



NCAP Circular No. 1

NCAP elevates camps to new levels of excellence...

National Council, Boy Scouts of America

Issued May 9, 2013

PREPARING THE DECLARATION OF READINESS

What is the Declaration of Readiness?

The Declaration of Readiness is a statement by the council that a particular camp (or group of camps, in the case of day camps and family camps that operate on a common plan or "template") is ready to open in compliance with the National Camp Standards and its Authorization to Operate (if issued).

What must be filed with the Declaration of Readiness?

Page 1 of the Declaration of Readiness form (No. 430-072) must be filled out for all camps (or groups of camps).

In addition, all camps must complete the checklist on the top of page 2 (under "the following must be attached" statement) and attach any of these required items. Continuous Camp Improvement program materials (the last item) are not required to be submitted until 2014.

Finally, councils are **encouraged, but not required**, to submit the items listed on the bottom of page 2 and page 3. Submitting these items will diminish the

amount of time required for paperwork review during the Assessment, and will allow the Assessment team and camp staff to focus on review of programs.

Some clarifications on what the council should submit if it chooses to submit items from the "may attach" list:

Under "Agreements and Approvals", where a council uses a standard form for such agreement, it need not submit each agreement, but rather its standard form.

Staff application and letters. An example of the application and letter may be submitted. We do not need each individual letter.

Permits, licenses, etc. Only the faceplate of a permit or license need be submitted. We do not require a complete copy of each permit or license.

When must the Declaration of Readiness be filed?

No later than May 15, 2013 unless the council has made other arrangements with its area camp assessment chair.

Where do I send the Declaration of Readiness? The handling of the Declaration of Readiness varies by the type of camp.

Camp properties without a camp, day camps and family camps submit the Declaration of Readiness to the Council NCAP chair or, if none, the council camping committee chair (or equivalent). This individual will arrange for the council self-assessment of day and family camps.

Resident, trek, specialty adventure, high adventure and stand-alone COPE or Climbing courses submit the Declaration of Readiness to the area camp assessment chair or the camp assessment team leader, if assigned. A list of area camp assessment chairs appears at the end of this NCAP Circular.

National high adventure bases will be contacted by the NCAP Staff Advisor to arrange for submittal of their Declarations of Readiness.

Questions? Contact your area camp assessment chair, regional camp assessment coordinator, or NCAP@scouting.org.

INTERPRETING "CAMP PROPERTY" IN THE STANDARDS

The National Camp Standards apply to "camp properties" as well as different types of camps. This has caused some confusion. A "camp property" is property controlled by a council made available to BSA units for program purposes. A camp is an organized activity that meets a defined set of Standards. Critically, a "camp" that is located on a "camp prop-

erty" must meet the applicable Standards for both "camp properties" and the type of camp that it is. Thus, a resident camp with a camp

ranger must also meet the requirements of SQ-404 (ranger), FA-704 (conservation plan) and RP-452 (if opted into, ranger experience).

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STANDARDS DEFERRED FROM ASSESSMENT IN 2013

The National Camp Accreditation Program has determined that the following National Camp Standards will **not be assessed in the 2013 Assessment period** because the Application and Authorization process has not yet taken place. The affected Standards are as follows:

- **PD-101. General Program Design.** Specific Requirements A and B are being deferred because they are designed for analysis by the regional camp authorization team. Specific Requirement C should be assessed. On uniforming, attention is drawn to the discussion in the Interpretation. Finally, the “annual review” will be assessed beginning in 2014 as councils need the opportunity to conduct their first review in 2013.
- **PD-102. Cub Scout Program Design.** Specific Requirement A of this Standard is being deferred because it is designed for analysis and discussion between the council and the regional camp authorization review team. Similarly, the “annual review” will be assessed beginning in 2014 to

allow councils time to complete their first annual review under the new Standards.

- **PD-103. Boy Scout/Varsity Scout Program Design.** Specific Requirement A of this Standard is being deferred because it is designed for analysis and discussion between the council and the regional camp authorization review team. Similarly, the “annual review” will be assessed beginning in 2014 to allow councils time to complete their first annual review under the new Standards.
- **PD-104. Venturing/Sea Scouting Program Design.** Specific Requirement A of this Standard is being deferred because it is designed for analysis and discussion between the council and the regional camp authorization review team. Similarly, the “annual review” will be assessed beginning in 2014 to allow councils time to complete their first annual review under the new Standards.
- **PD-105. Specialty Adventure and High Adventure Program Design.** Specific Requirement B, which requires training of camp staff in accordance with Standard SQ-411, will not be implemented for camps that have not yet gone through application and authorization. Assessment teams should review the council’s offered training for adequacy. Concerns with the training should be noted in detail in the narrative portion of the assessment report and discussed with the camp staff. Standard PD-105 should not be scored noncompliant based on a training issue without consultation with the area camp assessment chair and area director. In some cases, councils may also make prior arrangements with their regional camp accreditation chair for approval of training programs for Specialty Adventure and High Adventure staff. A written approval of the training program by the region that is followed by the camp is deemed acceptable.
- **PD-111. New Programs and Activities.** The requirements of Standard PD-111 apply to programs that commence operation in 2013 and thereafter. Programs that predate the 2013 Standards are not “new” programs or activities. Assessment teams with concerns about risk should note those concerns in the narrative assessment for review by the regional camp authorization team. In extreme circumstances, the team should contact area leadership for guidance.
- **AO-801. Permits and Compliance.** All camps are required to comply with applicable laws and regulations. A camp that is known not to be in compliance and not “in process” for achieving compliance should be scored noncompliant with this requirement. However, the compliance verification requirement that the camp have a list of required permits and approvals and copies of such permits is deferred in 2013 and may not take effect until after the council has gone through the application and authorization process.

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STANDARDS DEFERRED FROM ASSESSMENT IN 2013 *CONTINUED*

- **AO-802. BSA Authorization to Operate.** No camp will have a currently effective BSA Authorization to Operate in 2013. Therefore, this requirement is deferred until the first Authorizations to Operate are issued effective in 2014. The Standard will not come fully into effect until the BSA Authorization to Operate is issued to the council.
- **AO-806. Camp Budgeting, Analysis and Financial Controls.** The Standard requirement for an annual camp analysis and the Specific Requirement A for budget and financial data entered in accordance with BSA directives will be addressed during the authorization process and not during the assessment process. The assessment team should inquire whether financial control requirements have been shared with key staff and that such finance, inventory and related controls are being followed.
- **AO-808. BSA Reporting.** As stated in the compliance verification section, the National Office will notify the area or council if issues are detected in reporting. Assessment teams should ensure that camp staff is aware of incident reporting requirements.

Questions about the applicability of these Standards and their assessment should be directed to the area camp assessment chair.

STANDARDS CLARIFICATIONS

NCAP is clarifying the application of the following Standards to assist both councils and assessment teams in their proper application.

General Question: Recommended Practices. Several individuals have enquired whether councils and camps are required to adopt Recommended Practices. The answer is “no,” Recommended Practices are not required for basic Accreditation unless a council has requested a Recommended Practice be applied through the Application and Authorization process. Any such case will be clearly stated in the Authorization to Operate. NCAP envisions that when Accreditation with Silver or Gold Recognition becomes available, camps will need to meet a certain number of recommended practices to qualify for such recognition.

- **PD-103. Boy Scout/Varsity Scout Program Design.** Specific Requirement B.6 requires an Order of the Arrow program. For camps with the Tribe of Mic-O-Say in lieu of the Order of the Arrow, NCAP has issued a variance, but the camp ***must apply for the variance***. Applications should be submitted using the appropriate form to: NCAP@scouting.org.
- **RP-164 and RP-251. Conservation Program Integration.** This Recommended Practice was inadvertently duplicated. RP-251 is the correct citation. Councils may not claim credit for both RP-164 and RP-251.
- **SQ-401. Staff Qualification and Training Standards.** Specific Requirement D requires “all camp personnel—employees and CITs—complete a camp staff application and receive a letter of agreement along with a written position description and camp staff manual prior to starting work. First, some camps and councils use letters of employment rather than letters of agreement and this is acceptable. Second, CITs and Staff may have separate applications and manuals and this is also acceptable so long as all camp personnel have a position description and manual appropriate to their role.
- **SQ-402.C. Day and Family Camp Staff Training.** Specific Requirement C for day and family camps requires 8 hours of training. The training requirements apply to the primary staff: camp director, program director, and area directors (or equivalent). This training does not have to be accomplished in a single session, but may include multiple sessions as approved by the relevant council committees. Other staff and volunteers should receive appropriate training.
- **SQ-402.E. Staff First Aid Training.** For day and family camps, the staff first aid training applies to camp director, program director and area directors (or equivalent). It does not include den chiefs and volunteers. For resident camps, the training requirement excludes volunteers. See the Interpretation for additional guidance.
- **SQ-402.F. Weather Hazard Training.** If a camp staffer cannot obtain the on-line train-

STANDARDS CLARIFICATIONS *CONTINUED*

ing prior to or during camp, slides or handouts may be obtained and used to complete the training. Records of the training must be kept as required by the Standard.

- **SQ-404. Camp Ranger.** As stated earlier in this Circular, SQ-404 applies to any day camp, family camp, resident camp, trek camp, specialty adventure camp or high adventure camp that operates on a camp property with a camp ranger.
- **SQ-410.D. Trek Staff First Aid requirements.** The proper course is American Red Cross Wilderness and Remote First Aid with CPR/AED (or equivalent). The Emergency Care and Safety Institute – Boy Scout Wilderness First Aid Course is a recognized equivalent.
- **SQ-411.A, Authorization listing of required training.** Until such time as the Authorization is issued, the Assessment team should assess the training plan that is being used for specialty adventure and high adventure staff. Any concerns should be noted on the Assessment narrative. For 2013, this Standards should not be scored noncompliant solely because the Assessment team does not agree with the training plan, but issues should be flagged to the attention of the area camp assessment chair and the regional camp accreditation chair and camp assessment coordinator. If life or safety could be at risk, seek guidance from the area camp assessment chair and area director as provided in Assessment training.
- **SQ-411 Specialty and High**

Adventure Staff Training, Interpretation. In the table listing acceptable training, under Trail Horse Riding, the “Camp Horsemanship Association” should be the “Certified Horsemanship Association” and the “Horsemanship Safety Association” should be the “American Association for Horsemanship Safety.”

- **SQ-412.A. Commissioner credentials.** Until the Authorization is issued, the Assessment team may determine whether a camp commissioner meets the training experience in lieu of National Camping School. In general, five or more years of experience should be sufficient.
- **SQ-412.B. Ecology Director credentials.** Until the Authorization is issued, the Assessment team may determine whether an ecology director meets the alternative criteria set forth in the Interpretation. Prior contact with the Assessment Team is advised if using the alternative criteria.
- **SQ-412.C through H.** Until an Authorization, Variance or Waiver is issued, these positions must meet the National Camping School requirement.
- **SQ-412.I. Other staff.** Until the Authorization is issued, a council’s determination satisfies the requirements of Specific Requirement I.
- **RP-452. Camp Ranger Experience.** Any camp located on a camp property with a ranger may claim credit for this Recommended Practice, if the requirements are met.
- **RP-455. Chaplaincy.** An individual recognized by their

religious body, whether or not a church, satisfies this requirement.

- **FA-701. Camp Facilities Evaluation and Postcamp/Precamp Inspection.** The Camp Facilities Evaluation Tool (CFET) evaluation, which is conducted by the local council, is not required each year, but only on the first year after issuance of the Authorization to Operate and in the year in which Application for the next Authorization to Operate is sought. Councils are free to conduct a CFET analysis more often at their discretion. During Assessment, the Assessment team will verify that the council has conducted any required CFET. No councils required a CFET in 2013. After a required CFET has been conducted, the Assessment team may be asked by their region or area to “audit” two to three facilities using CFET criteria to compare with the local council’s scoring. The purpose of this “audit” is to help assess consistency in CFET application to improve future training and to assist the regional authorization review team. The Assessment team should not score the Standard based on the audit, but only on the requirements of the Standard.
- **FA-704. Conservation Plans.** All camp properties *and their associated camps*, must have a conservation plan. The only camps not requiring a conservation plan are camps that are not conducted on a BSA camp property.

ASSESSMENT: GUIDANCE ON MULTIPLE VISITS

A number of questions have been raised by assessment personnel concerning camp properties that offer multiple camps and when it might be appropriate to assess multiple camps during a single assessment versus multiple visits.

In general, NCAP's position is that each camp (as opposed to a camp session) requires assessment unless there is substantial identity in the programs and personnel.

Criteria to be considered:

1. If the staff does not change significantly. A separate assessment would likely not be

needed if there is a change in Handicraft Directors running Cub/Webelos Resident level handicraft programs and then another person handling Boy Scout Resident Camp handicraft programs. However, if there is a change in other "director-level" positions requiring National Camping School or other special training / certification, then we will conduct a second assessment.

2. Each separate property, regardless of the type of program being conducted, will require a separate assessment, even if you move the same camp staff

from one property to another and conduct the same or different kinds of programs.

3. Separate assessments will be conducted on a property for each type of resident camp program being operated simultaneously. Shared facilities, such as a dining hall or swimming pool, as well as staff credentials, will only need to be reviewed once.
4. If your council uses one property and staff to operate a Boy Scout Resident Camp, and then runs a Trek, Specialty Adventure or High Adventure Camp, separate assessments for each of these programs will be required.

APPLYING FOR VARIANCES AND WAIVERS

A number of questions have arisen about how a council obtains a variance or waiver from the National Camp Standards for a particular camp. The process is straight forward, but rigorous.

Step 1. Obtain the variance/waiver from from the NCAP website, www.scouting.org/NCAP

Step 2. Justify your request. In order to grant a variance or waiver, you must explain how the request achieves the purpose and goals of the Standard in some other way that is equivalent. Each aspect of the Standard for which you seek a waiver or variance must be separately addressed to show that

the camp will achieve equivalent protections or program quality. Inadequately justified requests will be denied.

Step 3. Submit the waiver or variance request to NCAP@scouting.org. It will be routed for approval. The process takes between two to four weeks in most cases.

NCAP REGION AND AREA LEADERSHIP

NCAP Position	Northeast	Central	Southern	Western
Accreditation Chair	Arnold Traupman atraupman@gmail.com	Dr. Denis Ward dward@danville.k12.in.us	Steve Gerber stevegerber68@gmail.com	Carl Nicolaysen cnicolaysen@esoen.com
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Area 6 Assessment Chair	Nicholas Adams nadams@aluminum.org	David Williams david.williams.h@gmail.com	Don Dares ddare@wate.com	Irene/Richard Fujimoto azfuji@cox.net
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Area 8 Assessment Chair	NA	NA	Rick Woodbridge drjrw@ardmore.com	NA
Area 9 Assessment Chair	NA	NA	Austin Landry austinlandry@charter.net	NA