

American Camp Association[®]

Visitor Update Course



Participant Handout Packet

THE VISITOR JOB DESCRIPTIONPREREQUISITES

1. At least 25 years of age
2. Current ACA member
3. Successful completion of the Associate Visitor Course
4. Successful completion of the required visits under the supervision and evaluation of a Visitor-Mentor (the number of required visits determined by the Associate Visitor Course Instructor - a minimum of two)
5. Knowledge and acceptance of the Conflict of Interest Statement for ACA Volunteers. (See below)

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Maturity and good judgment
2. Understanding of camping operations
3. Willingness to participate in training and updates/refreshers, and to conduct standards visits
4. Relates well to camping professionals
5. Objectivity, patience and, willingness to learn
6. Capable and willing to take the lead on communicating with the camp to confirm the information on the Camp Information form is correct and making arrangements for the review of the camp self-assessment and the on-site visit.
7. Capable, willing and ready to assume ultimate authority during the visit for compliance decisions and applicability of specific standards and sections of standards.

APPROVAL to SERVE as VISITOR - Based on:

1. Satisfactory completion of supervised visits
2. Demonstrated ability to assume full responsibility and ultimate authority for visits
3. Endorsement of local Standards Chair, local Standards Committee, and LCOL/Board
4. Indication by the candidate that s/he is ready to assume full responsibility for visits and/or for supervising Associate Visitors on his/her training visits

RESPONSIBILITIES:When Visiting

1. Observe all aspects of camp operation.
2. Assist camp staff/Director/committee in improving their own observation skills regarding the camp.
3. Interpret the Standards as related to each camp visited.
4. Correct and update the Camp Profile information for the *Accreditation Process Guide*.
5. Along with the Director and second Visitor, complete the scoring and comment forms accurately and completely, securing all required signatures. The person designated as the Lead Visitor is the final authority on scoring.
6. Distribute completed forms as directed to the Camp Director, the Section Standards Chairperson, and the national office immediately following the visit.
7. Provide information as needed in Review Process and/or Appeal Process.
8. Attend Standards Update at least once every three years, complete required refresher courses and conduct a visit at least every other year.
9. Complete an evaluation of the visit following said visit.

When Serving as the Lead Visitor

1. Contact the other person(s) assigned to the visit and Camp Director to make arrangements for the date and time of the visit.
2. Arrange for the review of the camp self-assessment with the Director. This may be done electronically, in person, or other method arranged by the local office.
3. Assume ultimate authority on matters related to scoring and compliance.

4. Determine how the visit will be conducted - with visitors viewing separate areas, as a team, etc.
5. Complete ICA Response Form, send to local Standards Chair, and be available for ICA follow-up.
6. Write a thank-you note to the camp director following the visit.
7. May be appointed as a mentor.

When Serving as a Mentor

1. Discuss with the Standards Chair appropriate goals for the Associate Visitor assigned to you.
2. Plan the visit to help the Associate Visitor gain new experiences and increase skills.
3. Evaluate the visit and the Associate Visitor's performance with that individual.
4. Share the Associate Visitor's progress with the Standards Chair.

Conflict of Interest Statement for ACA Volunteers

From the ACA Board Policy Manual:

A conflict of interest is a transaction or relationship that presents or could present, or appears or could appear to present, a conflict between a volunteer's responsibility to ACA and the volunteer's personal business or other interests. A conflict contemplated by this policy includes, among other transactions and relationships, a volunteer or other leader:

1. Maintaining a relationship or ownership investment in an enterprise or organization that to an outside observer would constitute a conflict of interest; OR
2. Accepting payments or other financial benefits for consulting or other services to ACA.

In their capacity as volunteers, individuals must act at all times in ACA's best interests. They must subordinate personal business, third-party, and other commercial interests to ACA's welfare. Their conduct cannot be, or appear to be, prejudicial to the best interests of the organization. They cannot benefit from their role as a volunteer or otherwise act in a manner that harms, or might appear to harm, the association. A volunteer must not serve personal or commercial interests that prejudice the association, and must avoid any situation that might compromise, or appear to compromise, the exercise of their judgment in the best interests of ACA.

No volunteer shall use her or his leadership position, knowledge gained from that position, or proprietary documents whose contents become known to them as a result of serving in that position except for ACA's benefit. Volunteers will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

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

THE ASSOCIATE VISITOR JOB DESCRIPTIONPREREQUISITES

1. At least 21 years of age
2. Current ACA member
3. Completion of the Standards Course
4. Completion of the Associate Visitor Training
5. Knowledge and acceptance of the Conflict of Interest Statement for ACA Volunteers. (See below)

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Maturity and good judgment
2. Relates well to camping professionals
3. Knowledge of and administrative experience in organized camping, preferably in ACA-accredited camp
4. Objectivity, patience, and willingness to learn
5. Willingness to participate in training and updates/refreshers as required and to conduct Standards visits.

APPROVAL OF ASSOCIATE VISITOR STATUS - Based on:

1. Successful completion of the Standards Course and 14-to-16-hour Associate Visitor Course
2. Recommendation of the Course Instructor, Section Standards Chair, and the Section Board

RESPONSIBILITIES

Associate Visitors are persons who have completed the requirements of the Associate Visitor Course. They participate as a second (or third) person on a visitation team conducting accreditation visits. In this role they are expected to:

1. Assist in the interpretation of the Standards Program's purpose, background, function, and process.
2. When possible, review documentation for the camp self-assessment.
2. Aid the Camp Director and Visitor in evaluating all aspects of the camp operation.
3. Assist in the accreditation procedures:
 - A. Observe all aspects of camp operation.
 - B. Assist in utilizing camp observations to record "Yes," "No," or "DNA" on the Score Form, and all comments on the comment form.
 - C. Inform the Camp Director/Administrator of the responses as they are recorded.
 - D. Assist the Visitor, Director, camp staff, or camp committee in developing and sharpening their own observation skills regarding their camps.
 - E. Assist in the interpretation of individual standards.
 - F. Provide information as needed in the Review or Appeal Process.
4. Complete an evaluation of the visit following said visit.

To maintain certification, Associate Visitors are responsible to attend a Standards Update or Refresher at least once every three years, complete required refreshers, and assist with one or more visits at least every other year.

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2. Accepting payments or other financial benefits for consulting or other services to ACA.

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No volunteer shall use her or his leadership position, knowledge gained from that position, or proprietary documents whose contents become known to them as a result of serving in that position except for ACA's benefit. Volunteers will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

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

September 2014
List of Changes to the
ACA Accreditation Process Guide (2012)

Specific Changes

- Page 77 HW.5 Camper Health History
Clarify what is acceptable to meet the standard related to immunizations.
- Page 86 HW.14 Special Medical Needs
Add “of Participants” to title of standard.
- Page 90 HW.19 Medication Storage and Administration
Add information to Contextual Education.
- Page 95 HW.24 Health Screening for Resident Camp Staff
Delete HW.24.1-B-3, the requirement for healthcare staff to collect staff medication.
- Page 110 OM.6 Firearms Control
Change the word “guns” to “firearms” in Contextual Education.
- Page 112 OM.8 Emergency Plan and Rehearsal
Change in wording of the standard and additional information added to Contextual Education.
No change to the intent of the standard.
- Page 117 OM.13 Camper Security
Clarify what is required for OM.13.2.
- Page 126 HR.3 Hiring Policies
Clarify to whom standard HR.3.3 applies, and add **mandatory** requirement for criminal background check for year-round staff (every five years). Addition to Contextual Education.
- Page 127 HR.4 Annual Staff Screening
Clarify to whom standard applies and add **mandatory** requirement for annual criminal background check for seasonal staff. Now applies to camps that serve rental groups.
- Page 128 HR.5 New Staff Screening
Clarify to whom standard applies and by when a criminal background check needs to be conducted. Now applies to camps that serve rental groups.
- Page 134 HR.9 Supervision Ratio Exceptions
Add need for camp to advise rental groups.
- Page 138 HR.15 Camp Staff Responsibilities for General Camp Activities
Clarify when this applies to rental groups.
- Page 172 PD.25 Archery Safety
Add requirement for locking of bows/arrows. Entire standard is now **mandatory**.
- Page 173 PD.26 Rifle, Pellet Gun, and Air Gun Safety
Entire standard is now **mandatory**.



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CAMP INFORMATION FORM FOR YOUR STANDARDS VISIT

This form is REQUIRED for all camps requesting a visit. This form will be mailed to the visitors assigned to your camp and sent to ACA, Inc. with your score form. Please return this form to your course Instructor or local ACA Office per their instruction.

| | |
|---|--|
| CAMP INFORMATION | |
| Camp Name: | Camp ID #: |
| Name of Operating Organization: | |
| Camp Director Name: | |
| Camp Website Address: | |
| WINTER ADDRESS/CONTACT INFORMATION | SUMMER ADDRESS (address to use for mapping/GPS) (For Multi-site visits – use additional paper to report ALL site addresses) |
| Use the address below during these dates: | Use the address below during these dates: |
| Street or P.O.#: | Street or P.O.#: |
| City, State, Zip: | City, State, Zip: |
| Phone: | Phone: |
| Alt Phone: | Alt Phone: |
| Fax: | Fax: |
| Camp Director E-mail: | Camp Director E-mail: |
| STANDARDS COURSE/STANDARDS UPDATE COURSE | |
| Location of Standards Course Attended: | Date of Course: |
| Name of person(s) Attending Course: | |
| INFORMATION FOR YOUR CAMP VISIT | |
| Arrange Camp Visit With (Person's name): | Position at Camp: |
| Phone: | List Three Preferred Dates for Your Visit: |
| E-mail: | Starting Date and Ending Date of Camp SEASON: |
| Please list any dates that would not work for your visit: | |
| Camps must complete a Camp Self-Assessment and have it reviewed prior to the onsite visit. | |
| Are your documents (please check one): <input type="checkbox"/> paper <input type="checkbox"/> electronic <input type="checkbox"/> both | |
| When would you prefer to schedule your Camp Self-Assessment review? (check one) (MUST be complete by MAY 1) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late February <input type="checkbox"/> Early March <input type="checkbox"/> Late March <input type="checkbox"/> Early April <input type="checkbox"/> Late April <input type="checkbox"/> Early May | |
| Which MODES of Operation will be scored on your visit? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day Camp <input type="checkbox"/> Resident Camp <input type="checkbox"/> Short-Term Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Camps that Rent to Others | |
| Which Program areas will be scored on your visit? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized Activities (see page 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatics (ANY swimming, or watercraft) (see page 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Trip Travel (three nights or more) | |
| Do you primarily serve campers with any special needs or special medical needs? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Does your camp operate on someone else's site/property that already has their own ACA accreditation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| If yes, what is the ACA camp ID number of your host camp/landlord? | |
| Does your camp operate at more than one site during the summer (excluding trip.travel programs or field trips) – is your camp/operation a multi-site operation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Please return this form to your course Instructor or local ACA Office per their instruction – ASAP. | |

Camp Information Form -- Aquatics/Specialized Activities*

**List is NOT exhaustive - please be sure to indicate any "other" activities in the spaces provided*

Activity uses equipment, animals or tools whose use by campers requires supervision by a person skilled in their use

Activity involves camper use of fire or camper use of heat-producing equipment or substances

- All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)
- Archery
- Aviation

- Backpacking
- Bicycling/Biking
- Campcraft/Camping Skills/Outdoor Living – use of fire, camp stoves, and use of tools (knives, ax, etc.)
- Ceramics/Pottery/Enameling
- Challenge/Rope Courses – high and low (requiring spotting)
- Climbing/Rappelling - plus, additional standards
- Field Trips that include campers in public
- Go-Karts
- Gymnastics – tumbling, using apparatus

- Hockey – broom, ice, or roller
- Horseback Riding – English, western, or pony rides
- Lacrosse
- Llama (trekking)
- Martial Arts
- Model Rocketry
- Motorized Sports
- Mountain Boarding
- Power Tools
- Skating – board, ice, in-line, roller
- Shooting Sports -riflery, air rifle, pellet guns, etc.
- Snow Sports – boarding, skiing, sledding/tubing

- Woodworking
- Travel/Tour and/or Wilderness Trips (Less than 3 nights)
- Specific sport-related programs - such as soccer camp, baseball camp

- Fire Building for Cookouts
- Kilns for Ceramics/Pottery
- Wood-Burning Tools

Activity requires injury-protection equipment such as helmets, goggles, or padding

- Caving - plus, additional standards

- Competitive baseball
- Competitive hockey – broom, ice, or roller
- Competitive soccer
- Fencing
- Wrestling
- Paintball

Activities that require a specialized skill set or knowledge, such as edible plants, ice fishing, pyrotechnics, and circus stunts that occur in the air

- Cheerleading
- Circus stunts in the air such as trapeze, tightrope, etc.
- Edible plants
- Ice fishing
- Pyrotechnics

Other - Please List

List specific AQUATIC activities here (swimming, lessons, any watercraft, skiing, etc.):

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Camp Name and ID #: | Camp Representative: |
| Camp Phone: | Camp Rep Email: |
| Camp Email: | Camp Rep Cell Phone: |
| Camp Website: www. | Camp Rep Business Phone: |

SAMPLE ACCREDITATION VISIT CONTACT OUTLINE

The following is a sample outline to help you make arrangements for a camp visit. Please take the time to explore all of these questions with the camp director. It is recommended that you review the camp website before making contact.

1. Has your camp completed their Camps Self-Assessment? (Did they use My Accreditation)?
 - a. If no – Is there something you need assistance with?
 - b. If yes – How and when would you like me to complete the review of your self-assessment? (If they used My Accreditation you can then use My Visits to complete the review).
2. Can we talk about a date for the visit?
 - a. The visit needs to take place during a day or resident camp session so the MOST specialized activities can be seen and verified.
 - b. The visit also needs to take place on a typical program day meaning one in which as many of your program offerings can be observed and the majority of your campers are in the camp. It's not good for us to schedule a visit on a day when special all camp activities are being run in place of regular program.
3. Can we review the modes that you are planning to score? (Use the camp information for this discussion).
 - a. Do you rent your camp facilities to other groups (at any time of the year)?
 - b. Can you tell me about your program? How long are your sessions? Do your campers stay overnight?
 - c. Can you give me details of about any non-summer program you have?
4. Can we review programs you are planning to score? (Again cross reference with the camp information form.)
 - a. Have you added any new programs since your last accreditation visit?
 - b. What program sections are you planning to score?
 - c. What specialized program activities are you planning to score? (Discuss those listed on camp information form).
 - d. Do you do any other programs that use equipment or apparatus, targets, heat or fire, animals, or safety equipment?
 - e. Do your campers do overnights? If yes, for how many nights and where?
 - f. Do your campers take day trips or excursions?
5. Do any of your program activities take place away from your main camp location?
 - a. We'd really like to see those activities during our visit if possible. How can we arrange that?
 - b. Are you planning to score staffed public facilities standards for any of those programs?
 - c. Who is responsible for the staffing of those programs?
6. The visit can takes 6-9 hours (adjust hours as necessary; 6-9 is typical for a resident camp scoring all the program sections). The visit team will be planning on being there the whole day.
 - a. Can you be available all day also?
 - b. There will be a visit team of _____ with me. Can you tell me about any special needs that I should share with them – weather, terrain, bring own food, meal times, travel, verify directions, access codes, etc.
7. Please let me know if you have any questions before the visit?
 - a. Do you have my contact information?
 - b. What's the best way for me to stay in contact with you?

Camp Name:

Camp #

Date:

Camp Self-Assessment Directions

A camp self-assessment is a required review of the written documentation for twenty identified standards and must be completed prior to the start of staff training for the summer season. Your local office might require an earlier completion date

Purpose: A camp self-assessment review (CSA) prior to the actual day of the visit is an important element of the educational process of the standards program. The review of the self-assessment may be completed person-to-person in the months prior to the start of the summer camp season, or the review can be done by mail, or electronic exchange of documentation with a phone follow-up. Some documentation might also be viewed on a camp's website (such job descriptions, transportation information for parents).

This form lists all standards included in the required self-assessment review. The purpose of the self-assessment is to:

- A. Educate the camp director/administrator on the adequacy of the camp's paperwork BEFORE the on-site visit and scoring. While the intent is for the standard response to be complete, this review still provides the camp with the opportunity to ask questions and make needed corrections prior to the on-site visit, when the actual scoring occurs.
- B. Reduce the time needed to review all the documentation during the on-site visit, thus allowing more time for observation and discussion.
- C. Help verify the camp is ready for their on-site visit to occur.

List of the Standards Included in the Required Self-Assessment

| | |
|---|--|
| TR.5 Transportation Information for Parents | OM.15 Rental Group Responsibilities |
| TR.7 Accident Procedures | HR.3 Hiring Policies |
| TR.8 Safety Procedures | HR.6 Job Descriptions/Information |
| TR.15 Training for Drivers | HR.7 Personnel Policies |
| OM.1 Risk Management | HR.8 Camper Supervision Ratios and Staff Age |
| OM.4 Personal Property Policy | HR.9 Supervision Ratio Exceptions – General Ratios |
| OM.8 Emergency Plan and Rehearsal | HR.17 Behavior Management |
| OM.10 Missing Person Procedure | PD.1 Camp Goals and Outcomes – Overall Goals |
| OM.11 Emergency Communications | PD.4 Program Eligibility |
| OM.14 Rental Agreement | PD.6 Activity Information and Permission |

Directions for Visitor Completing the Form

1. If all the needed documentation is seen and is acceptable, mark the box under "SEEN."
2. If none of the documentation is seen, mark the box under "NOT SEEN."
3. If the standard requires implementation of the policy, verification of practice, confirmation of certified personnel, etc., mark the third column "SEEN AND NEEDS ADDED VERIFICATION."
4. If some of the documentation is not completed or changes must be made, write a description of what must be completed or changed in the space under "FOLLOWING MUST BE COMPLETED." Also use this area to write any reminders of what should be seen at camp.
5. Any standard that does not apply at all to the camp operation can be marked DNA (does not apply).
6. Upon completion of the form, a copy should be made for the camp. The visitor keeps the original. Remind the camp that all required paperwork must be on site at the visit.
7. **Actual scoring is done at the time of the on-site visit.** On the day of the visit, after verifying compliance through observation, "SEEN" items can be marked YES on the score form. Score all others according to what is seen during the on-site visit.
8. A visitor other than the assigned on-site visitors may complete this self-assessment form. In such a case, the form will be forwarded to the on-site visitors.

Camp Name:

Camp #

Date:

Camp Self-Assessment Worksheet

| Standard | Name/Title | Seen | Not Seen | Seen and Needs Added Verification | Following MUST Be completed | Comments – Visitor and/or Director |
|----------|--|------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| TR.5.1 | Transportation Information for Parents | | | | | |
| TR.7.1 | Accident Procedures | | | | | |
| TR.8.1 | Safety Procedures | | | | | |
| TR.15.1 | Training for Drivers | | | | | |
| OM.1.1 | Risk Management | | | | | |
| OM.1.2 | Risk Management – Identified and Analyzed | | | | | |
| OM.4.1 | Personal Property Policy | | | | | |
| OM.8.1 | Emergency Plan and Rehearsal | | | | | |
| OM.10.1 | Missing Person Procedure | | | | | |
| OM.11.1 | Emergency Communications – System To and From Incident | | | | | |
| OM.11.2 | Emergency Communications – Contacting Parents | | | | | |
| OM.11.3 | Emergency Communications – Media | | | | | |
| OM.14.1 | Rental Agreement | | | | | |

Camp Name:

Camp #

Date:

Camp Self-Assessment Worksheet

| Standard | Name/Title | Seen | Not Seen | Seen and Needs Added Verification | Following MUST Be completed | Comments – Visitor and/or Director |
|----------|---|------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| OM.15.1 | Rental Group Responsibilities | | | | | |
| HR.3.1 | Hiring Policies – Application and Screening Processes | | | | | |
| HR.3.2 | Hiring Policies – Policies Reviewed | | | | | |
| HR.3.3 | Hiring Policies – Screening Requirements for Year-Round Staff | | | | | |
| HR.6.1 | Job Descriptions/Information | | | | | |
| HR.7.1 | Personnel Policies | | | | | |
| HR.8.1 | Camper Supervision Ratios and Staff Age – In General | | | | | |
| HR.8.2 | Camper Supervision Ratios and Staff Age – 80% > 18 yrs. | | | | | |
| HR.8.3 | Camper Supervision Ratios and Staff Age – Staff Minimum Age | | | | | |
| HR.9.1 | Supervision Ratio Exceptions – General Ratios | | | | | |
| HR.9.2 | Supervision Ratio Exceptions – Minimum of Two Requirements | | | | | |
| HR.17.1 | Behavior Management and Discipline – Teach Campers Skills | | | | | |
| HR.17.2 | Behavior Management and Discipline – Bullying | | | | | |

Camp Name: _____

Camp # _____

Date: _____

Camp Self-Assessment Worksheet

| Standard | Name/Title | Seen | Not Seen | Seen and Needs Added Verification | Following MUST Be completed | Comments – Visitor and/or Director |
|---|---|------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| HR.17.3 | Behavior Management and Discipline – Fair and Consistent Discipline | | | | | |
| PD.1.1 | Camp Goals and Outcomes – Overall Goals | | | | | |
| PD.1.2 | Camp Goals and Outcomes – Behavioral Outcomes | | | | | |
| PD.1.3 | Camp Goals and Outcomes – Training for Staff | | | | | |
| PD.1.4 | Camp Goals and Outcomes – Informed Parents | | | | | |
| PD.4.1 | Program Eligibility | | | | | |
| PD.6.1 | Activity Information and Permission | | | | | |
| <i>Do you offer any activities that are conducted by others (a third-party/noncamp staff)?</i> | | | | | If so, please list: | |

Notes:

Visitor: _____

Phone: _____

Visitor: _____

Phone: _____

Camp Representative: _____ Date: _____