

Short-Term Camp FAQ

National Camp Accreditation Program 2021

All standards referenced are the 2021 NCAP standards.

What is a short-term camp?

As defined by NCAP standard SA-001, effective January 1, 2021, a short-term camp is any council-organized overnight camping program, whether one-time or continuing, that is one, two or three nights in length where the council or its agents provide the staffing and may provide program and food services, and includes camps conducted off council properties. National training courses are subject to the short-term camp requirements, regardless of format or duration.

When does this short-term camp NCAP classification become effective?

The short-term camp classification is effective January 1, 2021.

Will any council event have to meet these NCAP standards?

Please review the NCAP 2021 Standard SA-001 for the definitions of each camp type to determine applicability to your camping program. As subsets of the council, “council-organized” also includes any district level programs.

Why are events like camporees and other weekend-style council events now under the NCAP standards?

The purpose of the BSA National Camp Standards are to:

- 1) Promote the health, safety, and well-being of every camper, leader, visitor, and staff member while participating in a BSA-accredited camp program.
- 2) Guide councils so that each camper and leader obtain a quality program consistent with the BSA brand.

What happened to the Family Camp NCAP classification?

The Family Camp NCAP classification is retired as of 12/31/2020. Council overnight programs that previously fell under the NCAP “Family Camp” classification will either meet the short-term or long-term camp classification depending on the event. Refer to NCAP standard SA-001 (rev. January 1,

2021) for the classification definitions. The 2021 NCAP standards can be found here:

<https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/camp-accrreditation/>

What is a short-term camp administrator?

The Short-Term Camp Administrator is responsible for ensuring that the planned short-term camp complies with the NCAP Short-term Camp standards.

In their capacity, the short-term camp administrator will work closely with the planning committee of the short-term camp. In some cases, this person may also be the event director. Some of the short-term camp administrator responsibilities include walking the short-term camp location to ensure that it is appropriate for the event; ensuring that paperwork is filed and any written BSA approvals are completed and obtained through the council. They confirm facilities and program are safe and in good order before starting operation; and that appropriate health, safety and sanitation provisions are made. This individual also ensures that all activities at the short-term camp comply with the applicable BSA National Camp Standards and other BSA policies.

They should be involved throughout the planning process of the short-term camp to act as a resource for the camp chair or coordinator. Each short-term camp must have a short-term camp administrator.

Who can serve as a short-term camp administrator?

The short-term camp administrator must be at least 21-years of age and be currently registered in the BSA. The short-term camp administrator must either have a current NCAP short-term camp administrator National Camping School Certification or hold a resident camp director certificate from BSA National Camping School. Refer to NCAP Standard SQ-403.

Does every camp chair or camp coordinator have to be a certified short-term camp administrator?

Each short-term camp must have an assigned short-term camp administrator. However, councils may choose how to assign the short-term camp administrator(s) within their council. A council could decide that each chairperson be a certified short-term camp administrator; other councils may choose to have one short-term camp administrator for each district; other councils may choose to have one for the entire council. This is a local council operational decision; but, regardless each short-term camp must have a short-term camp administrator assigned to serve in this role for every short-term camp.

Who will assess the short-term camp?

Each short-term camp must be assessed by the short-term camp administrator assigned to that camp. This assessment will be submitted via the NCAP Authorization and Assessment Declaration Form. [Click here](#) to view the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration form.

Does the short-term camp assessment process represent a conflict if the short-term camp administrator is assessing the same camp, they either supported or potentially even serve as chairman for?

The NCAP standards are a tool for local councils and represent the minimum safety and quality standards to operate BSA camping programs. These standards must be followed regardless of who assesses the camp.

Can an individual unit get together with other units and have their own short-term camp?

From the [BSA's Activities & Civic Service Guide \(#33082\)](#) page 20.

There are occasions when units conduct activities or events that involve other units. Units that wish to host events involving other units must have approval from their council. This includes events for packs, troops, crews, and ships from the same council; neighboring councils; the same region; or other regions. A detailed step by step process can be found on page 20 of the BSA Activities and Civic Service guide. *This is not a change in BSA policy.*

Will National Camping School certifications be required for short-term camps?

Yes, depending on position and the programs offered. Please reference NCAP SQ 400 series standards.

Will a council have to apply and be authorized to conduct short-term camps?

Yes, as a part of the authorization process outlined in NCAP standard SA-002. All councils who have an approved Authorization to Operate on file with the National Council are automatically granted the ability to locally authorize short-term camps.

Does a council have to submit an "Intent to Operate" to run a Short-Term Camp?

No. Short-term camps do not require a council to submit and Intent to Operate to the National Council. The process for councils to authorize a short-term camp can be found in NCAP standard SA-002 and AO-811.

What about Order of the Arrow events held at the chapter, lodge, or section?

As subsets of the local council, an Order of the Arrow lodge and chapter must meet the NCAP standards applicable to the event they are running. As subsets of the national council, Order of the Arrow Area sections must also meet applicable standards. Please review the NCAP 2021 Standard SA-001 for the definitions of each camp type to determine applicability to your camping program.

What about training courses?

Any council-organized camping program must meet the applicable standards beginning on January 1, 2021. Depending on the event, they must meet either Day Camp, Short-Term Camp, or Long-Term Camp standards. All overnight training courses no matter the duration or format (week-long or two weekend) are subject to the short-term camp standards. See NCAP standard SA-001.

Do all short-term camps require an area-led assessment?

Short-term camps are council self-assessed as defined in NCAP standards SA-003 and AO-811. This assessment is overseen by the Short-Term Camp Administrator for the camp.

What about overnight events held at the local museum or ballpark?

Per NCAP standard SA-001, if the event is *“council-organized... where the council or its agents provide the staffing and may provide program and food services”*, an event of this type would meet the definition of a short-term camp and would need to meet the applicable short-term standards.

If it the event is **not** *“council-organized... where the council or its agents provide the staffing and may provide program and food services”* then it does not meet the definition and therefore would not have to meet the NCAP standards. As always, these overnight events would be subject to the Guide to Safe Scouting.

What about a troop hosting the district camporee?

Any council-organized camping program must meet the applicable standards beginning on January 1, 2021. Depending on the event, they must meet either Day Camp, Short-Term Camp, or Long-Term Camp standards.

As the district is a subset of the council, the unit acting as the “host” is acting as an agent of the council. This event would be a short-term camp if it met the other parts of the definition related to length of camp. See NCAP standard SA-001.

If a unit is hosting an event for other units, this process is explained in the [BSA’s Activities & Civic Service Guide \(#33082\)](#) page 20.

There are occasions when units conduct activities or events that involve other units. Units that wish to host events involving other units must have approval from their council. This includes events for packs, troops, crews, and ships from the same council; neighboring councils; the same region; or other regions. A detailed step by step process can be found on page 20 of the BSA Activities and Civic Service guide. *This is not a change in BSA policy.*

Is a one-day event where units have the option to camp overnight considered a short-term camp?

The NCAP standards are a tool for local councils and represent the minimum safety and quality standards to operate camping programs. Councils must utilize NCAP standard SA-001 to determine standard applicability for each council-organized camping event.