

## **Standards Revisions to the *Accreditation Process Guide (2006) Effective 2008***

The following document includes Standards that have been revised (by vote of the Council of Delegates, December 2007) effective beginning 2008.

The format of this document will allow you to print it off front to back thereby allowing you to simply replace the old page with this new, correct page. ONLY STANDARDS LISTED BELOW contain a revision.

**OM-19** USER GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES, p. 142

**HR-4** STAFF SCREENING, pp. 149, 150

**PD-23** ADDITIONAL FIREARM SAFETY, p. 195

**PD-24** PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR, p. 196



## OM-18 USE AGREEMENT

Does the camp utilize a written use agreement, signed by authorized representatives of the camp and the user group, that includes the following (as applicable):

- Terms of use, including dates, times, and costs;
- Cancellation, minimum fees, and refund policies;
- Services that will be provided by the camp for the group, such as food service, recreation options, program staff, transportation, and
- Costs and conditions for use of any recreational equipment or services? Yes No

**INTERPRETATION:** This standard does not require that all items listed will be provided for all user groups. The use agreement will normally include requirements from Standard OM-19. Conditions for use may specify such aspects as adult supervision, expectations for youth groups, clean-up responsibilities, and the reporting of damaged facilities or equipment.

The *ACA Accreditation Standards Resource CD-ROM* should be consulted for information on sample guidelines and considerations for use agreements.

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** Visitor observation of forms and information used.

### **WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED**

**Applies to:**

- **User-group programs**



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## OM-19 USER-GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES

### Applies to:

- User-group programs

Does the camp require the written user-group agreement to specify:

- Party responsible to provide first aid, emergency care, and emergency transportation,
  - Party responsible to supervise the group and its behavior,
  - Party responsible to supervise any specialized recreational activities,
  - Required orientation to the camp's safety procedures and regulations, and
  - Any insurance coverage to be provided by the group?
  - \*Recommendations to user group leaders of need for appropriate screening policies for all user group staff with responsibility for or access to campers.
- YES NO

**INTERPRETATION:** Standard HW-24 defines the responsibility for the provision of first aid and emergency care. Standard OM-19 covers the supervision of the group and its behavior, including defining who has the authority to eject individuals from the property. This standard may be combined with the requirements of Standard OM-18.

"Specialized recreation activities" are any activities whose safe conduct requires supervision by persons with specialized training and skills (e.g., swimming, archery, ropes course, etc.). Supervision for general recreation activities, along with all other general activities not specified in the contract, would normally fall under that part of this standard that addresses the supervision of the group and its behavior.

Orientation for user groups should include general safety regulations, communication in an emergency (e.g., weather, missing persons), security concerns, and warning systems. Groups should know how to get emergency assistance and how to contact the site owner.

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** Visitor observation of information and/or forms utilized; director description of orientation process.

### **WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED**

## HR-4 STAFF SCREENING

## MANDATORY (HR-4A)

Does the camp have written evidence of a policy in practice that requires screening for all camp staff with responsibility for or access to campers that includes::

HR-4A: Annually for all camp staff—paid, volunteer, and contracted:

- A voluntary disclosure statement, and
- A check of the National Sex Offender Public Registry, or for residents of states not participating in the National Sex Offender database, a check of the sexual offender registry of any state in which the applicant resided? YES NO

HR-4B: For new camp staff 18 years and older, paid, volunteer, and contracted, a criminal background check? YES NO

HR-4C: For new camp staff, at least two reference checks and verification of previous work (including volunteer) history? YES NO

HR-4D: For new camp staff, personal interview by the camp director or a designated representative? YES NO

**INTERPRETATION:** \*The camp must implement established screening policies for its own operation. All camp staff (e.g., volunteer, employed, and contracted; full-time and part-time, international) who could have unsupervised access to children must be included in the screening process. This requirement includes on-site operational personnel, as well as staff members working from a central office who come to the camp as a part of their responsibility. Guest-program specialists who provide leadership in a limited area and are never with campers in an unsupervised situation would not be subject to screening.

A “voluntary disclosure statement” is a signed statement that, at minimum, attests to the non-conviction of violent crimes and crimes against children. It may include further information about other criminal behavior, previous addresses, and other data relevant to the camp and position. The policy should be reviewed by legal counsel. The “voluntary disclosure statement” may be included on the application form or with the release of information form, or may be a separate document. The statement should be secured from ALL staff, including international staff. A statement must be signed by all staff annually, regardless of previous or continued employment.

The U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry (a free service at [www.nsopr.gov](http://www.nsopr.gov)) will only reflect certain types of criminal sexual behavior. A criminal background check seeks additional records of other types of criminal behavior. Criminal background checks are available through a variety of agencies and private vendors, each with its own level of coverage, accuracy, timeliness of providing information, and cost.

- **Applies to:**
- **Day camps**
- **Resident camps**
- **Short-term resident programs**

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Consult the ACA Accreditation Standards Resource CD-ROM for detailed information on criminal background checks.

The camp must have a specific plan for securing criminal background checks based on state laws, availability of data, cost, and type of staff. For staff from other countries, criminal background checks are increasingly provided through the international placement agencies. Availability of criminal background checks for international staff and volunteers vary by the country of origin. The international placement agencies have recommendations concerning the minimum types of checks that should be performed. Consult the ACA Accreditation Standards Resource CD-ROM for further information on criminal background checks.

Securing a criminal background check, references, verification of previous work, and interviews applies to the hiring of new staff, seasonal and year round. Staff are considered "new" upon initial hiring, and if there has been a break in employment of 12 months or more. Year-round staff, including directors, must be screened upon entry and thereafter according to the policy of the camp (see Standard HR-3).

Some "seasonal staff" may be year-round employees of the parent organization (agency staff, clergy, religious educators). These persons may be treated as "year-round staff" PROVIDED THAT the parent organization has a policy in practice for screening and supervising that meets the criteria of the standard.

"Verification" of work history means evaluation of the timeframes of previous jobs to determine reasons for any gaps in employment and spot checking to verify that the applicant was employed or licensed as claimed. Standards in other areas, such as transportation, aquatics, and program, also call for specific types of record checks or documentation of skills which may be undertaken as part of the screening process. The standard does not require visitors to be given access to confidential files. "Written evidence of the screening process in practice" may include the application or receipt for securing background checks.

"Personal interview" means face-to-face or by phone for all applicants, including internationals, conducted by the camp director or a designated representative. In addition to interviews conducted by a staff placement agency, camps should make their own contact with applicants before hiring to confirm the applicant's language and communication skills, identify their expectations for the job, determine their suitability for the specific job offered, and provide specific information to the applicants about the camp program and location.

The *ACA Accreditation Standards Resource CD-ROM* should be consulted for sample forms and additional information on screening practices related to international staff.

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** \*Visitor observation of written evidence of the screening policy in practice; director description of the screening process.

### **WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED**

## PD-23 ADDITIONAL FIREARM SAFETY

### MANDATORY (PD-23A)

Does the camp require the following for all firearm activities:

PD-23A: When not in use, all firearms are stored in a locked cabinet or closet, within a locked room or inaccessible area for redundant safety; and all ammunition is stored in either a third location or container, requiring a separate key or access system?

YES NO

PD-23B: Shooting range design that includes:

- A bullet trap or a supplementary backstop and specific safety zone behind the targets,
- Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers, known to the entire camp population,
- Clearly defined firing line,
- \*A plan for dealing with spent lead bullets consistent with applicable local environmental regulations

YES NO

PD-23C: Clear safety signals and range commands to control both the activity at the firing line and during the retrieval of targets?

YES NO

**INTERPRETATION:** \*This standard applies to all program activities that use firearms and air/pellet guns. "Redundant safety" for firearms can also be met by utilizing gun locks on each rifle or locking each one up within the gun safe. Establishing safety buffers and zones around the shooting range is critical to safe operation of the activity. All persons who may be close to the area for any reason must be aware of and oriented to the safety zones and boundaries. Camps may use posted signs or warnings, physical barriers, or specific scheduling procedures to control access.

Safety signals and range commands are the specific directives and instructions utilized to assure the orderly and safe operation of the range. Participants must learn and follow commands to demonstrate proper respect for the potential danger involved with the unsafe use of firearms. Although retrieval of targets is not a part of paintball activities, the expectation is that safety signals and range commands will be used to safely control the activity.

\*For additional information regarding spent lead bullets, visit: [www.ACAcamps.org/accreditation](http://www.ACAcamps.org/accreditation); select "Resources/Tools."

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** \*Visitor observation of activities; director/staff description of shooting range design and plan for dealing with spent lead bullets; staff and camper description of safety procedures used.

**Does not apply if firearm (e.g., rifle, pistol, or shotgun) activities are never provided.**

**\*PD-23 does not apply to paintball.**

**Applies to:**

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term resident programs
- User-group programs

## PD-24 PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR

**MANDATORY  
(ALL)**

### PD 24A

**Does not apply if bicycling activities are never provided.**

### PD 24B

**Does not apply if motorized vehicle activities are never provided.**

**\*Does not apply to golf carts.**

#### Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term resident programs
- User-group programs

Does the camp require that helmets be worn by all participants (staff and campers) when engaged in:

PD-24A: Activities involving bicycling? YES NO

PD-24B: Activities involving any kind of motorized vehicle? YES NO

**INTERPRETATION:** PD-24A requires helmets to be worn in any program activity that involves bicycling on any surface provided by the camp, the camper, or a vendor. This standard does not apply to riding four-wheeled pedal bikes. If bicycle riding occurs outside of a program activity, helmets are not required to be worn, but all riders are encouraged to wear helmets as a way to model good safety practices. Standard PD-24B includes any program activity involving motorized vehicles such as motorcycles, motor bikes, go-karts, ATVs, etc.

Helmets should be appropriately sized and designed specifically for the activity being conducted, given that helmet construction standards vary for different activities. Helmets may be supplied by the camp or by a staffed public facility or vendor.

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** Visitor observation of activities; staff and camper description of helmets required.

## PD-25 GO-KART SAFETY

**Does not apply if go-karts are never used.**

#### Applies to:

- Day camps
- Resident camps
- Short-term resident programs
- User-group programs

Does the camp require that go-karts be equipped with roll bars and restraint devices?

YES NO

**INTERPRETATION:** Camp go-karts, as well as go-karts at public facilities, must be properly equipped. Such equipment should include the required roll bars and appropriate restraint devices, such as seat belts, harnesses, and restraining bars.

**COMPLIANCE DEMONSTRATION:** Visitor observation of go-karts; director/staff description of policy's implementation.