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THANK YOU!

We know many of you are being asked to do more and more for your job and that taking time away from camp or other responsibilities can be a real challenge. We also hope you recognize (and share) the incredible educational opportunity being a visitor is for you, the camps you visit, and those with whom you share the experience. Often we hear that serving as a visitor is the best professional development one can “give” oneself. We hope your experience is similar.

As we look to “grow the visitor pool,” we urge you to consider sharing information with your peers about the educational opportunity that is serving as visitor. In your visitor packet (which you have received or will be receiving soon), there are business cards that provide information on “who to contact” for those interested in learning more about serving as a visitor. Please share these cards and let us know if you need more!

**STANDARDS UPDATES!**

It is important to make sure your copy of the *Accreditation Process Guide, 2012 Edition* has been updated! Check out the resources below **and make sure the camp you are visiting has updated their Accreditation Process Guide!** All of the updates below need to be included!

- **January 2016 Standards Revisions** — Includes new HR.8.B, One on One Camper/Staff Interaction and Non-mandatory status of HW.23 (staff health history) Effective Summer of 2016 (ready to print, pull, and replace)
- PD.29.3 Does Not Apply (DNA) when climbing on a manufactured climbing walls that use an auto-belay system (Effective immediately — It is at the discretion of the camp should they use helmets on a wall with this type of belay system) Posted April 2015
- **[Chart listing all changes to ACA Standards to date: Jan. 2012 through present](#)** (Effective Summer 2016)

- [September 2014 Standards Revisions](#) — Effective Summer 2015. Description of methods to access revisions

New DNA Status for ACA Standard PD.29.3 — Additional Information

At their recent meeting (and only after contacting authoritative sources), the National Standards Commission has made a revision to “what” is included in the “Does Not Apply” category for PD.29.3:

PD.29.3 (Protective Headgear on Adventure/Challenge Activities): DOES NOT APPLY when climbing is conducted on a manufactured (man-made) climbing wall that uses an auto-belay system. This is due to a potential for choking should the helmet get “stuck” on a climbing hold. This change is effective immediately.

Helmets continued to be required on all climbing walls (indoors/outdoors, man-made and natural surfaces) when a “human” belay is used.

In addition, this standard does not apply to zip lines that end in water.

EDUCATION! EDUCATION! EDUCATION!

(Thanks to Instructor Kurt Podeszwa and Visitor Courses held in ACA, Texoma for the following suggestions)

What are things you can do as visitors to make the visit process more educational?

- Be prepared as a visitor.
 - Spend time reviewing what specialized activities the camp offers ahead of time
 - Review the camp’s website before your visit
- Make contact with camp early.
 - If the camp is ready and you would like, you can review additional written documentation; not just the 20 standards of the CSA
 - Review areas that have changed or that you as a visitor have seen be difficult for camps (see links in the “update” section of this newsletter)
 - If they are using online resources, review to make sure questions are answered correctly
- Have a conversation about what the director’s expectations are.
- Remind directors that the accreditation process is a great opportunity to educate non-leadership staff and campers about ACA.
- Make sure your “specialty” is not influencing your decision making: medical, aquatics, facility, ropes. . .etc.
- Language matters — use open-ended, non-threatening questions.
 - “Is after lunch a good time to visit with kitchen staff?” vs. “After lunch I will go look at the kitchen.”
 - “Tell me about Paintball” vs. “Why do you run paintball that way?”

How to make ICA educational:

- Discuss what was missed and why.
- Ask the director “What is your understanding of the standard?” and why did you “miss” it?
- Use non-judgmental language.
- Explain why the standard is important (mandatory standards deal with issues that could lead to serious injury).
- Visitor stays calm. It’s important but not something that cannot be fixed. **Be specific with how they can fix it.**
- Let them know next steps — what they can expect from whom and when.

The opening slides of both the Standards Course(s) and Visitor Course(s) indicate that the main purpose of ACA accreditation is EDUCATION! Make sure your actions and language support this purpose.

INFORMATION JUST FOR VISITORS!

Important Reminders – If You Are Assigned as a Lead Visitor

- Make sure to share the date of your scheduled visit with your Standards Chair and/or Staff who support standards.
- Shortly after your visit, you will be sent a link for an evaluation of the visit. Please take the time to complete this short survey as it helps provide us with valuable information to address issues and concerns.
- **NEW FOR 2016:** Camps that miss four or more mandatory standards will be required to have a visit again in 2017, even if they “fix” the missed mandatories!
- Make sure to check out and remind the camp you are visiting to check out the “[Resources by Sections of Standards](#)” on the ACA website. They might find ‘just the form’ or resource they need! This area has been updated for 2016.

Can’t Make Your Visit? Need Assistance?

When life happens and you can’t conduct your visit, you can’t get in touch with your co-visitor or the camp, you have a question, or you are one of those who are available on “short notice” to fill in. . . who should you contact?

While this might vary from area to area, the KEY thing to remember is to contact either your volunteer standards chair OR the ACA staff member that supports standards in your area. If you can’t reach one of them, try to contact the other!

[Contact your Standards Chair](#) (you will have to log-in to this page for access to a list of Standards Chairs)

ACA Staff Supporting Standards

- ACA, Illinois:
 - Colette Marquardt- colette@acail.org
- ACA, New York /New Jersey:
 - Kyle Medeiros – kyle@aca-nynj.org
- ACA, New England:
 - Elizabeth Snell - elizabeth@acanewengland.org
- ACA, Upstate New York, Chesapeake, Ohio, Virginias, Keystone, and Southeastern:
 - Barb Collins - bcollins@acacamps.org
- ACA, Indiana, Heart of the South, Michigan, Wisconsin, Northland, Great Rivers, Texas, St. Louis:
 - Amanda Zoellner – azoellner@acacamps.org
- ACA, Rocky Mountain, Southwest, Evergreen, Oregon Trail, Northern California, Southern California/Hawaii:
 - Danielle Pinney – dpinney@acacamps.org

Missing Forms?

Missing Visit Forms? Check out the Visitor [page of the ACA website](#) to find the 2016 Score Form, ICA form, Examples of Missed Mandatory Corrections and much more!

Camp Information Form (CIF)

For each camp you will be visiting this summer, you should have received a “Camp Information Form” (either via a link in your visitor assignment email or a paper version). This document **is critical and is considered a “conversation starter”** for the visitor and the camp director. In addition to having the basic information such as the camp’s location, the form also provides:

- Who to contact about your visit



Standards Visitors

A comprehensive list of resources and forms for standards visitors, including the My Visits tool.

[Learn More](#)

- Potential visit dates
- Potential Camp Self-Assessment review dates
- What modes the camp provides (day camp, resident camp, serves rental groups, etc.).
- What type of aquatic programs might be offered (if any)
- List of specialized activities

It is important to have a conversation with the standards contact for the camp **PRIOR** to the visit to clarify what activities and what modes are being scored. Be prepared for your visit!

Take a printed copy of the CIF with you on your visit to help inform the activities you should view in action and guide questions to be asked. The camp information form should be mailed with the score form immediately following the visit. This form is used specifically for visit purposes and no changes will be made to the camp's listing in "Find a Camp" or in the ACA database based on this form.

Camp Self-Assessment (CSA)

By now, you should have either completed the Camp Self-Assessment for the camp you are visiting or have plans to get this done very soon!

The CSA is the preparation and internal review of 20 pre-identified standards. Its purpose includes:

- Sending a message to camps about the need for preparation prior to the camp season.
- Helping indicate to visitors the camp is "ready" (or at least getting there).
- Reminding the camp that if the required written documentation is not seen when the CSA is initially completed, that the documentation will need to be reviewed on the day of the visit. Make a note of this on the form AND share the form with the camp representative.
- Allowing for additional written documentation to be reviewed beyond the 20 required standards. While this is not required by the National Standards Committee (NSC), some local areas do strongly encourage such a review. Check with your standards chair about the expectation in your area.

The two documents below are found on the [Visitor page of the ACA website](#):

- Expanded Camp Self-Assessment (with additional written standards)
- Camp Self-Assessment (Required 20-Only)

ACA Web-based Tools for the Visitor

Visitors have access and the ability to view the camp's customizations on the "My Visit" portal of the camp(s) they will be visiting this summer. A few key things to remember:

- Verify (with the camp) if they are using this tool! If so, they (and ACA) expect you will review posted documents prior to the onsite visit.
- Prior to reviewing any of the camp's document, make sure to confirm with the camp's contact that they are ready for you to review such documents!
- Go to "[My Visits.](#)"
- After taking the tutorials, follow the steps on that page to access your camp.
- If you do not find your assigned camp listed, contact the ACA staff member who supports the standards in your area so they can make the "connection" in the ACA database.
- You can make "notes" both on the website and/or on your worksheet.
- Communicate with the camp contact to determine if you have any questions on what should be available.

Confirm with the camp you have reviewed written documentation. Be sure they receive a copy of your review of their CSA.


REMINDERS ON THINGS YOU'VE HEARD BEFORE. . .ICA AND THE 72- HOUR RULE


Immediate Corrective Action (ICA) Process

Visitors **MUST** complete an ICA notice form for any missed mandatory standards (even if they are resolved during the course of the visit). Please note the ICA procedure:

- Used **ONLY** for missed **mandatory** standards.
- Allows documents to be created in order to meet the standard.

My Visits Tool

 ShareThis



Features

The following functions are available for use through the "My Visits" site:

- Ability to *convey your availability* as a visitor to your local office
- Ability to *review your visit assignment* information
- Ability to *review the camps customizations* to the standards based on the programming and modes of the camp/program

- ANY and all documentation is sent to the ACA Administrative office (in Indiana) **within seven days** of the visit. The staff will forward to the documentation to the appropriate people.

To view the steps for the ICA and examples of “fixes” for missed mandatory standards, make sure to check out: [Examples of Corrections for Missed Mandatory Standards](#)

72-Hour Rule

The 72-Hour Rule is very different from (and not to be confused with) the ICA process. The 72-Hour Rule is a courtesy that may be extended to a camp as an option for the director to get his or her hands on missing documentation. The 72-Hour Rule may only be used for standards that require written documentation that can be verified to already be in existence but for some inexplicable reason is not present at the time of the visit.

To extend the courtesy of the 72-Hour Rule, follow these steps:

1. Mark the standard a "No" and comment on the score form.
2. Indicate WHY the documentation is missing and specify WHAT documentation needs to be sent to the lead Visitor.
3. Visitor will explain to the director what needs to be sent and how things need to be sent. Visitor will also explain the consequences if documentation is not sent, is incomplete, or is inaccurate.
4. Camp sends documentation to the lead Visitor within 72-hours.
5. Lead Visitor holds the score form for 72-hours.
6. If the documentation received is acceptable
 - a. Visitor will change the score to "YES."
 - b. Add a comment on the score form related to the changed score.
7. If the documentation is not received or not acceptable, the Visitor will leave the "No" as originally scored.

Lead Visitor will promptly send the score form to ACA administrative office after documentation arrives or 72-hours have expired.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!