifications.

Examples: Reference forms for staff member in charge of trips; letters of reference and performance review of staff member teaching windsurfing.

Proof that the written documents were *in existence* at the time of the visit or were prepared by others outside the camp operation prior to the visit is absolutely necessary for the document to be considered.

Not Acceptable

1. Written procedures, policies, plans, and so on that were not seen at the time of the visit and whose date of origin cannot be clearly established as prior to the visit. The standards and compliance demonstration statements clearly identify items required to be in writing.

After Presentation of Evidence

After information is presented and discussed, the standards committee should dismiss any camp representatives and visitors and vote on the issues.

The committee may change a visitor's response to a standard or a section and request a rescore from the ACA administrative office accreditation team if the visitor made a scoring error or the camp presented written documentation that met the written documentation guidelines.

If the standards committee feels a situation deserves special consideration, or feels the system is unfair in some way, the committee may be tempted to just change the score to “Yes” so the camp will be accredited. Using this solution creates unequal administration of accreditation policies across the country.

Questionable situations should be sent to the NSC immediately along with the standards committee rationale, concerns, and recommendation. This affords an equitable and consistent system and the NSC can identify and address any major problems. In all circumstances, visitor input needs to be considered.

Once a review has been held, if the standards committee has changed any scores, call or email ACA, Inc. to have the scores refigured prior to your LCOL/Board meeting. Then you must **submit a Local Report of Review for each camp reviewed along with the final Score Report.**

After the corrected score form has been rescored by the accreditation team at ACA, Inc., the standards committee must make the appropriate recommendation to the LCOL/Board to accredit or not accredit the camp.

Recommendation to the LCOL/Board for Camps in Review from the Standards Review Committee

Target Dates: Late September/Early October

When making recommendations to the LCOL/Board on camps in review, camp numbers rather than names should be used to help ensure the objectivity and confidentiality of accreditation decisions. Basically, the standards committee has three options. It can recommend to the LCOL/Board:

1. Recommend – The camp be accredited

This option can be used only if the standards committee has determined that the camp was scored incorrectly and the recalculated scores from ACA, Inc. confirm that the camp meets all criteria for accreditation.

2. Recommend – The camp *not* be accredited

If the standards committee decided that the visitors scored the standards correctly (or if with any rescore the minimum 80 percent is not obtained) and there is not valid, substantive reason for an exception, recommend to the LCOL/Board that the camp not be accredited.

3. **Recommend – The review be referred to the NSC**

The standards committee may recommend to the LCOL/Board that the review be forwarded to the National Standards Commission as an appeal. The only circumstances under which the local leadership may initiate an appeal are if:

- a. The standards committee feels there is a valid, substantive reason why the camp could not or did not meet the standard;
- b. The standards committee feels that a standard, the score for a section of standards, or the score for an entire visit should be waived (include rationale); or
- c. The issue centers on the intent of a standard, and the intent is not clear in the standard or the interpretation, or the camp appears to be meeting the intent of the standard in a manner not specified by the standard or its interpretation.

Note that the local leadership still must complete a review and make a specific recommendation to the NSC, even when referring the matter for appeal. Whether the camp or the LCOL/Board initiates the review, the local leadership must provide the NSC with *all* information on each camp whose concerns could not be settled by the local review process. Also, it is extremely important that the LCOL/Board provide, in writing, its recommended action and the rationale for the recommended action.

Action of LCOL/Board for Camps in Review

Target Date: Prior to October 15

It is the responsibility of the LCOL/Board to take formal action on the recommendations of the standards committee. This action may occur when action is taken regarding the accreditation status for all camps visited that season and not going through a review and for all camps continuing in accreditation. For camps that did not originally meet the criteria for accreditation, the LCOL/Board may:

1. **Vote to accredit** a camp whose score form has been corrected by the standards committee and whose recalculated scores are in compliance with the criteria for accreditation.
2. **Vote to *not* accredit** a camp based on the camp's noncompliance with the criteria for accreditation.

In this situation, the camp should be informed in writing that the local leadership has voted to *not* accredit and that it has a right to *appeal* directly to the National Standards Commission. If the LCOL/Board believes the visitors made the correct determination, tactfully report such determination to the camp. The camp deserves to know the level of support it will have from the LCOL/Board if the camp decides to appeal. This written notice comes from someone at the local level (staff or volunteer). Accreditation is removed.

- 3. Vote to file an appeal** with the NSC to waive a standard or a minimum score percentage or to rule on the intent of a standard.

In this situation, the LCOL/Board is essentially submitting the appeal on behalf of and in support of the camp. If this group cannot support the camp's request for a waiver, it should deny the review, not accredit the camp, and allow the camp to pursue an appeal if it wishes. The LCOL/Board and the camp should submit in writing all materials, relevant facts, and special considerations to the National Standards Commission. The camp should be notified in writing if this action is being taken. Again, the notice should come from someone at the local level. The camp remains accredited.

- 4. Request that the NSC establish the applicability of the standard or section of standards in question.** Once the applicability of the standard or section of standards has been determined, the NSC will provide the requesting standards committee with this information. The local committee should then make a recommendation. As this will prolong the review period, the camp will remain accredited throughout this process.

Report of Review

Following LCOL/Board action, a Report of Review must be completed for each camp reviewed. (See ACA website for sample forms.) Submit the report of review with the Final Score Report by **October 15**.

National Standards Commission Appeal Procedures

Any camp that does not meet the criteria for accreditation after completing the local review process has a right to appeal the decision to the National Standards Commission. An appeal may be initiated by a camp or by a LCOL/Board on behalf of a camp.

Appeals go to the NSC:

- 1. From the camp** when the camp is not satisfied with the results of the review process, or
- 2. From the LCOL/Board** when the intent or applicability of a standard or area of standards is in question or when the LCOL/Board is recommending that a standard, an area, or a minimum score percentage be waived.

Requests for NSC appeal shall be submitted to the director of standards at ACA, Inc. within 21 days of receiving the decision following a review, or immediately following the review if being referred by the LCOL/Board.

Appeals will be determined by the NSC at its next scheduled meeting. Its ruling and rationale must be provided to the camp and the LCOL/Board within 21 days of the decision. **THE DECISION OF THE NATIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION IS FINAL.**

Accreditation Status of Camps in Review and Appeal

When a camp requests a **review**, the camp's accreditation status remains as it was during the accreditation visit. Previously accredited camps remain accredited through the review process.

Following the review, the accreditation status of camps shall remain as determined by the LCOL/Board throughout the National Appeal Process. *Unless the LCOL/Board is supporting the appeal to the NSC, camps who do not meet accreditation criteria remain **not** accredited.*

LCOL/Board Responsibility to Accredit Camps Not Going through Review

The ACA Accreditation Program is a national program, developed and monitored by the National Standards Commission and based upon the integrity of the local leadership as the implementing agency. As such, the local office and local volunteers have the responsibility to conduct the visits.

The LCOL/Board has the **responsibility to accredit** camps that:

1. Have met all applicable mandatory standards, and
2. Have met the minimum score percentage for each area of the standards (80 percent), and
3. Have paid current dues and fees, and
4. Have a Statement of Compliance on file with a current signature.

The LCOL/Board also has the **responsibility to not accredit** camps that:

1. Do not meet all mandatory standards, or
2. Do not meet the minimum score percentages, or
3. Have not paid current fees, or
4. Do not have a current signed Statement of Compliance on file.

Any and all exceptions to these two areas of responsibility shall be handled by the National Standards Commission, on appeal from camps and/or LCOL/Board.

The LCOL/Board **takes final action** on all camps in the locality, according to the following guidelines:

1. Within the guidelines under "Responsibility to Accredit," LCOL/Board shall act or shall empower the executive committee to act on the status of all camps to which they provide accreditation services prior to **October 15**.
2. Prior to **November 1**, the LCOL/Board shall notify in writing each camp visited the previous summer of its status as voted on by the LCOL/Board and/or executive committee. (See ACA website for sample letters.)
3. Camps that have been through review and are not accredited should be notified by certified mail, return receipt requested, and reminded of the policy regarding the use of logos, signs, and right to appeal. (See ACA website for sample letter.)

Handling Common Questions from Directors of Camps that Failed

Handling camps that have not passed is a delicate and difficult task. When a camp director is informed that the camp is “not accredited,” he or she may be embarrassed, threatened, or angry. Because ACA is administering a *national* program, with criteria that must be applied consistently across the country, the standards cannot be compromised. ACA should work with people in a positive and understanding way to help them with the process.

Standards chairs, ACA staff, or local leaders may get some of the following questions from camp directors or administrators of camps that have failed.

Are you saying we can't be accredited because of one little thing we didn't have in writing?

Often, the perception of the camp director (especially if the score is *close* to 80 percent) is that the camp failed because of one “unimportant” standard. In fact, the camp has taken a “No” on *more* than one standard — enough to score below 80 percent. (Most camps score in the mid-90s.) That *combination* of missed standards has resulted in a low score.

If we can correct mandatory (really important) standards, why can't we correct the non-mandatory ones?

The mandatory standards have been identified as those practices so important to the health and safety of campers and staff that noncompliance with them is unacceptable. We have an obligation to the public and to the participants in camps to be sure that those important areas are brought into compliance as quickly as possible.

ACA visits are not a “surprise” to camps. Because the director has known exactly what the standards are, exactly how to comply (through the compliance demonstration statements), and exactly when the visitors are coming, it is expected that the standard will be scored as seen at the time of the visit.

The public also expects that the camp will be fully prepared for an announced visit. To allow correction for *all* standards dilutes the accreditation visit process. A limitation needs to be placed on how much could be corrected. That line was drawn at the limit of the mandatory standards, which are the critical health and safety issues.

We have added that item to our procedures. We now meet the standard. Why can't we be accredited?

Even if the director promises to change or write procedures, the score is based on what the trained visitors saw at the time of the visit. The day of the visit is the time when you “have it all together.” Piecemeal additions are not acceptable.

The standards state very clearly when written documentation is required. ACA has already given camps a 20-percent leeway to miss non-mandatory standards. Keeping the correction to a very few standards means that our overall system of having compliance measured on the day of the visit is not compromised. If accredited camps can't present a full package of all requirements being met on the day of the visit, what assurance is there that they meet all standards on nonvisit days?

Chapter VII

ACCREDITATION ANNUAL REPORT

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. The 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. At least every fifth year, they will demonstrate their full compliance through an on-site visit.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to:

- Provide evidence of quality enhancement/improvement efforts, to be included in the overall five-year accreditation cycle.
- Provide enhanced communications with camps in nonvisit years through the AAR process.
- Provide confirmation of continual compliance with ACA standards throughout the five-year accreditation cycle.

Annual Accreditation Report Guidelines

- The individual who completes the AAR for the camp must be actively involved with the overall camp operation and ideally will have completed a current Basic Standards Course, Standards Update Course (or the Accreditation Process Workshop when completing the AAR under the 2019 standards), or be a current visitor (at any level).
- Individuals who review the AAR will be considered the reviewers and must be currently trained visitors (at any level). Current visitor status will be determined by the Approved Visitor Report submitted the prior spring.
- Both the individual from the camp who completes the AAR and the reviewer should review a tutorial video or user guide prior to completion or review.
- Visitors will be randomly assigned the reports they review. If the reviewer feels there is a conflict of interest with the report he or she has been asked to review, the reviewer will contact the standards chair or ACA staff from their area.
- Time frame for completion and review of the AAR will be as follows:
 - The camp's AAR will be made available for completion online by the camp between December 1 and February 1.
 - All AARs will be reviewed by visitors between the time they are submitted and March 15.
 - If the camp's AAR is not completed by February 11, the camp will be notified of the need to complete the report no later than March 1. If this date is not met, the camp may be scheduled for a visit that summer. If the visit is not conducted, accreditation may be removed.
 - The camp will be notified by March 15 if there are any questions and/or concerns regarding their AAR.

- If questions or concerns are raised in the review:
 - The reviewer will contact the person from the camp who completed the form and try to resolve the issue.
 - If questions remain, the reviewer will talk with the standards chair to get a second opinion.
 - If questions still remain, the standards chair will involve the local Standards Committee for resolution.
- Camps that do not submit the AAR by the agreed upon date may be scheduled for an out-of-cycle visit. At the discretion of the LCOL/Board, the visit may occur during the immediate season or the next season (based on timing).

All currently accredited camps are required to complete the Annual Accreditation Report (AAR) in nonvisit years.

Chapter VIII

MAINTAINING RECORDS AND ACCESSING REPORTS

Custodial Responsibilities

For protection of ACA field/affiliate offices and ACA visitors, ACA, Inc. is the custodian of ACA official records. Any legal inquiries regarding camps and/or visits must be directed to the director of standards at ACA, Inc.

Reports from the Local/Affiliate Office

Documents Related to Visits

All field offices/affiliate offices shall follow these guidelines related to visit documents:

1. Allow the camp director to copy the score form (minus the front page with signatures), if desired, before the visitors leave the camp. Upon completion of the visit, the lead visitor should send the original score form directly to ACA, Inc. Visitors should *not* keep copies of the score form.
2. Furnish ACA, Inc. with the final standards report by October 15 of each year, with LCOL/Board decisions on the accreditation status of all camps in the locality. Include reports of review, ICA Response Forms, and copies of correspondence/documentation related to accreditation (or non-accreditation) of camps.
3. Discard/delete any copies of score forms and documentation once reviews/appeals are settled.
4. Retain records of visitor assignments to camps only until that camp is visited again, but no longer than five years following a visit.
5. Forward all records of training of visitor personnel to ACA, Inc. for permanent recordkeeping in a timely manner. This includes documents from Standards Courses, Standards Update/Refresher Courses, Associate Visitor Courses, Visitor Update/Refresher Courses, and Standards Instructor Courses.

Documents Related to Courses

All field offices/affiliate offices shall follow these guidelines related to visit documents.

Associate Visitor Course: Submit a training report (or roster as described in Chapter III) with names and member ID numbers of all candidates who have completed the Associate Visitor Course. In addition, submit application forms, complete with instructor endorsement and LCOL/Board approval, for all persons who completed the Associate Visitor Course.

Visitor Update/Refresher: Submit a report of all additional training provided for visitors and associate visitors. Visitor personnel must complete a Visitor Update Course whenever a major change in standards is adopted or as required by the NSC, before conducting visits under the new standards.

Standards Instructor Course: Candidates for the Standards Instructor Course must have Local Leadership endorsement to attend. Following course completion, standards trainers will certify candidates as instructors or associate instructors. Local offices will receive instructor application forms for approval by the LCOL/Board. After approval, the application forms should be forwarded to ACA, Inc. for record maintenance.

Other Course/Workshop Rosters: Instructors/standards chairs/or ACA staff should submit a copy of all course rosters to accreditation@ACAcamps.org for archiving purposes.

Reports from ACA, Inc.

Web Portal Reports

Standards chairs and staff have a variety of reports available through the Standards Chair Web Portal, which can be found at:

ACAcamps.org/volunteers/standardschairs

Information for these reports is updated in real time. Reports on the web portal cover areas such as:

- New Camps by Join Date
- Camps Getting Ready to Terminate
- What Camps Will Be Visited by Year
- Find an Available Visitor within X Radius

Local Score Report

Beginning in early August, local offices will receive periodic reports, via email, of scores for camps that have been visited. By October 1, the local office will receive a *final* score report that includes all camps with scores from visits *and* all other fee-paying camps in the local area, with current accreditation codes. This report must be completed and approved by the LCOL/Board and is due back to ACA, Inc. by October 15.

Standards Annual Report

By mid-December, the local office will receive a Standards Annual Report, based on score form information and reports received throughout the year. The purpose of these reports is to help identify any training problems or confusions and to track trends. Statistics are kept for each local office by the accreditation team on:

- Number of fee-paying camps
- Number of currently approved visitors and instructors
- Number of visits completed
- Number of extensions granted
- Number of visits made with only one visitor
- Number of and reasons for calls made to visitors on score forms
- Dates on which required reports were received from the local office

The National Standards Commission reviews statistics each year and may recommend curriculum or procedural changes or provide further clarification or education on certain standards as a result of this statistical review. The NSC may also offer guidance and assistance to any local area whose percentages fall below those necessary to help provide consistent delivery and implementation of the accreditation program across the country.

Reports Due to ACA, Inc.

The following reports are due annually to the ACA administrative office.

March 1 — Visitor List

The **Visitor List**, with updated visitor levels, approved by the LCOL/Board. In early spring, all standards chairs and staff who support the volunteers will be sent an Excel report along with detailed instructions on how to complete this information. Visitor codes in the ACA database will be updated by the ACA accreditation team with information from the visitor list and/or visitor training reports.

Submission of the report indicates the LCOL/Board is aware of those individuals who are serving as visitors and of their assigned status. The recommendation to accept this list should come from the local standards chair (with assistance from staff). The list should not contain individuals who do not meet (or will not meet by the beginning of the visit season) the requirements to serve as a visitor at their designated level (due to lack of training, length of time since they have conducted a visit, etc.). Changes to visitor status can be made throughout the year as newly trained associate visitors and/or visitor status are approved. This change is noted in the ACA database by ACA staff.

Local offices must notify ACA, Inc. of any updates in visitor or instructor status based on the recommendation of the standards committee. Local offices are encouraged to have staff update training dates in the CRM. Approving trainer codes is the responsibility of the NSC, with input from other trainers.

Because camps may be visited only by currently approved ACA visitor personnel, part of processing score forms at ACA, Inc. includes verifying the approval and membership status of visitors who have signed score forms.

Visits done by visitors who are not current members will be counted as one-visitor visits in the report on local performance, which is used to help determine the 90-percent compliance of visits with two visitors.

October 15 — Final Score Report

The **Final Score Report** documents LCOL/Board-approved accreditation status for all fee-paying camps in the locality. This report indicates the accreditation status not only of camps visited in the prior season, but also includes all fee-paying camps (both those currently accredited and those not currently accredited).

In order to be accredited, a camp must (1) be current in fees, (2) meet all applicable mandatory standards, and (3) have a current, signed Statement of Compliance on file.

As accreditation status is approved by the LCOL/Board, please verify that a Statement of Compliance (SOC) is on file for the current calendar year for all currently accredited camps (newly accredited camps do not sign this document until the next year). If a current SOC is not on file, accreditation status can be “conditional” based on receiving this document by December 1. If the document is not received by this date, accreditation will be removed and reinstated only when a current document is submitted.

Camps have several options for completing the SOC. They can go to [ACAcamps.org/soc](https://www.acacamps.org/soc) to complete and submit a form online. Additionally, we can email a form to camps upon request.

Letters to Camps

All camps that were visited must be notified of the results of their visits no later than November 1.

Camps that requested reviews *must* be notified, in writing, of the results of those reviews and of the accreditation decision of the section.

Camps that are missing their current SOC must be sent notification in writing (email is sufficient) of the potential loss of accreditation if this document is not submitted by December 1.

Finally, any camps that failed and did not request reviews, or camps that refused a visit, must also be notified by the local office of their loss of accreditation. **All letters sent to camps regarding the removal of accreditation should be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested.**

Accredited Camp Certificates

ACA, Inc. will send accreditation certificates to all accredited camps (those visited the previous summer as well as those whose accreditation continues) in late winter.

All reports and associated review information are due to ACA, Inc. office by October 15.

Chapter IX

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTRATION OF ACCREDITATION

Professional Conduct of Visitors

Visitors should be aware of potential ethical concerns in their role and function regarding learning about other camps. Care should be exercised in the following areas:

1. **Confidentiality** — Visitors need to be sensitive to what is public information and what is not. Information about finances, staffing problems, or other concerns at a camp is strictly confidential and should not be shared outside of the visit context.
2. **Professional Manner** — Visitors are guests in the camps they visit and need to remember that conversation and behavior reflects not only upon one's own camp, but also upon ACA and the entire profession. Visitors' behavior should reflect high moral and ethical standards. For many of our members, the standards visitor *is* the face of the American Camp Association. The visitor may be the only personal contact, particularly for seasonal directors.
3. **Social Media** – Comments or posts on any social media sites should be limited and “approved” by the camp visited prior to any posts. Taking of photos on visits should be approved by camp personnel.

Conflict of Interest Statement for ACA Volunteers

1. All standards volunteers (trainers through associate visitors) will reveal any conflicts of interest with regard to their roles in serving as standards volunteers. Individuals will recuse themselves from participating in discussions and decisions relevant to their conflict of interest.
2. All standards volunteers (trainers through associate visitors) will not disclose or discuss with another person or entity, or use for their own purpose, confidential or proprietary information gained through their volunteer work for ACA (e.g., accreditation approval issues).
3. All standards volunteers (trainers through associate visitors) will not receive compensation for their work. However, volunteers can be reimbursed for expenses related to participation in meetings and other expenses incurred for the benefit of the field office or affiliate.
4. All standards volunteers (trainers through associate visitors) will not use the intellectual property (IP) of ACA to further any personal interests; or purport or imply ACA's IP to be their own. This includes all information in ACA's database, knowledge center products and services, logos, and any other statements or educational materials created by or for the American Camp Association.

All leaders must adhere to any and all ethical standards or codes of conduct established by the association.

Reinstating Accreditation Following Lapse in Payment of Dues or Fees

When camp fees are not paid, all services related to that camp lapse, including accreditation and the privilege of using the ACA-accredited camp logo. The membership (and services) of any individuals paid for by that camp also lapse.

If the dues/fees are paid within six (6) months of the expiration date, the membership and accreditation status will be reinstated to the expiration date **if (1) the last visit was within the past three years, (2) there has been no change of site or ownership, and (3) the camp has a current Statement of Compliance on file.** This will be done automatically by the ACA administrative office and the local office will be notified.

If the dues/fees are paid after lapsing for more than six (6) months and less than twelve (12) months, the local office will be contacted for input as to whether accreditation should be reinstated without a visit. Reinstatement of accreditation must be approved by the LCOL/Affiliate Board.

If dues/fees are paid after lapsing for more than twelve (12) months, accreditation cannot be reinstated without a revisit.

Reinstating Accreditation Following Lapse in Accreditation

When an accredited camp on the five-year visit cycle lapses for more than one year (due to failing a visit and not trying the next season, lapsing fees, etc.), the camp will begin on the three-year visit cycle if they choose to become accredited again. After two successful visits three years apart, the camp is eligible to move back to the five-year visit cycle.

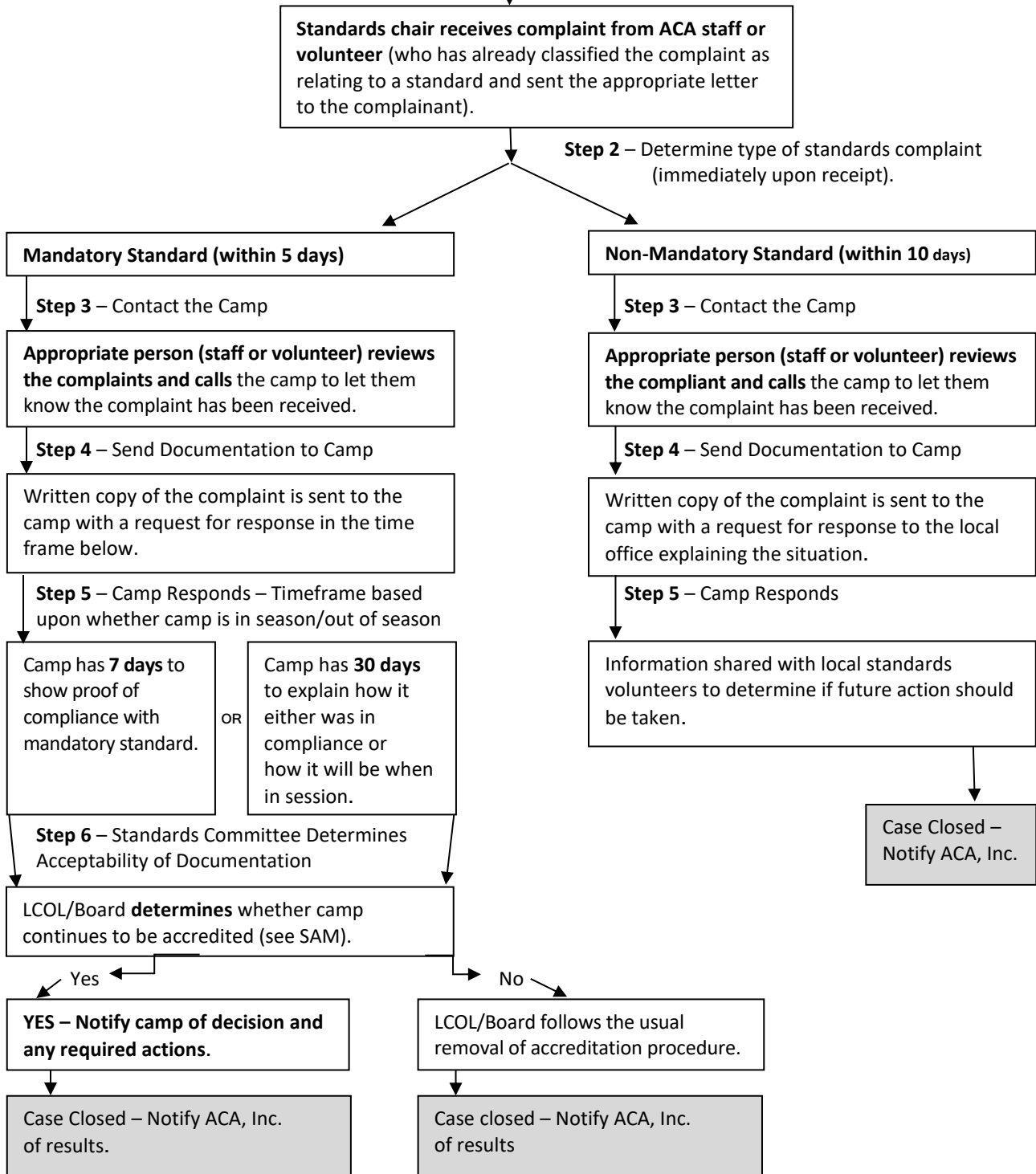
Handling Complaints

The American Camp Association (ACA) may from time to time receive complaints from the public regarding an ACA camp. ACA only has the legal authority to investigate issues that pertain directly to the ACA accreditation standards. When complaints are regarding other issues, ACA strives to direct complaints to the entity that does have the authority to investigate a complaint. Thus, if you receive a complaint, please respond as follows:

1. Inform the complainant that you will direct them to the proper person at ACA who can assist them.
2. Direct all complaints to the ACA staff member designated to administer the complaints program (extension 396 at the administrative office, or complaintsresolution@ACAcamps.org).
3. Note that for complaints regarding ACA camps in the ACA, New England or the ACA, New York New Jersey affiliate offices, the ACA staff person works directly with the ACA, NE and ACA, NYNJ executive directors to facilitate the handling of complaints.
4. There are numerous options available in doing follow-up on alleged violations of standards. These options include discussing the matter with the director, asking for a written response, alerting currently assigned visitors, and conducting an out-of-cycle visit after notifying the camp and giving them adequate notice. All local offices will work with the ACA director of accreditation to implement the procedures found in the Standards Complaint Flow Chart.

Complaint Resolution Management Flow Chart Complaints Classified as Standards Issues

Step 1 – Standards complaint is received and a response is sent to complainant indicating that, because the complaint involves an ACA standard, ACA will follow the established process for addressing noncompliance with standards. The response is sent by ACA, Inc.



Educating Camps on the Use of ACA Logos

American Camp Association logos play an integral part in our association's identity. They are a visual representation of the work we do and how we do it. They *are* our brand. Use and protect them with pride.

As ambassadors of ACA, chairs and visitors are encouraged to comment on the ACA-accredited camp logo usage by:

- Making positive remarks where they see the logo in use;
- Making constructive remarks where they see the logo not used correctly;
- Encouraging camps to use the logo if they are not, affirming that they have earned the right and that they should be proud to show they are part of a national organization committed to high standards.

Access to the ACA-Accredited Camp Logo

The consistent, correct use of ACA trademarks is essential to creating one single, unified association. Camps may obtain the ACA-accredited logo and information pertaining to it at ACAcamps.org/logos.



Camps must be reminded that it is a violation of federal trademark law to improperly display the ACA logo or to misrepresent oneself as an ACA-accredited camp. While it is the responsibility of ACA, Inc. to handle the administrative tasks related to trademark compliance, it is the mutual responsibility of the ACA administrative office and local offices to proactively educate and guide camps regarding the proper usage of the ACA logo on brochures, in advertising, and on stationery, as well as on signs and websites. If ACA fails to proactively protect logo use and protect our rights under federal trademark law, we not only confuse the public but diminish our rights under the law to retain exclusive use of those logos.

A camp may not display the accreditation logo if:

- The camp fails to meet the minimum requirements of the ACA Standards Program and has not been approved by its LCOL/Board;
- The camp fee is not current; or
- A legal representative of the camp has not signed the Statement of Compliance for the current year.

Continued improper use of ACA trademarks in advertising, printed materials, or websites should be reported to the ACA, Inc. at 800-428-2267 for further action.

Removal of Accreditation for Flagrant Advertising or Camp Fee Payment Violations

Accreditation can be removed from all camps listed and/or advertised by an owner/director or sponsor in situations where violation of camp fee requirements or advertising policies concerning ACA accreditation is a recurring problem.

The camp shall be notified in writing of the violation of advertising requirements, logo restrictions, or fee payment requirements and shall be given opportunity to sign a statement indicating willingness to comply with stated requirements. This notification is completed by ACA, Inc. after notifying the local office of such action.

Refusal to agree to comply with policies will result in contact from ACA's legal counsel.

Violation of the policy may result in legal action and immediate loss of accreditation. The National Standards Commission may also take action on the accreditation status of other camps listed under the same owner/director.

Removal of Accreditation for Violations of the Statement of Compliance

ACA has the authority to withdraw accreditation for reasons other than failing the visit. The Statement of Compliance clearly indicates that accreditation *may be* withdrawn in the following cases:

1. If false information is knowingly provided to the visitors or the standards chairperson or his/her representatives; or
2. If it is verified that compliance with mandatory standards is not being continually maintained; or
3. If ACA has been notified by appropriate federal, state, or local authorities that laws that significantly affect the health and safety of campers or staff have been violated, and/or ACA has documented reasons to believe that such violations have occurred; or
4. At the discretion of the LCOL/Board, following a local review and notification of the National Standards Commission prior to such action being taken. The camp has the right of appeal to the NSC in the event of such action. The NSC has the final and absolute authority in such matters.
5. If anyone associated with the operation of or employed by the camp has been convicted of a crime, has been found liable of wrongdoing in any civil proceeding or, in ACA's opinion, would have a material adverse reputational implication for ACA if ACA remained associated with such individual or the camp that employed the individual.

If the local office has information that there are violations of the above conditions, contact the director of accreditation or the chair of the National Standards Commission immediately. Those persons will provide advice and guidance on further steps to follow.

Visitors who report concerns about situations observed during an accreditation visit should be advised that they are not "inspectors" and are not trained by ACA or the state to make a determination of compliance with regulations or state law. If they believe a violation may have occurred, they may contact the local standards chair, local ACA staff, or the director of accreditation for guidance. However, visitors cannot represent themselves as having authority to interpret the law or obligate the camp to comply.

If the visitors feel that this violation "significantly affect(s) the health and safety of campers or staff" (see number 3 above from the Statement of Compliance), they should notify the standards chair or ACA staff, who can seek further guidance from the NSC by contacting the director of standards at the ACA administrative office.

Chapter X

TECHNOLOGY

ACA Online Accreditation System

ACA provides an easy-to-use, web-based application for camp directors, standards volunteers, and staff. Current fee-paying ACA camps can access the standards online through this web-based application. The online process allows the camp director or administrator to generate a PDF of ACA standards and allows the user to upload written documentation to a secure site for storage and review. It is important to note that the camp's fees must be current for a camp to access their My Accreditation site.

Camp administrators may have key staff persons assist with preparation of documentation for the visit via the online system. This is done by contacting the ACA accreditation team, who will grant secure access to those key staff members.

Assigned visitors also have limited access to a camp's customized file of applicable standards and its written documentation (read-only capabilities for documents, to make helpful comments to directors). To learn more about this process, visit My Accreditation and My Visits. My Accreditation and My Visits can be found here.

[ACAcamps.org/staff-professionals/accreditation-standards/tools-resources-camps/accreditation-information-forms](https://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/accreditation-standards/tools-resources-camps/accreditation-information-forms)

ACA Staff / CRM User

Staff will use the CRM to

- Record visitor assignments on the contact's (visitor's) record. CRM users supporting the administration of standards will follow the most current SOPPs for recording visitor assignments. If you need a copy of the most current SOPPs, please contact a member of the accreditation team at the administrative office of ACA, Inc.
- Indicate dates of all standards courses and standards updates in CRM, so CRM reports are as complete and accurate as possible.
- Assign CEC credit for completion of face-to-face standards courses. Again, follow the most current SOPP for this procedure.

Reminder:

- Send all signed associate visitor applications to the accreditation team at the ACA, Inc. administrative office as soon as possible after a course is complete, so the visitor codes can be assigned by ACA administrative staff.
- Send all changes to visitor codes to the accreditation team at the ACA, Inc. administrative office, so proper codes can be assigned by ACA administrative staff.

