



American Camp Association® Accreditation . . . TELL ME MORE!

For over 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.



For more information on how your camp and campers can benefit from ACA accreditation, visit:

www.ACAcamps.org/accreditation
800.428.2267 (CAMP)

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?

ACA standards help with every aspect of camp management and operation:

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

Mandatory standards include requirements for staff screening, emergency exits, first aid, aquatic-certified personnel, storage and use of flammables and firearms, emergency transportation, obtaining appropriate health information, among others.

Steps to Becoming ACA Accredited

1. Camps 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 professional development for the staff, public awareness, and legislative monitoring.
2. Camp staff attend a Standards Course, offered by local ACA offices, which explains the accreditation process and describes the requirements of the standards.
3. Camp staff review and evaluate each area of camp operation according to the guidelines in the standards. (Camps will receive a discounted copy of the *American Camp Association's Accreditation Process Guide*.)
4. Camp staff prepare materials and written documentation required by the standards.
5. Camps participate in the standards visit by a team of ACA-trained visitors who will spend a day observing the camp and working with the director in determining compliance with the standards. The visit must occur when the camp is in full operation.
6. The camp director annually signs a statement of compliance — the camp administrator's pledge to operate ethically, legally, and in compliance with ACA standards.