



American Camp Association Accreditation . . . TELL ME MORE!

For fifty years the American Camp Association (ACA) accreditation process has grown to keep pace with changes in the camp industry, expectations of the public, and the challenges of operating a business in today's highly regulated society.

The ACA-accreditation Program:

- Educates camp owners and directors in the administration of key aspects of camp operation, program quality, and the health and safety of campers and staff.
- Establishes guidelines for needed policies, procedures, and practices for which the camp is responsible for ongoing implementation.
- Assists the public in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards. ACA's Find-A-Camp Database provides the public with many ways to find the ideal ACA-accredited camp.

What Areas Are Covered?

American Camp Association standards help you with every aspect of your camp management and operation:

- Site: fire protection, food service, sleeping quarters, bathing and toilet facilities.
- Transportation: procedures concerning drivers, vehicles, and traffic on site.
- Health and Wellness: staff qualifications, facilities requirements, record keeping, storage distribution of medicines, contact information, health forms.
- Operational Management: safety regulations, emergency communication systems, procedures for intruders, personal property regulations.
- Human Resources: staff qualifications, training, supervision ratios, and procedures.
- Program Activities: aquatics, adventure/challenge, trips, horseback riding, staff qualifications for special programs.

There are certain mandatory standards that include requirements for emergency exits, first aid, aquatic-certified personnel, storage and use of flammables and firearms, emergency transportation, and obtaining appropriate health information.

Steps to Becoming ACA Accredited

1. Apply for accreditation by completing an accreditation application and remitting required fees. Camp fees, paid annually vary among ACA local offices and provide not only accreditation services but also benefits for the camps such as public awareness and legislative monitoring.
2. Attend a Standards Course, offered by local ACA sections, which explains the accreditation process and describes the requirements of the standards.
3. Review and evaluate each area of camp operation according to the guidelines in the standards. (Camps will receive a copy of ACA's *Accreditation Standards for Camp Programs and Services* when they attend the Standards Course.)
4. Prepare materials and written documentation required by the standards.
5. Participate in the visit by a team of ACA-trained visitors who will spend a day observing the camp and working with the director in scoring compliance with the standards. The visit must occur when the camp is in full operation.
6. Annually sign a statement of compliance—the camp administrator's pledge to operate ethically, legally, and in compliance with ACA standards. (A statement of compliance will be sent upon application.)

For more information on how your camp and campers can benefit from ACA accreditation, visit our website www.ACAcamps.org/accreditation or contact ACA Indiana, Standards Chair Kate Weidner at standards@acacamps.org or 317-663-3030.