



## National Camp Standards Replacement Pages for converting the 2022 NCAP Standards Book to become the 2023 NCAP Standards Book

On behalf of the National Camp Accreditation Program Committee, thank you for updating the 2022 National Camp Accreditation Program Standards to become the 2023 National Camp Accreditation Program Standards. We appreciate you recycling dated pages in your current edition and replacing them with the enclosed updates.

You will find all content changes made to the standards as of January 1, 2023, attached. Please use the attached pages to replace their corresponding pages in the 2022 printing.

You will notice blank pages in this group. The blank pages are placed there so you can print your pages double sided so that they will replace the current pages (standards) or inserted in the case of Standard RP 551.

For any additional information on the National Camp Accreditation Program please refer to [www.scouting.org/ncap](http://www.scouting.org/ncap) or email [ncap@scouting.org](mailto:ncap@scouting.org).

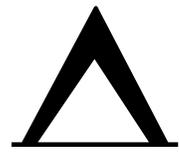
Thanks for your commitment to the program

*For best results:*

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS

## PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS

The BSA National Camp Standards are established to:

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

The local council is responsible for maintaining the BSA National Camp Standards. The National Camp Standards are the foundation of the National Camp Accreditation Program, which assesses council and camp conformance with the requirements of the National Camp Standards.

## THE NATIONAL CAMP ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The purpose of the BSA's National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP) is to help councils elevate camps to new levels of excellence in delivering Scouting's promise to youth. Councils will engage in rigorous review of camps and properties, continuous improvement, and correction or elimination of substandard practices.

In addition to the National Camp Standards, the NCAP involves three separate but interrelated cycles that both support the standards and ensure that camps meet continuous improvement goals: (1) the multiyear Authorization cycle; (2) the continuous camp improvement program, which has multiyear and annual components; and (3) the annual Assessment and Accreditation cycle.

### Multiyear Authorization Cycle

The multiyear Authorization cycle starts with the council submitting an application to the National Council. The application contains a description of all the council's camps for which it is seeking an Authorization to Operate and accreditation. For each camp property and camp (or group of camps for day camps or short-term camps), the application will describe the program goals; the facilities; how the council will meet the standards; the recommended practices, if any, the council intends to adopt; and any additional quality commitments that the council intends to meet to provide the safest and highest possible quality program to participants. The application requires approval by the council executive board or executive committee. All councils will also submit Council Sustainability Data Sheets. Based on the data sheet, the National NCAP Committee may request that the council submit additional information as part of the application process.

The Authorization to Operate represents a determination by the National Council, through the National NCAP Committee, that the council has demonstrated that its camp properties and camps meet the requirements for accreditation. The Authorization to Operate identifies additional commitments, if any, made by the council concerning the operation of its camp properties and camps. Specified terms and conditions of the Authorization to Operate are treated in the same fashion as standards. Authorizations to Operate remain valid for five years, unless there is a basis to revoke the Authorization to Operate or to issue an Authorization to Operate for fewer than five years.

and council leadership. The NCAP staff advisor and zone assessment coordinator shall be notified immediately. If there is disagreement, the NCAP staff advisor and zone assessment coordinator will provide leadership. A camp in this situation must immediately resolve the situation to the satisfaction of the National NCAP staff advisor in accordance with the terms and time schedule set forth in a corrective action plan developed in consultation with the NCAP staff advisor and zone assessment coordinator. The report of the successful implementation of the corrective action plan shall be submitted in accordance with the schedule developed in conjunction with the zone assessment coordinator and National NCAP staff advisor.

***Deviation finding.*** A camp that receives a deviation is on notice that there is a weakness in its program. The camp should correct the deviation prior to the start of the next camping season. Second and subsequent deviations for the same standard may be scored as a noncompliant at the discretion of the assessment team. The report of the successful implementation of the corrective action plan shall be submitted in accordance with the schedule developed in conjunction with the zone assessment coordinator.

If a camp exceeds 10 deviation findings in any assessment, the camp must prepare a timely corrective action plan and submit it to the zone assessment coordinator and National NCAP staff advisor. If the corrective action plan can be completed promptly, the camp will be conditionally accredited while the corrective action plan is in place but may be restored to accredited status upon demonstrating that it has completed the corrective action plan to the zone assessment coordinator and National NCAP staff advisor's satisfaction. The report of the successful implementation of the corrective action plan must be submitted no later than the declaration of readiness for the subsequent year.

# THE ACCREDITATION DECISION

The accreditation decision is based upon the results of the scoring of the standards, authorization terms and commitments, variances, and waivers.

## **Accredited**

1. A camp property or camp shall be accredited if it has no noncompliants and 10 or fewer deviations.
2. A camp may be accredited if it has one “upgraded from noncompliant” (UNC) score in accordance with Standard SA-004 and has five or fewer deviations and UNC findings.

If these conditions are met, the camp is accredited and the camp assessment team should present the accreditation certificate and pennant (if applicable) in an appropriate fashion, or if it has 2 UNC scores and no deviations.

## **Conditionally Accredited**

A camp property or camp shall be conditionally accredited if any of the following conditions are met:

1. Any applicable standard, term, condition, or commitment of an Authorization to Operate, variance, or waiver is scored “noncompliant.”
2. More than 10 standards, terms, conditions, or commitments are scored “upgraded from noncompliant” or “deviation,” with any “upgraded from noncompliant” being counted as equivalent to 5 deviations.
3. A waiver or letter of relief states that it requires conditional accreditation.

As noted under the subsection *Camp Response to Noncompliant and Deviation Findings*, if the camp corrects a significant noncompliant finding while the assessment team is present, the finding should be scored as an “upgraded from noncompliant” and not “noncompliant.” If this is not possible, but the findings are relatively minor and the camp’s program and corrective action plan is strong, the assessment team may request that the zone assessment coordinator and National NCAP staff advisor obtain approval for full accreditation from the National NCAP Assessment Leadership or, if necessary, an approval of a corrective action plan allowing full accreditation with the concurrence of the zone assessment coordinator and NCAP staff advisor. The camp may be accredited until such time as the corrective action is completed.

As discussed in *Camp Response to Noncompliant and Deviation Findings*, the council and camp leadership should develop a corrective action plan with the camp assessment team to correct any noncompliant findings. Most noncompliant findings should be addressed within a week or two, unless the council demonstrates that more time is needed and the additional time will not adversely affect the health or safety of the campers or result in an unacceptable level of program delivery. If a mutually agreed-upon schedule cannot be developed while the assessment team is onsite, the assessment team should consult with the NCAP staff advisor. Once the schedule is established, or upon direction from NCAP national assessment leadership granting more time to develop the corrective action plan, conditionally accredited credentials should be granted.

**STANDARD:**

The BSA National Camp Standards apply to any BSA-branded *camp property* or *camp*. All *camp properties* and *camps*, regardless of type, must comply with the standards applicable to the facilities and programs offered. When applicable, at *camp properties* and *camps*, the National Camp Standards take precedence over other national or local council policy or requirement except as provided herein.

**Applies to:**

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

The BSA National Camp Standards apply to each of the following *camps* or *camp properties*:

- A. **Camp property.** A *camp property* includes any property over which a BSA council exercises long-term control that is made available to BSA units or individuals for use in BSA-branded program activities. A BSA camp property does not include the following:
1. Property held for use, investment, or sale that is not made available to BSA units or youth for use in BSA program activities;
  2. Service centers and Scout shops where activities of a primarily office or sales nature occur, except that Scout shops located in conjunction with a BSA camp (e.g., a camp trading post) are covered by the standards. A COPE or climbing course located at a service center or Scout shop is subject to the standards.
- B. **Camp.** *Camp* includes any program that provides a BSA-branded program to individuals or youth using the same or substantially the same personnel. Except for day camps as provided below, a camp is an overnight program. In determining the length of a camp, count all nights where any participants (other than staff) are present with substantially the same camp leadership or camp staff, regardless of what the camp is called, unless there is a gap of five or more nights between sessions. *Camp* includes the following classifications:
1. **Day camps.** A *day camp* is a council-organized program designed for Scouts for two or more days, under council-retained leadership at an approved site with no overnight. The program may operate at age-appropriate Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturer, or Sea Scout level. A council may choose to treat a one-day event (without an overnight) as a day camp.
  2. **Short-term camps.** 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

# NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS APPLICABILITY

SA-001

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

provide the staffing and may provide program and food services, and includes camps conducted off council properties. National training courses, specifically National Camping School, Leave No Trace Master Educator, National Youth Leadership Training, Wood Badge, OA trainings such as NLS, are subject to the short-term camp requirements, regardless of format or duration. All other national training courses designation must be determined based on the number of nights of the camp (such as SEAL, Powderhorn, KODIAK).

3. **Long-term camps.** A *long-term camp* is a council-organized camp of four nights or more that operates under council-retained leadership and can include static campsites, transient campsites, adventure or trekking programs, or some combination thereof. A long-term camp may operate at multiple age-appropriate Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturer, or Sea Scout levels, but each program level must be offered a separate camp experience meeting the relevant program design standards and cannot be combined into a single camp experience.

C. **Exclusions from National Camp Standards.** The World Scout Jamboree, National Scout Jamboree, and the National Order of the Arrow Conference are excluded from coverage under the BSA National Camp Standards. The following programs are excluded from coverage under the BSA National Camp Standards, except when conducted on a camp property, in which case the *camp property* must meet the standards applicable to a *camp property*:

1. BSA council meetings
2. Events. An event is a council-sponsored activity that is not overnight and not a day camp. Events at a *camp property* are subject to the National Camp Standards applicable to the *camp property*.
3. Unit activities. A unit activity is subject to the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) in lieu of the National Camp Standards even if located at a camp property. The council must continue to meet any standards applicable to the camp property and the unit must comply with council policies that implement the standards.

D. **Precedence.** At *camp properties* and *camps*, the National Camp Standards take precedence over inconsistent statements in other BSA policy statements, manuals and guides, regardless of whether issued at the national or local council level, except in the following circumstances:

1. The National Camp Accreditation Committee issues an NCAP Circular that states it supersedes certain sections of the National Camp Standards.
2. The National Camp Accreditation Committee issues a variance, waiver, equivalency determination, or other relief in accordance with Standard SA-005, which is binding upon the parties covered.
3. The National Camp Standards expressly reference and adopt another policy, manual or similar document, such as the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#), as controlling for certain issues. Additionally, the National Camp Standards explicitly allow councils and *camps* to adopt more stringent requirements. Where a council or camp exercises that authority, the more stringent requirement prevails.
4. The National Camp Standards take precedence only over inconsistent statements in other BSA publications only at *camp properties* and *camps*. For activities not at *camp properties* or *camps*, other BSA publications provide the applicable requirements.
5. Notwithstanding the above, *camp properties* and *camps* must always operate in compliance with federal, state and local laws, regulations and permits. Those legal requirements prevail over inconsistent Standards. *Camp properties* and *camps* are expected to comply with both law and the Standards to the extent consistent and possible. Councils facing this situation should apply for a variance pursuant to Standard SA-005 to eliminate inconsistency or tensions.

## INTERPRETATION:

**BSA council** includes the National Council and its service territories, subdivisions and subsidiaries and any BSA-chartered local council and its districts, subdivisions and subsidiaries.

**BSA-branded program** includes any program offered using the name, trademarks, copyrights, or trade dress of the BSA.

A **long-term camp** is a camp of four or more nights. A short-term camp is one to three nights. The question arises of how to distinguish them when the camp is repeated. The answer is that the total number of nights of the program using essentially the same leadership and staff and within less than five days of each are counted to determine program length. Examples:

- A five-night camp is followed by a two-night camp using the same staff. This is a seven-night program and both camps must meet the long-term camp standards.

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS APPLICABILITY

SA-001

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

- A three-night camp is followed by a day off followed by another three-night camp using the same staff. This is a six-day camp and the camps meet the long-term camp standards.
- The council offers a campmaster program where a varying staff offers a generally consistent program each weekend. Because these programs are five days apart, they are separate camps. This is a *short-term camp*.
- A Cub Scout camp is offered for four or more night sessions using the same program and staff. This is a long-term camp.

**Long-term control** means that a council or affiliated entity owns or leases the property or has a multiyear permit or license to operate a camp on the property. A council or affiliated entity that makes non-trivial improvements to facilities at a property is presumed to exercise long-term control over that property.

**A council meeting** is a meeting of a council executive board, any of its committees, subcommittees, or task forces, or of council members in a governance capacity.

**Events.** An event may not be subdivided to avoid application of the BSA National Camp Standards. For example, a camp that runs over five days cannot be split into daily activities to avoid the standards. *Events* not subject to the National Camp Standards are subject to the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) and Youth Protection policies. Events at a camp property are subject to the standards applicable to the camp property, including any requirements of an applicable Authorization to Operate, for that camp property.

**Exclusions.** The World Scout Jamboree, National Scout Jamboree, and National Order of the Arrow Conference are mass events subject to additional health and safety requirements specific to those events which are equivalent to or more stringent than the National Camp Standards. Unit activities are subject to the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#).

**Specific national training courses,** National Camping School, Leave No Trace Master Educator, National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT), Wood Badge, and OA trainings such as NLS, are subject to the short-term camp requirements, regardless of format or duration.

All other national training courses designation must be determined based on the number of nights of the camp (such as SEAL, Powderhorn, KODIAK).

## VERIFICATION:

- Verification of compliance by a council with this standard will be determined during the zone conducted council NCAP program administration assessment and not individual camp assessments.

**STANDARD:**

**No camp or camp property shall operate without an assessment conducted in accordance with the National Camp Standards.**

**Applies to:**

**Camp  
properties**

**Day camp**

**Short-term  
camp**

**Long-term  
camp**

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:****A. Camp properties.**

1. Each camp property shall be assessed at least annually by the local council using NCAP trained personnel.
2. Each COPE/climbing course shall annually receive a professional inspection pursuant to ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, Chapter 1, Sections B.1.2 and B.2. In addition, each COPE/climbing course shall be assessed annually by the local council using NCAP-trained personnel. These assessments should be at separate times.
3. Camp properties used for long-term camps shall also be assessed by the National Council assessment team during the long-term camp assessment.

**B. Camps.** Camps shall be assessed as follows:

1. **Day camps** shall be assessed by the local council using NCAP trained personnel using the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration.
2. **Short-term camps** shall be assessed by the short-term camp administrator using the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration.
3. **Long-term camps** shall be assessed by the National Council assessment team using NCAP certified personnel.

**C. Reporting.** Each assessment shall be reported as follows:

1. **Camp properties and COPE/Climbing courses.** A copy of each camp property assessment conducted pursuant to Specific Requirement A.1 shall be submitted to the camp ranger (if present), council president, Scout executive, and council NCAP chair within five working days of completing the assessment and to the National NCAP Committee using the official Assessment Scoresheet found at [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP)

# ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

SA-003

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

2. **Long-term camps.** A copy of each camp assessment conducted pursuant to Specific Requirements A.2 (if a stand-alone operation), and B.3 shall be provided to the camp director, council president, Scout executive, council NCAP chair, zone assessment coordinator, and to the National NCAP Committee using the official Assessment Scoresheet found at [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP)
3. **Short-term camps and day camps.** Completion of the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration is required and the file retained at the Council Service Center for review by the national NCAP committee when requested.

## INTERPRETATION:

All terms are defined in Standard SA-001. All long-term camps must be assessed by the National Council. All other camps must be assessed by the local council. Local council inspections, under specific requirement A.2, may use a mix of NCAP-trained and otherwise qualified personnel, but the team lead must have the required NCAP training.

## VERIFICATION:

- During the council NCAP program administration assessment, the lead council assessor will review the council's self-assessment plan to verify that all day camps were properly assessed and that all short-term camps were assessed by the short-term camp administrator and the NCAP Site Appraisal Form and the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration forms were completed.

# ACCREDITATION OF CAMPS AND CAMP PROPERTIES

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## STANDARD:

Each camp and camp property shall be accredited in accordance with the specific requirements of this standard. A camp or camp property denied accreditation may continue to operate using BSA trademarks and trade dress only pursuant to an approved plan of improvement, corrective action plan, or letter of authorization from the national NCAP staff advisor.

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. **Authorization to Operate.** No camp or camp property shall be accredited unless it has current Authorization to Operate and Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration, if required, as set forth in Standards SA-002 and AO-802.
- B. **Accredited.** A camp or camp property *shall* be accredited if it receives no noncompliant findings and not more than 10 deviation findings. A camp or camp property *may* be accredited if it receives not more than one “upgraded from noncompliant” findings and a total of not more than five deviation findings or two “upgraded from noncompliant” findings and no deviation findings *if and only if*:
1. The camp or camp property corrects any noncompliant finding prior to departure of the assessment team to the team’s satisfaction *and* the team receives the approval of the zone assessment coordinator (or the national NCAP staff advisor, if the zone camp assessment coordinator cannot be contacted). Any standard scored “noncompliant” during the assessment and corrected while the assessment team is onsite shall be scored as an “upgraded from noncompliant” (“UNC”) on the assessment score sheet with an explanation of the circumstances; or
  2. The camp or camp property commits to a corrective action plan to correct the noncompliant finding as soon as possible, the plan is approved by the Scout executive (or designee), *and* the plan is approved by the zone assessment coordinator and the national NCAP staff advisor. Any noncompliant findings adjusted under this procedure shall be scored as “UNC” on the assessment score sheet. An explanation for any adjustments must be provided in the score sheet. A conditional accreditation may be issued if the assessment team believes the program is safe while the necessary plan approvals are obtained.

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# ACCREDITATION OF CAMPS AND CAMP PROPERTIES

SA-004

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

3. Notwithstanding Specific Requirements B.1 and B.2, if the total number of UNC and deviation findings exceeds 10, with each UNC counting 5, the camp or camp property must be conditionally accredited.

C. **Conditionally Accredited.** A camp or camp property shall be conditionally accredited if either of the following conditions occur:

1. One or more standards is scored noncompliant and the conditions in Specific Requirements B.1 or B.2 are not met; or
2. If there are more than 10 deviations or UNCs scored with each UNC counting 5.

A conditionally accredited camp must prepare a plan of improvement to address the deficiencies leading to conditional accreditation as directed by the zone assessment coordinator or the National NCAP staff advisor.

D. **Denied Accreditation.** A camp or camp property shall be denied accreditation if any of the following conditions are met:

1. The local council's charter from BSA is revoked.
2. The local council's Authorization to Operate is revoked or terminated in whole or with respect to the camp or camp property.
3. The camp or camp property was conditionally accredited in the prior assessment and cannot satisfy the conditions for full accreditation in Specific Requirements B.1, B.2, or B.3.
4. The camp is conditionally accredited and does not timely comply with its corrective action plan or plan of improvement.

E. **Appeal.** An accreditation decision may be appealed informally and then formally as follows:

1. An accreditation decision may be appealed informally by the camp or an assessment team member to the zone assessment coordinator, who will hear the camp's position and the assessment team's position and issue a final decision or defer a decision to the formal appeal process. This is the only appeal route for an assessment team member.
2. An accreditation decision may be appealed by a camp to the National NCAP committee as set forth in this Manual within five working days, unless the national NCAP staff advisor grants an additional time. The camp's appeal must be in writing and must set forth the basis for appealing the assessment team's decision. The

# ACCREDITATION OF CAMPS AND CAMP PROPERTIES

(Revised January 1, 2023)

zone assessment coordinator and assessment team shall have five working days, or more if granted by the national NCAP staff advisor, to respond in writing. A panel of the national NCAP committee may decide the appeal on the written submissions or may hold a hearing in person, over the phone or virtually and decide the appeal. This decision shall be in writing.

- F. **Plan of Improvement.** A camp that is conditionally accredited shall prepare a plan of improvement to address the noncompliant and deviation findings and submit it to the national NCAP staff advisor for approval by the national NCAP committee. Failure to implement the plan of improvement constitutes grounds for denial of accreditation. Conditions in a plan of improvement may be appealed pursuant to Specific Requirement E.3.
- G. **Reinstatement After Denial of Accreditation.** A camp that was denied accreditation may petition the national NCAP committee for approval of a plan of improvement to reopen the camp. Approval of a plan of improvement is at the national NCAP committee's discretion.

## INTERPRETATION:

NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration approvals may be issued by a council in accordance with Standard AO-811. All councils have interim authorization to issue such approvals until they receive their Authorization to Operate specifically addressing this authority or receive written notice from the National Council or National NCAP Committee stating affirmatively that they do not have such authority.

For purposes of Specific Requirements B.3 and C.2, each deviation is counted as a finding and each UNC is counted as five findings. So, a camp with 2 deviations and 1 UNC has seven findings.

## VERIFICATION:

- Compliance with Standard SA-004 by a camp or camp property is demonstrated by the issuance of the camp assessment score sheet for long-term camps and camp properties and the issuance of the on-site verification for day camps and short-term camps.
- Verification of compliance by a council with this standard for its self-assessed day camps, short-term camps and camp properties will be determined during the nationally coordinated council NCAP program administration assessment and not individual camp assessments.

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp



**STANDARD:**

All NCAP authorization reviewers, NCAP assessment personnel, and council NCAP chairs and their respective staff advisors shall have current NCAP training with a current NCAP Assessment training certificate, if required, appropriate to their responsibilities. NCAP leadership may revoke a certification at any time for cause.

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. **Assessment Team Leaders.** All NCAP assessment team leaders shall have completed current-year team leader training from the National Council and hold a current NCAP assessor certification. Assessment team leaders at a local council shall have completed assessor training from the National Council and hold a current NCAP assessor certification.
- B. **Assessors.** All NCAP zone assessors shall have completed NCAP assessor training provided by the National Council and hold a current NCAP assessor certification. Assessors at a local council shall have completed NCAP assessor training provided by the National Council or the local council.
- C. **Others.** Other NCAP personnel shall review relevant NCAP training materials and participate in training as directed by the local or national council.

**INTERPRETATION:**

NCAP zone assessment team leader means a zone assessment coordinator, council camp assessment chair or the team leader of a camp assessment team at any camp.

Appeal from revocation of an NCAP training certificate must be made in writing through [NCAP@scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@scouting.org) to the national NCAP committee.

**Applies to:****Camp properties****Day camp****Short-term camp****Long-term camp**



# ADULT PARTICIPANT TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Adult leaders are provided the opportunity to participate in supplemental training opportunities, including three or more of the following:

- A. Understanding and Preventing Youth-on-Youth Abuse for Unit Leaders and Staff
- B. Safe Swim Defense
- C. Swimming and Water Rescue
- D. Climb on Safely
- E. Paddlecraft Safety
- F. Safety Afloat
- G. Hazardous Weather Training
- H. Other training approved by the council training committee

## INTERPRETATION:

Training completion cards are issued for each course completed, and the camp keeps a record of all courses completed.

## VERIFICATION:

- Written records of training offered and completed
- Director/staff description of procedures in practice
- Observation of procedures in practice

## Applies to:

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp



**STANDARD:**

If provided, swimming pools, waterfront facilities, and aquatics equipment (including watercraft) are safe, neat, clean, and operated in compliance with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America, U.S. Coast Guard, and other governing jurisdiction regulations.

**Applies to:**

Day camp

Short-term  
campLong-term  
camp**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat procedures are used for all on-site and off-site swimming and boating activities. All campers and staff adhere to the buddy system and restrictions based on swim classifications. Life jackets are worn by everyone aboard small craft. In addition, emergency action plans specific to aquatics must be developed along with training as described in the staff qualification (SQ) standards.
- B. Life jackets, paddles, and other equipment are properly sized for all participants.
- C. Reach poles, rescue tubes, ring buoys, backboard with straps and head restraint, and other emergency items such as radios or communication gear are present in sufficient numbers, are in good repair, and are easily accessible for use by appropriately trained staff. Safety and emergency equipment, including rescue tubes, personal protective equipment (PPE), backboards, sun protection, and communication gear, is provided as specified by the CDC Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) or local authority having jurisdiction over swimming activities, whichever is more stringent.
- D. Aquatics amusement features, such as floats and water slides, are operated in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines, as well as local and state regulations. All points of Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat are followed.
- E. Long-distance swimming in open water must follow Distance Swimming in Open Water safety guidelines as set forth in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#).
- F. Pools and/or pool shower systems, including sanitation, are overseen by and documentation is maintained by personnel trained according to state regulations. (Note: The camp ranger may need pool operator certification in your state.)

# AQUATICS: GENERAL

PS-201

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

- G. All motorboats, sailboats, and watercraft are in good repair, are licensed if required, and meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Disposable fire extinguishers, if used, must be less than 12 years old and appropriate for the use. Council-owned boats 26 feet or greater in length and/or 40 HP or greater must be registered with Risk Management at the National Council.
- H. Campers may not operate motorboats without an adult or staff member who meets state requirements on board. Proper safety and environmental precautions are taken for fueling and fuel storage.
- I. Proper training and equipment, including helmets, are in use for whitewater activities (Class II and above). *Note: Trips above Class IV are not allowed in any Scouting program.*
- J. If a swimming program is conducted at a licensed swimming facility operated by another vendor not on council property (established pool, spray park, water park, or lakefront swimming area, for example), the council and the provider must prepare a written agreement noting their respective responsibilities (as stated in PD-109). Facility employees with state-regulated training may provide aquatics supervision. Participants are assigned buddies and limited to water depths appropriate to their ability unless approved life jackets are worn. Roll is taken at the beginning and end of the activity. Special precautions indicated by medical conditions are shared with facility staff. In areas from which the public is excluded, Safe Swim Defense policies are implemented as they would be at a council-staffed facility.
- K. Personal watercraft (PWC) used for program must be approved in advance in writing from National Council Outdoor Programs using the Personal Watercraft (PWC) Program Application, No. 430-045, and a copy must be available for the assessment team. The program follows the BSA PWC Lesson Plan. No deviation is permitted from the course outline. The program must comply with local and state laws and adhere to manufacturers' instructions at all times. The program must follow the BSA-approved lesson plan for instruction and practical experience. PWC used for program must be owned or leased by the council. Personal PWCs are not authorized.

**INTERPRETATION:**

Boats under 26 feet or under 40 HP are automatically covered under BSA liability insurance.

Personal watercraft (PWC) are motorized vehicles for personal use and subject to this standard. See the Personal Watercraft (PWC) Program Application, No. 430-045, for additional information on this program.

**VERIFICATION:**

- Check of water-quality records as required by applicable regulation
- Review of watercraft licenses, if applicable
- Check of emergency action plan (plans in place and staff trained in them)
- Review of emergency equipment against MAHC or local requirements (facility must have copy of current code or MAHC section)
- Observation of procedures in practice and program implementation
- If PWC program is offered, review of National Council approval and PWC operation manual, with staff assurance that the nationally approved operational plan and lesson plan are followed

**REFERENCES:**

Specific requirements for aquatics emergency action plans are found in Standard AO-805. Staff training requirements are found in Standard SQ-406.

The CDC Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) may be found at [www.cdc.gov/mahc/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mahc/index.html)

MAHC 5.8.5.3 specifies safety equipment required for facilities with lifeguards.

General information on aquatics program supervision is found in *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346.

**Applies to:**

Day camp

Short-term  
campLong-term  
camp



**STANDARD:**

If offered, scuba programs are conducted in a safe manner and in accordance with the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) scuba policy and applicable industry requirements.

**Applies to:****SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. Any person possessing, displaying, or using scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus) gear in connection with any Scouting-related activity must be either currently certified by a recognized agency or enrolled in an instructional scuba program, such as Scuba BSA or Scuba Diving merit badge, which must be conducted by an insured recreational diving instructor in good standing with a recognized agency and approved by the council.
- B. When scuba diving is taught in connection with any local council program, instructors should provide the training on a contract basis. Such instructors should have dive store or other commercial affiliation that provides liability insurance coverage. Direct employment of scuba instructors is not recommended.
- C. Diving using surface-supplied air systems is not authorized in connection with any BSA activity or facility except when done under contract by commercial divers.
- D. Local council programs may not compress or sell air for scuba use, or sell, rent, or loan scuba equipment (scuba cylinders, regulators, gauges, dive computers, weights, or BCDs). All air and equipment for local council program use must be obtained from professional sources (dive stores, resorts, dive boats, etc.) affiliated with a scuba agency recognized by the BSA. Use of personal air or equipment is not authorized.
- E. Youth members in Cub Scouting, including Webelos Scouts, are not authorized to use scuba in any activity.
- F. Scouts BSA members may participate in the introductory Scuba BSA program and may obtain open-water certification as part of earning the Scuba Diving merit badge.
- G. Venturing and Sea Scouting groups may participate in introductory and certification scuba programs conducted by recognized agencies appropriate to their age and current level of certification.
- H. Standards of the recognized scuba agencies require students for open-water certification programs to be at least 15 years of age but allow special certification programs for younger students. Because all

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# AQUATICS: SCUBA PROGRAMS

PS-203

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

instruction for BSA scuba programs must be conducted by professionals certified by a recognized agency, additional agency-specific, age-related restrictions, and protocols apply to students under 15 years of age.

- I. Scouts BSA members, Sea Scouts, and Venturers may participate in recreational group dives as unit, district, or council activities, provided such dives are consistent with their certifications and are under direct, on-site supervision of a responsible adult currently certified as a divemaster, assistant instructor, or higher rating from a recognized agency. All such activities must meet all requirements of the scuba policy in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#).
- J. The divemaster or instructor supervising a recreational dive by a BSA group must implement the following policies for all divers under 15 years of age, as well as any additional junior diver restrictions and protocols adopted by that person's certifying agency:
  - Depths are limited to 40 feet for divers under 12 years of age and to 60 feet for divers 12 to 14 years of age.
  - Each diver under 15 years of age must have an adult buddy certified as an open-water diver who is either the junior diver's parent or an adult approved by the parent.
  - Additional divemasters or instructors must be present to maintain a ratio of one trained supervisor to four buddy pairs (eight divers) containing no more than four divers under 15 years of age.
- K. All scuba participants must submit a current (within one year) BSA Annual Health and Medical Record. In addition, all scuba participants taking scuba certification courses while attending a scuba program must submit a current (within one year) medical statement approved by the Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC). Each scuba training agency recognized by the BSA requires a specific health history form prior to enrollment in a certification program. The BSA requires review and approval of the completed form by a physician even if the scuba agency itself does not require physician approval. Various risk factors identified on the forms may exclude a person from scuba training, either temporarily or permanently. Risk factors include but are not limited to ear and sinus problems, recent surgery, spontaneous pneumothorax, asthma or reactive airway disease (RAD), seizure disorders, diabetes, leukemia, sickle-cell disorder, pregnancy, panic disorders, and active psychosis.
- L. The divemaster or instructor supervising the program must review the BSA annual health and medical record and the RSTC Diver Medical Participant

Questionnaire and evaluate risk conditions using medical standards consistent with those used by their certifying agency and the BSA, whichever is more stringent. Either the divemaster/instructor or the camp health officer may disapprove a participant for a scuba activity but only the divemaster/instructor may approve a participant for a scuba activity.

Scuba diving is prohibited for people with the following conditions:

- Participants with a history of seizures or epilepsy unless allowed under the BSA Scuba Policy
- Individuals with diabetes or similar conditions, unless well-controlled and allowed under the BSA Scuba Policy
- History of asthma or RAD unless resolution is confirmed in accordance with the BSA Scuba Policy
- Participants with ADD, ADHD, anxiety and depression, or related conditions requiring any medication unless allowed under the BSA Scuba Policy
- Any person with conditions listed as “severe” by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society.

M. All scuba programming is accomplished within the standards and guidelines of BSA recognized agencies and the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) scuba policy.

Recognized agencies are:

- Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI)
- National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI)
- Scuba Schools International (SSI)
- International Diving Educators Association (IDEA)
- Professional Diving Instructors Corporation (PDIC)
- Scuba Diving International (SDI/TDI)
- YMCA Scuba Program (discontinued in 2008, but certification cards are still recognized)
- National Association of Scuba Diving Schools (NASDS; merged with SSI, but certification cards are still recognized)
- International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers (IANTD)
- Rebreather Association of International Divers (RAID)
- Scuba and Nitrox Safety International (SNSI)
- National Academy of Scuba Educators (NASE)

In addition to the agencies listed by name, any current member of the World Recreational Scuba Training Council (WRSTC), which includes all RSTC members, is also recognized.

## Applies to:

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# AQUATICS: SCUBA PROGRAMS

PS-203

(Effective January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

## VERIFICATION:

- Review of certifications
- Review of provision of cylinders to ensure in accordance with standard
- Assurance that proper health forms are collected and reviewed by scuba instructor or divemaster
- Evidence that certifying agency is on approved list

## REFERENCES:

- UHMS Diving Medical Guidance to the Physician (current edition), available at [www.uhms.org/](http://www.uhms.org/)

**STANDARD:**

If offered, COPE or climbing programs are operated safely and in compliance with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America, Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Standards, and other governing jurisdiction regulations.

**Applies to:**

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

## A. Program Equipment

1. All specialized equipment needed for conducting a safe COPE and/or climbing program must be available to participants and staff members and approved by a qualified person. Personal climbing helmets and harnesses may be used if inspected and approved by the on-site Level II instructor or director. All equipment and cordage must be used, inspected, and retired according to the manufacturer's recommendations. In the absence of a manufacturer's recommendation, all soft goods must be retired no more than 10 years from the date of purchase.
2. Each participant and staff member in the fall zone of a climbing site or COPE high-course site must wear a rock-climbing helmet. Observation areas for onlookers must be outside of the fall zone.
3. An inventory of all cordage and rope used in the program must be kept, including: (a) manufacture date, (b) purchase date, (c) in-service date, and (d) any unusual or environmental or mechanical stress. All rope and cordage must be uniquely marked, permanently identified, and traceable in the inventory.
4. Equipment is retired according to the manufacturer's recommendations for inspection or age. In the absence of a manufacturer's retirement recommendation, all soft goods must be retired no more than 10 years from the date of purchase.
5. Staff members inspect all program equipment before and after each use and are taught how to inspect equipment for defects that render equipment unsafe for use. Disposal of retired equipment is done in such a way that it cannot be used for life safety systems.
6. When not being used, equipment must be kept in locked, protected storage, away from exposure to sunlight, heat, moisture, chemicals, and destruction or contamination by animals.

# COPE AND/OR CLIMBING PROGRAMS

PS-206

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

- B. Participant Requirements. Participation in COPE and climbing activities shall comply with the Age-Appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities available in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). Additionally, program staff shall ensure that all participants have adequate maturity to participate in the activities.
- C. Program Operation
1. All COPE and climbing staff use written procedures for:
    - Opening and closing the program site
    - Conducting a site and safety orientation before the program activity
    - Safety during program operation
    - Equipment use
    - Disabling or limiting access to program sites
  2. No participant is ever coerced or pressured into attempting an activity. A participant may be encouraged to take the next small step, but the final choice of participation and performance is left entirely up to the individual.
  3. The technique of spotting is explained, demonstrated, and practiced before any activity requiring that skill.
  4. Prior to any activity using life safety systems, participants are trained in:
    - Proper belaying technique
    - Backup belay technique
    - Belay transfers
    - Signal use
    - CHECK or equivalent procedure
    - Equipment use
  5. The Level II instructor or director determines if a participant's safety might be compromised by course conditions, staffing, weather or any other factor, and is empowered to open and close the COPE or climbing program. Staff members are trained to monitor environmental conditions and their effect on participants during challenge activities. Alternative weather-appropriate activities should be available.
  6. All participants are top-roped when climbing. When transferring from one belay system to another, a consistent process is used to ensure

that the new belay attachment is secure before the old system is disconnected. All rappelling participants use an acceptable rappel belay method.

7. Only trained COPE and climbing staff may climb using lobster claws or similar tether systems to self-belay above the anchor, such as during a staple climb. Load-limiting or fall-arresting devices shall be used in these situations.
8. Measures are in place to provide for the safety of everyone at the program site, including observers. Everyone must be belayed or tethered when within 8 feet of an edge where a fall of more than 6 feet could occur. All zip line staff who are working on launch or landing areas where the staff member can come in contact with a moving participant must be tethered.
9. A consistent process is used by all COPE and climbing staff to ensure that clothing, head protection, environment, connections, and knots are double-checked in any belayed events for staff members and participants. This requirement must also be followed by staff at all times, including setup and takedown of life safety systems.
10. Written incident resolution plans identifying likely emergencies, including rescues, and procedures for resolving them are reviewed with COPE and climbing staff members and rehearsed annually. Plans must address emergency access (see Standard AO-805).
11. At least one person at the program site must have a valid certificate of training in first aid and American Red Cross Adult CPR/AED training or equivalent, and be physically present whenever the program is in operation. If the program site is more than 60 minutes away from emergency medical services (EMS), then a person trained to a minimum level of wilderness first aid must be present on the program site.
12. Rescue equipment and medical supplies appropriate for likely incidents must be on-site and accessible when the program is in operation, and at least one person must be trained in the use of all supplies.

#### D. Temporary Anchor Systems

1. All temporary anchor systems must provide such a strength as to limit potential falls and the load must be equalized across multiple anchor points. Anchors are placed to provide the most effective protection for both the climber and the belay.

#### Applies to:

**Camp properties**

**Day camp**

**Short-term camp**

**Long-term camp**

# COPE AND/OR CLIMBING PROGRAMS

PS-206

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

2. Trees used as anchor points in an anchor system must be well-rooted, healthy, at least 6 inches in diameter at the point of attachment, and protected from damage.

## INTERPRETATION:

A COPE course is defined as any challenge elements that are part of a challenge course program and artificial climbing structures. Climbing and rappelling programs include natural rock sites and artificial climbing structures. These standards apply to all COPE and climbing activities that are operated by councils and/or their districts at any location and any time of the year. Scouting units wishing to conduct climbing programs should consult the Climb On Safety guidelines and [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). Unit leaders must take Climb On Safety training (available online at [scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org)) prior to taking their units on climbing activities.

Scout camp structures such as monkey bridges, obstacle courses, and pioneering towers are expected to meet safety standards in equipment and supervision comparable to COPE but are not subject to COPE and climbing standards under these conditions, do not require professional inspection, and do not require an onsite COPE Level II instructor or director. Councils may find their COPE and climbing committee to be a valuable resource for writing operating procedures and providing training for staff who supervise these activities.

**Soft goods:** Rope, webbing, cordage, helmets, harnesses, slings, etc.

**Life safety systems:** Life safety systems are generally required where a fall of more than 6 feet could occur. Some low COPE course elements such as “The Wall” may have a fall potential of more than 6 feet. Proper spotting techniques or life safety systems may be acceptable practices on these elements.

**Proper belaying technique:** Belayer’s position must be in direct line with a potential fall and allow for no slack between the anchor point, if used, and the belayer. Horizontal traversing elements require either a movable dynamic belay system with a belay team or a static belay system using an observer. **Back up belay is required.** In rare, natural area, instances where there is not enough space for a backup belayer, using trained belayers to belay with an assisted-braking device or hitch is allowed. (Artificial climbing surfaces or elements that do not allow for a backup belay should be redesigned or their operating procedures modified to meet this requirement.)

**Acceptable rappel belay methods:** Rigged using a releasable rappel or other belay system that allows participants to be quickly and safely lowered if the rappel device becomes jammed.

- Recommended: Double-line rappel with an independent belay line
- Recommended: Single-line rappel with an independent belay line
- Acceptable: Double-line rappel with a fireman's belay
- Acceptable: Single-line rappel with a fireman's belay

Some activities employ life safety provisions similar to COPE or climbing (e.g., caving, canyoneering, ice climbing, via ferratas, spar pole climbing, etc.), and may involve the use of equipment and/or techniques that are not covered in typical BSA instructor training. Staff members must consult with experts familiar with and trained in the use of this equipment and these techniques prior to implementing the program. Specific training and assessment for instructors operating these programs must be documented prior to operating these programs.

### VERIFICATION:

- Observation of procedures in practice with participants
- Evaluation of program documents (may be submitted with declaration):
  - Equipment record/inventory
  - Daily orientation and operating procedures
  - Plans for likely emergencies

### REFERENCES:

- Many states regulate some or all COPE elements and may require permits. See Standard AO-801.
- Staffing requirements are set forth in SQ-409.
- Facilities requirements are set forth in FA-715.
- Additional information on COPE and Climbing programs may be found in *Belay On!*, No. 300-530.

### Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp



# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## STANDARD:

If offered, the camp operates a safe, age-appropriate firearms shooting sports program.

## Applies to:

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. Shooting is confined to approved ranges. Each range is designed in accordance with guidelines at [www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/shooting-sports/](http://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/shooting-sports/) which provides examples of approved range layouts.
- B. Age-appropriate restrictions on firearms used:
  1. Tigers, Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts may use BB guns in council-operated programs.
  2. At long-term camp only, Webelos Scouts may use pellet rifles on a council-operated range meeting the requirements of paragraph A of this standard.
  3. Scouts BSA members may use BB guns, pellet rifles, .22-caliber rimfire, bolt-action rifles, shotguns, and muzzle-loading rifles. If magazines are used, range commands must include “magazines out after firing all your shots” to ensure the firing line is safe after shots are fired, if repeaters are used.
  4. Venturing youth, Sea Scouts, and Scouts BSA members who are 14 years of age or older, or are 13 and have completed the eighth grade may participate in the Scouting pistol safety and marksmanship program.
  5. Venturing youth and Sea Scouts may use BB guns; pellet rifles; any cartridge-firing rifle with open, scope, or dot sights; shotguns; pistols; and muzzle-loading rifles, muzzle-loading shotguns, and muzzle-loading pistols.
- C. Safe, age-appropriate equipment is maintained in good repair. Firearms modified to fit the size of the shooters are desirable:
  1. Bolt-action .22-caliber rifles used in BSA shooting sports must have a trigger pull in excess of 3 pounds and are tested with a 3-pound weight or scale at least once a week while in use. If any mechanism fails, the firearm is immediately removed from service. Test documentation is maintained.
  2. All pellet rifles (CO<sub>2</sub>, pump, break barrel, etc.) are limited to single-shot, designated for target shooting, velocity of 500 to 540 feet per second, with a minimum of 2.5 pound trigger pull. Pellet rifle propellant is limited to CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders or air compressor/scuba tanks. If scuba

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

PS-214

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

tanks are used, each tank must be labeled appropriately, visually inspected annually, and hydrostatically tested every five years by a qualified technician. Refilling of scuba tanks used for shooting sports only is conducted by qualified adults with appropriate controls. Scuba tanks used for shooting sports purposes may not be used for scuba purposes.

3. Use of approved shooting safety glasses and ear protection is required for all shooters and instructors. Ear protection is not required for BB guns and air rifles. All personal protective equipment and standard operating procedures required pursuant to Specific Requirement D shall be followed at all times the program is in operation.
  4. Safe, separate, and locked storage (can be the same building) is provided for firearms, ammunition, and CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders and bulk tanks.
  5. Qualified supervision (see SQ-407) and appropriate ratio of adult coach/instructor to youth participants is present at all times.
  6. Ready access to communication and first aid is required.
- D. Prior to initiating the program in Specific Requirements E, F, G, or H, the council has convened a task force to review all local, state, and federal guidelines; age restrictions; licensing and/or certification courses; equipment and personal protective equipment standards, and any other standards recommended by the original equipment manufacturer or other governing body; costs; risks to participant and staff safety; impact on other camp programs; and impacts on the camp environment. This task force must complete a risk and safety review consistent with Standard PD-111 and ensure that the program conforms to BSA's [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). Appropriate standard operating procedures must be developed. The complete program, including standard operating procedures, must be specifically named and approved pursuant to Standard PD-112.
- E. Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program. Instruction shall follow the *Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program Instructor Syllabus* as written. No sections shall be moved or changed. Participant range instruction must occur in the order assigned in the syllabus.
1. Each youth participant shall be provided a copy of *Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship* for the course. It is recommended that each youth take this copy with them as a reference for safety and maintenance of pistols at the conclusion of the course.

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

2. Only one type of pistol action shall be demonstrated and used per course session.
  3. Only .22-caliber handguns are authorized for this program.
  4. The council must submit the Shooting Sports Application to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of the application identifying that the council will operate this program.
- F. Cowboy Action Shooting Program. Instruction shall follow the appropriate guide in the appendix of the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938.
1. Before moving to the shooting positions, each participant shall participate in a cowboy action shooting safety briefing using the outline in *BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide*, No. 530-318 (2016), Appendix 4.
  2. The course of fire must be clearly explained during the safety briefing so that the participants understand what they are to do at each station and when and where they are to move. No variation from the course of fire is allowed.
  3. Each youth participant shall be assisted by an instructor at each shooting position.
  4. No variation in the course of fire is authorized during any session. Different courses of fire consistent with the *BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide* may be used at different sessions.
  5. Only .22-caliber handguns, bolt-action or lever action .22 rifles, and 12- or 20-gauge shotguns are authorized for this program. Only council-maintained firearms and ammunition shall be used.
  6. In addition to Specific Requirement A, each cowboy action shooting range is designed in accordance with Appendix 2 of the *BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide*, No. 530-318 (2016). Each shooting position shall have a "red" ready line behind each shooting position.
  7. The instructor responsible for each shooting position shall load the firearms prior to the participant arriving. Participants shall not load the firearms in this program.
  8. The council must submit the Shooting Sports Application to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of the application identifying that the council will operate this program.
- G. Chalk Ball Programs. Venturers, Sea Scouts, and Scouts BSA members may participate in the chalk ball program. Instruction shall follow the

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

PS-214

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

program guidelines outlined in the Chalk Ball Program guide in the BSA *Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938.

1. Pointing any type of firearm or simulated firearm at any individual is prohibited. Participants shall shoot at targets that are neither living nor human representations.
2. Before moving to the shooting positions, each participant shall participate in a safety briefing using the outline in the BSA *Chalk Ball Program Guide*, No. 530-317 (2016), Appendix 4.
3. The trail and rules of the trail must be clearly explained during the safety briefing so that the participants understand what they are to do at each station and when and where they are to move. No variation from the trail and its defined shooting areas is allowed.
4. No variation in the trail and stations is authorized during any session. Different trails and stations consistent with the BSA *Chalk Ball Program Guide* may be used at different sessions.
5. Range staff must accompany the participants along the trail and at each station. Range staff shall carry the markers in a box between shooting stations; they will also carry the markers between shooting positions.
6. Only paintball markers using chalk balls or paintballs are authorized for this program. The camp will need an adequate number of chalk ball containers (15 recommended) and targets (10 metal targets and six cowbell targets recommended). Only council-maintained equipment and chalk balls or paintballs shall be used.
7. The camp will need a supplier/vendor to refill 20-ounce CO<sub>2</sub> canisters. Alternatively, the camp will need an approved CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder (two 50-pound cylinders are recommended) and several 20-ounce CO<sub>2</sub> canisters (a minimum of eight is recommended). If the alternative is chosen, the camp must follow training and safety requirements outlined in its risk review (see Specific Requirement D).
8. The Laporte throwing system and Flashball<sup>®</sup> program, or any program shooting a flying target, are not authorized under this Standard.
9. Each range is designed in accordance with Appendix 2 of the BSA *Chalk Ball Program Guide*. A “red” ready line shall be placed behind each shooting position.
10. Each chalk ball course shall have a radio or telephone, a first-aid kit, and adequate eye protection for the number of participants. Each

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

pair of safety glasses must be cleaned before a new participant uses it.

11. The council must submit the Shooting Sports Application to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of the application identifying that the council will operate this program.
- H. Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Program. Venturers, Sea Scouts, and Scouts BSA members may participate in the multi-gun airsoft experience program. The program shall follow the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide*, No. 510-316. This guide can be found in the appendix of the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938.
1. Only airsoft guns and accessories listed in Appendix 7 of the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide* are permitted. All airsoft guns must be obtained from an approved supplier listed in Appendix 6.
  2. Fully automatic operation of airsoft guns is not authorized. All guns must be set to semiautomatic or single shot position. A gun that fires multiple airsoft pellets at a trigger pull, but does not continue to fire, is not considered fully automatic.
  3. Each range is designed in accordance with the section "Airsoft Range Layout" and Appendices 8 and 9 of the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide*. Each shooting position shall have a ready line and a control line behind each ready line. The coach and instructor must be able to see all areas at all times.
  4. Each range shall have a radio or telephone, a first-aid kit, and an adequate number of safety glasses for the number of participants.

## INTERPRETATION:

A .22-caliber rimfire, bolt-action rifle is defined as either (1) a breech-loading, single-shot, bolt-action rifle or (2) a repeater bolt action rifle with a box magazine. Tubular, extended, or high-capacity magazines are not allowed. Trigger pull will be in excess of 3 pounds.

A pistol is defined as: (1) .177-caliber air pistol with at least or in excess of a 2.5-pound trigger pull; open, scope, or dot sights; air, CO<sub>2</sub>, or precharged pneumatic; or (2) a cartridge-firing pistol with a minimum of a 3-pound trigger pull; open, scope, or dot sights.

It is recommended that 20-, 16-, or 12-gauge semiautomatic shotguns be used.

The council should specify whether it will allow personal equipment and, if so, under what conditions, in its literature. Consult the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938, for additional guidance.

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS PROGRAMS

PS-214

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

The current *Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program Syllabus* is available at the BSA Advanced Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Class.

Paintballs are authorized as an alternative to chalk balls under Specific Requirement G.

## VERIFICATION:

- Observation of procedures in practice.
- Review of the Shooting Sports Application, the council's Standard PD-112 risk-and-safety review, and standard operating procedures and compliance with cited manuals and guides—if programs pursuant to Specific Requirements E, F, G, or H are offered.
- Review of course operation consistency with the FIRST Steps Syllabus and standard operating procedures.
- Verification of age, equipment, and permission slip controls.

## REFERENCES:

Staffing standards are set forth in Standard SQ-407. Sample standard operating procedures are available in Appendix of the BSA *Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938.

Find Shooting Sports program details at

[www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/shooting-sports/](http://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/shooting-sports/)

# CAMP STAFF QUALIFICATION: GENERAL

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## STANDARD:

- A. All camp staff are registered members of the Boy Scouts of America. All other camp personnel either are registered members of the Boy Scouts of America or meet alternative criteria pursuant to Standard PD-109.**
- 1. Long-term camp youth staff and personnel 17 and under must complete a youth application using Code 68 even if registered in another capacity.**
  - 2. Long-term camp adult staff and personnel must complete an adult application using Code 49 even if registered in another capacity.**
  - 3. Long-term camp staff and personnel at a National High Adventure Base must complete an adult application using Code E3 or a youth application using Code NCSY, even if the adult or youth is registered in another capacity.**
- B. Long-term camp employees must be 15 years of age or older, except lifeguards for swimming activities other than in swimming pools must be 16 years of age. Trek and adventure program and activity employees must be 16 years of age or older. Long-term camp counselors-in-training (CITs) and day camp staff must be 14 years of age or older.**
- C. The camp complies with all federal and state child labor laws. (Federal child labor laws set a limit of eight hours per day that a paid worker 15 years of age or younger may work. Minors (14 or 15 years of age) cannot perform hazardous duty, such as working on or operating a motor vehicle and maintenance and operation of power-driven equipment.)**
- D. The camp complies with all federal and state labor laws. This may include a seasonal camp staff application, a letter of agreement along with a written position description and having access to a camp staff manual prior to starting work.**
- E. If present, international camp staff members must be 18 years of age or older, have been approved by the BSA International Department, and may not hold any camp staff position for which National Camping School training is mandatory. International youth visitors/guests or volunteers may not serve on camp staff. Please visit the State Department's list of Camp Counselor Designated Sponsors to find an organization that can assist you in hiring an international camp counselor once BSA International Department approval has been obtained.**

## Applies to:

Day camp

Long-term  
camp

# CAMP STAFF QUALIFICATION: GENERAL

(Revised January 1, 2023)

SQ-401

## Applies to:

Day camp

Long-term  
camp

### STANDARD (continued):

- F. The complete, approved uniform is worn by camp staff during formal ceremonies such as campfires, evening meals, retreats, etc., as determined by the council. A staff shirt with uniform shorts/pants may be approved informal staff attire.
- G. The camp has a staff organization chart and a policy specifying minimum staff requirements.

### INTERPRETATION:

Camp staff and personnel must be registered each year using Code 68, 49, or NCSY as appropriate. For purposes of the National Camp Standards:

- *Camp staff* includes all personnel, paid or volunteer, working under the direction of the council or camp management, who interact with camp participants. Camp staff includes employees, CITs, and continuing volunteers (e.g., camp commissioners, volunteers asked by the camp management to assist program on an ongoing basis).
- *Camp personnel* includes all other personnel, working under the direction of the council or camp management or by contractors working at the camp, who do not typically interact with camp participants as part of their assigned duties. Examples might include kitchen staff, commissary or warehouse staff, or ranger staff without program responsibilities.
- Camp staff and camp personnel do not include (1) third parties who come on-site to offer a program to camp participants, are accompanied by camp staff while present, and do not remain on-site overnight; and (2) parents and volunteers in day camps and who assist in program while staff are present and provide supervision. In any camp, an unsupervised volunteer must meet the requirements for camp staff.
- Day camp den chiefs may be under the age of 14 only if they are serving as a den chief for the same Cub Scout/Webelos den they serve in the local pack.
- Scouts BSA members under the age of 14 may volunteer to help at day camp if under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, or troop leader. However, they are not considered staff members.
- The camp staff manual should include such items as the staff organization chart, position descriptions, purpose and philosophy of camp, policies and regulations, unacceptable behavior, dress code, and other stipulations of the council.

# CAMP STAFF QUALIFICATION: GENERAL

(Revised January 1, 2023)

- Formal and informal staff uniform requirements are consistent for all staff in camp, depending on duties. Theme-based costumes are an acceptable substitute for themed-camp programs. Consistent with the methods of Scouting, the official BSA uniform is used where appropriate as determined by the council.
- The staff organization chart should clearly define the chain of command. The camp has a policy specifying which key staff members cannot be out of camp at the same time. The camp has a policy specifying the minimum number of staff members who must be present in camp at all times.

## VERIFICATION:

- Sample staff application and letter of agreement. Copies of position descriptions and camp staff manual (may be submitted with declaration).
- Camp staff organization chart indicating chain of command. Policy regarding key staff in camp requirements and minimum number of staff required in camp at all times (may be submitted with declaration).
- Observation—uniform, staff manual, signed agreements at long-term and day camps as required.

## Applies to:

Day camp

Long-term  
camp



**STANDARD:**

Medical care is under the direction of the council health supervisor, who is a currently licensed physician practicing medicine in the state in which the camp is located. The camp health officer is at least 18 years of age, lives on-site, is on property and on call at all times, and holds qualifications appropriate for the nature of the camp and its proximity to emergency medical care.

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. When access to an emergency medical system (EMS) is 10 minutes or less, American Red Cross Standard First Aid and CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers, or equivalents, are required.
- B. When access to EMS is greater than 10 minutes, the camp health officer must be one of the following:
  - a. Licensed physician
  - b. Licensed nurse practitioner
  - c. Nurse (RN, LPN, or LVN). Nurse's aides, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), and assistants do not qualify.
  - d. Licensed physician assistants
  - e. Paramedic
  - f. Emergency medical technician (basic, intermediate, or paramedic)
  - g. Emergency medical responder, i.e., current state license from the state in which the camp is located or current Nationally Certified First Responder listed on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians ([www.nremt.org](http://www.nremt.org)) or, until 2017, eligible for certification on the National Registry.
- C. When access to emergency medical services (EMS) is greater than 60 minutes, the camp health officer must additionally have a current certification in American Red Cross Wilderness and Remote First Aid, Emergency Care and Safety Institute Wilderness First Aid, or equivalent.
- D. The camp health officer has completed the Camp Health Officer's Training Course.

**Applies to:****Camp properties****Day camp****Short-term camp****Long-term camp**

# CAMP HEALTH OFFICER

SQ-405

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

## INTERPRETATION:

EMS service includes both Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) services.

An emergency medical responder is an individual who either has a current license as an emergency medical responder from the state in which the camp is located or is currently a Nationally Certified First Responder listed on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians ([www.nremt.org](http://www.nremt.org)).

For day camps and short-term camps, the requirement that the camp health officer “lives on-site, is on property and on call at all times” is met if the camp health officer is on property and on call at all times that any staff or participants are present on property.

When the camp health officer is unavailable, another adult at least 18 years of age with a current and appropriate level of first-aid training (see standard above) is available, or emergency coverage is available within 10 minutes, as provided in the standard.

For camps that do not have a base camp but operate solely in a trek environment, the camp health officer does not need to live on-site but must be on call at all times. The on-trek medical support is provided by trek staff and participant training as provided in standards PS-218.B and SQ-410.D. Reasonable provision should be made for trek staff to contact the camp health officer in case of need.

## VERIFICATION:

- Documentation of age
- Description of camp program and camp health officer qualification requirements
- Statement from EMS provider as to response time or Google maps or Mapquest printout showing response time to nearest EMS
- Relevant certificates on file

All may be submitted with the declaration.

## REFERENCES:

The Camp Health Officer’s Training Course is located at [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org)

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## STANDARD:

The firearms and throwing sports programs and each range must be adequately supervised by qualified persons.

## Applies to:

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. *Program supervision.* The firearms program is supervised by a shooting sports director, at least 21 years of age, who holds a valid certificate of training from the Shooting Sports section of National Camping School, unless as noted below.
1. The shooting sports director must hold current National Camping School and NRA instructor credentials in each firearm discipline (rifle [also includes pellets and BBs], shotgun, muzzleloading, and pistol) offered at the camp.
  2. For long-term camps, the shooting sports director must be in camp when any firearms range is in use.
  3. An NCS-trained shooting sports director is not required if the camp **only offers** a BB, chalk ball, pellet rifles or airsoft program and no other firearms shooting sports program.
  4. If an individual trained as a BSA shooting sports director is not available, the camp may be granted a waiver so that the shooting sports program may be operated for one season only by currently certified instructors from military, law enforcement, or 4-H, or NRA instructors for the discipline in which they hold such certification. Evidence of certification shall include a current military range control card, law enforcement instructor credentials from the NRA or state certifying entity, 4-H instructor credentials and/or NRA civilian (other than LE) instructor credentials.
- B. *Range supervision.* At all times a firearms range at a camp is in operation, one or more qualified persons shall be present at the range who meet the requirements in the Firearms Range Supervision Chart (next page) applicable to the firearms being used. The range supervisor is responsible for safety and adherence to all applicable standards, policies and procedures.

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

SQ-407

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

### Firearms Range Supervision Chart

	Camp and Range Type	Range Supervision Required	Alternate Supervision Option (Requires waiver)
1	Day camp, Short-term camp, Long-term camp: BB range	<p>Range Supervision Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BB gun rangemaster at least 18 years old (BB gun rangemaster certification course instructed by NCS shooting sports director)</li> <li>• NCS shooting sports director</li> <li>• NRA Rifle Instructor**</li> <li>• Certified Military shooting instructor**</li> <li>• Certified Law Enforcement Shooting Instructor **</li> <li>• Certified 4-H Shooting Instructor**</li> </ul> <p>*BB gun range programs do not require an NCS shooting sports director to be on site. See A.3. **These individuals also must review Cub Scout shooting sports section of the BSA <i>Shooting Sports Manual</i> and be familiar with Cub Scout shooting sports if program is offered to Cub Scouts.</p>	None
2	Day camp, Short-term camp, Long-term camp: Pellet range  *This program is for Webelos, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting  *Webelos program limited to long-term camp ONLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCS shooting sports director</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRA Rifle Instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rifle instructor from military, law enforcement, 4-H in the discipline offered</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) or equivalent RSO from one of the above institutions</li> </ul>
3	Long-term camp: All disciplines other than BB or pellet  Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCS shooting sports director with current NRA instructor credentials for the discipline offered at the range</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRA instructor with current credentials for the discipline offered at the range</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructor for the discipline being offered from military, law enforcement, 4-H</li> </ul>
4	Short-term camp: All disciplines other than BB or pellet  Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCS shooting sports director with current NRA instructor credentials for the discipline offered at the range</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range Supervision requires two separate individuals:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NRA instructor for the discipline being offered AND</li> <li>- NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructor for the discipline being offered from military, law enforcement, 4-H</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) or equivalent RSO from one of the above institutions</li> </ul>
5	Short-term camp: Webelos Pellet Range	PROGRAM NOT AUTHORIZED FOR THIS CAMP TYPE	None
6	Day camp: Webelos Pellet Range	PROGRAM NOT AUTHORIZED FOR THIS CAMP TYPE	None
7	Day camp: All disciplines other than BB or pellet  Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCS shooting sports director with current NRA instructor credentials for the discipline offered at the range</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range Supervision requires two separate individuals:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NRA instructor for the discipline being offered AND</li> <li>- NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructor for the discipline being offered from military, law enforcement, 4-H</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) or equivalent RSO from one of the above institutions</li> </ul>

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

- C. *Firearms range instructor ratios.* (Except as provided in Specific Requirements D through H.)
1. When loading or firing rifles, pellet guns, or BB guns, there is a ratio of one qualified instructor per eight participants (1:8 instructor to participant ratio). For each additional eight participants, or fraction thereof, the minimum requirement is an 18-year-old or older instructor trained by the shooting sports director using at a minimum the NRA FIRST Steps three-hour training (for rifle and pellet guns) or the BB rangemaster training for BB guns in the BSA *Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938 as applicable.
  2. When loading or firing shotguns or muzzleloaders, there is a ratio of one qualified instructor per participant (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio).
  3. For Venturing/Sea Scout pistol ranges, the ratio is one qualified instructor per two participants (1:2 instructor-to-participant ratio).
  4. The firearms range supervisor (see paragraph B above) at a long-term camp only or the BB gun range master at a BB gun range may serve as one of the instructors for purposes of the instructor-to-participant ratios in this standard.
- D. **Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program instructor and range supervision requirements (Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouts only)**
1. Each instructor must be an NRA-certified pistol instructor.
  2. At least two individuals holding the Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship certification must be on the range at all times. One individual acts as the chief instructor and the other individual acts as the Range Safety Officer.
  3. Only an instructor holding a current Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program certification may serve as lead instructor for the classroom portion of the course and shall present the material. The other NRA-certified pistol instructors may assist participants but may not present material.
  4. Only a Range Safety Officer (RSO) holding the Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program certificate may serve as the range supervisor/Range Safety Officer (RSO) for this program. This individual may not serve as an instructor for purposes of the instructor-to-participant ratio. No more than six participants shall be supervised by the range supervisor/Range Safety Officer (RSO).

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

SQ-407

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

5. The instructor-to-participant ratio when on the range working with the firearms in this program is one qualified NRA-certified pistol instructor to every two participants (1:2 instructor-to-participant ratio).

### E. Cowboy Action Shooting program instructor and range supervision requirements

1. Each shooting position will have a qualified NRA-certified pistol, rifle, or shotgun instructor, depending on the firearm at the shooting position. *Note: An NCS shooting sports director may also serve as instructor if they are certified in the firearm discipline(s) being used at the shooting position.*
2. The instructor-to-participant ratio when on the range working with the firearms in this program is one instructor to every one participant, regardless of the firearm discipline (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio).
3. The range supervisor must hold a current NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) certification.

### F. Chalk Ball program instructor requirements

1. The chalk ball trail/course shall be under the supervision of an NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO).
2. The instructor-to-participant ratio when on the range working with chalkball is one instructor to every one participant (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio).

### G. Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience instructor requirements

1. Each bay in a multi-gun airsoft experience must be supervised by an airsoft instructor, who must be a BSA BB-gun range master, a BSA shooting sports director, or an NRA instructor, and all of whom also require an airsoft endorsement. An airsoft endorsement may be granted by the local Scout executive (or designee) if the requirements from the appropriate guide in the appendix of the *Shooting Sports Manual, Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide* are met. The endorsement is evidenced by a certification valid for two years.
2. The instructor-to-participant ratio when on the range working with multi-gun airsoft is one instructor to every one participant (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio). It is recommended that each bay also have a coach who is an individual authorized by the airsoft instructor. If there is no coach, the airsoft instructor shall perform the duties of coach.

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Effective January 1, 2023)

## H. Slingshot and throwing sports instructor requirements

1. The slingshot program must be supervised a BSA BB-gun range master or an NRA rifle instructor.
  - a. The adult-to-participant ratio when on the range working with slingshots is one adult to every one Cub Scout participant (1:1 adult-to-participant ratio) and one adult to four for every Scouts BSA and older participant. Note these adults need not be BB gun range masters for adult to participant ratio requirements.
2. *Throwing Sports requirements:* All other throwing sports programs such as tomahawks and throwing knives must be operated in accordance with the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) and *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938.

## INTERPRETATION:

The **program supervisor** is the individual responsible for supervising the camp's firearms program. The program supervisor must be an NCS shooting sports director for a long-term camp, day camp, or short-term camp that offers a firearms program. For a long-term camp only, the shooting sports director must be at the camp at any time the firearms program is operating. For day camps and short-term camps, the shooting sports director does not need to be at camp as long as the director has reviewed and approved the program and staffing. An NCS shooting sports director is NOT required for those camps that only offer a BB gun, chalk ball, pellet rifle or airsoft program or a throwing sports program.

A shooting sports director shall hold a current NCS shooting sports certification. In addition, the shooting sports director shall have current NRA certifications as an instructor in each discipline supervised (rifle, including pellet and BB guns; muzzle loading; shotgun; and/or pistol). A camp may use multiple shooting sports directors to meet this requirement. The camp staff plan shall detail which NCS shooting sports director supervises which programs and this shall be made available to the camp assessment team. A waiver by rule is available under the conditions set forth in Specific Requirement A.4. An NCS shooting sports director may also serve as a range supervisor if they are physically present on the range and have a current NRA instructor card for the firearms being used.

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# TARGET AND RANGE SPORTS: FIREARMS AND THROWING SPORTS

(Revised January 1, 2023)

SQ-407

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

The **range supervisor** is the individual or individuals responsible for supervising a specific firearms range. A range supervisor must be a current NRA instructor in the firearms used at the range (e.g., rifle, shotgun, pistol). A range supervisor must be present at all times the range is in operation. The program supervisor may serve as a range supervisor if they are physically present on the range and have a current NRA instructor card for the firearms being used on the range.

Shooting at camp properties other than as part of a camp subject to this Standard must meet the requirements of the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). The [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) requires different supervision outside of the supervised camp environment.

Information on obtaining the Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program training certification may be obtained from Outdoor Programs or NCAP.

For the multi-gun airsoft experience, the instructor must hold a current airsoft endorsement. An NRA RSO is not considered a qualifying certification because the training differs from that of an NRA instructor.

## VERIFICATION:

- Documentation of age
- Relevant BSA and NRA certificates on file (may be submitted with declaration). Note that BSA, NRA, and USAA certificates have different validity periods. **All certifications must be checked for currency.** An NCS shooting sports certification requires at least one currently effective NRA instructor certification to be valid.
- Observation of program implementation

## REFERENCES:

Additional recommendations for operating a shooting sports program are found in the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*.

## STANDARD:

All adventure program and activity leaders and staff shall have appropriate age, experience, and training to safely operate a quality program.

## Applies to:

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

A. **Adventure Programs.** The staff member responsible for day-to-day operation of an adventure program must be at least 21 years of age and hold a current certificate of training from the National Camping School or equivalent training approved in this standard, a variance, or an Authorization to Operate.

1. A swimming-based aquatics adventure program leader must meet Standard SQ-406, Specific Requirement A and have specific training provided in the adventure.
2. A boating-based aquatics adventure program leader must meet Standard SQ-406, Specific Requirement A and:
  - a. If canoeing, appropriate training from the American Canoe Association, or equivalent
  - b. If whitewater canoeing, kayaking, or rafting, appropriate training for the class of water and type of craft from the American Canoe Association or American Whitewater or completion of state or other agency licensing requirements for professional whitewater guides
  - c. If large boat, training satisfying the requirements of Standard PS-202.
3. A COPE or climbing-based adventure program or activity must meet the staffing requirements of Standard SQ-409. If Standard SQ-409 is not appropriate, a variance must be sought.
4. A mountaineering-based adventure activity leader must have trek leader training if only backpacking is involved. If off-trail mountaineering is included, the adventure activity leader must have Philmont Ranger Training or Alpine Guide course from the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA), or equivalent.
5. A winter-based adventure activity leader must have Okpik or Kanik training or Alpine Guide course from the American Mountain Guides Association, or equivalent.
6. An ice-climbing activity program leader on an artificial ice structure must have specific ice-climbing training, experience and/or certification that could include AMGA, NOLS, EMS or similar. An ice-climbing activity program leader on natural ice must have specific ice-climbing training from AMGA or an national equivalency determination pursuant to Standard SA-005.

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

# ADVENTURE PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2023)

SQ-411

## Applies to:

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

7. A camp or council proposing an activity not clearly addressed above must apply for a variance for approval of its staff training plan.
8. Provision must be made for the NCAP Assessment Team to observe this activity.

### B. Adventure Activities.

1. Staff members supervising an adventure activity must be 18 years of age or older and have evidence of training in their area of responsibility consistent with that approved in this standard, a variance, or the Authorization to Operate.
2. Staff members supervising a swimming or boating adventure activity must meet the requirements of Standard SQ-406, Specific Requirement A or be under the supervision of a person meeting those requirements and meet the requirements of Standard SQ-406, Specific Requirement B.
3. Staff members supervising a COPE or Climbing adventure activity must meet the requirements of Standard SQ-409.

### C. Staff members accompanying a crew on an adventure program or activity must be trained by and under the supervision of a program leader meeting the requirements of Specific Requirement A and, if a trek program, a trek leader meeting the requirements of Standard SQ-410, or must meet those requirements themselves.

1. Staff members accompanying a crew on an aquatics-based adventure must also be trained in Safe Swim Defense and Swimming and Water Rescue, Safety Afloat and Paddlecraft Safety, or all of the above as appropriate.
2. Staff members accompanying a crew on a COPE or climbing-based adventure must meet Standard SQ-409.
3. A camp or council proposing an activity not clearly addressed above or seeking to vary from the training specific above must apply for a variance for approval of its staff training plan.

**INTERPRETATION:**

An adventure activity that meets the definition of a trek program must also meet Standard SQ-410. An adventure program or activity including a COPE and/or climbing course must also meet the requirements for COPE and/or climbing courses in Standards PS-206 and SQ-409.

Some activities employ life safety provisions similar to COPE or climbing (e.g., caving, canyoneering, ice climbing, via ferratas, spar pole climbing, etc.), and may involve the use of equipment and/or techniques that are not covered in typical BSA instructor training. Staff members should consult with experts familiar with and trained in the use of this equipment and these techniques prior to implementing the program. Specific training and assessment for instructors operating these programs must be documented prior to operating these programs.

**VERIFICATION:**

- Documentation of age
- Description of training/certifications held by staff leading specialty-adventure or high-adventure programs
- Variance and/or authorization approval for adventure training
- Relevant certificates on file (may be submitted with declaration)
- Observation of program implementation during visitation

**REFERENCES:**

- AMGA is the American Mountain Guides Association
- EMS is Eastern Mountain Sports
- NOLS is the National Outdoor Leadership School

**Applies to:****Short-term  
camp****Long-term  
camp**



(Revised January 1, 2023)

**STANDARD:**

Each camp will ensure that units participating in its program have adequate adult supervision.

**Applies to:**

Day camp

Short-term  
campLong-term  
camp**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. A unit leader has no other duties that would detract from responsibilities as the unit leader.
- B. **Minimum leadership requirements.**
1. The minimum leadership requirements for any Cub Scout unit attending long-term camp is a ratio of two adults to a maximum of eight youth and one additional adult for each four additional youth (or part thereof).
  2. The minimum leadership requirement for other unit-based camps and programs is two leaders with each unit as provided in BSA's Youth Protection Policies, including having one registered female adult, age 21 or older, in every unit serving female youth. If a unit cannot meet these standards, then the camp may arrange leadership.
- C. A camp that is not organized to provide service to BSA units, but rather to serve individuals, must provide for adequate adult supervision given the age of the youth and planned activities. Supervision can be provided by a combination of staff and volunteers so long as the National Camp Standards and BSA's Youth Protection Policies are met.

**INTERPRETATION:**

In cases of doubt, councils and camps are urged to seek a variance or letter of interpretation from the National Council confirming the appropriateness of proposed adult supervision arrangements for non-traditional camps.

**VERIFICATION:**

- Observation
- Discussion with camp director, staff members, and others

**REFERENCES:**

- BSA's Youth Protection Policies are available at:  
[www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/](http://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/)



# MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2023)

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

The camp has access to an appropriate support network to assist in responding to staff and camper mental, emotional, and social health (MESH) needs. This support network is approved by the council's health supervisor and reflected in the camp's on-site treatment procedures.

## INTERPRETATION:

An appropriate network is one that is supervised by a relevant mental health professional with network members operating under supervision. For long-term camps, camp leadership should be able to access the support network as needed, preferably including emergency access.

NCAP recommends that councils consider some level of staff training, a protocol for involvement of the MESH support network, and an in-camp response team that is trained to provide immediate support pending further direction from the support network.

RP-551 will become a standard within two to three years.

## VERIFICATION:

- Review of mental health network resources and discussion with camp leadership regarding engagement of these approved individuals.
- Review of written treatment procedures that includes mental health care needs.

## REFERENCE:

Additional guidance may be found at the ACA public website:

[www.acacamps.org/resource-library/mental-health-resources-tips-camps](http://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/mental-health-resources-tips-camps)

## RATIONALE FOR THE CHANGE:

According to data gathered by the American Camp Association, youth mental health incidents at ACA accredited camps have increased substantially over the last decade. Youth at BSA camps are not immune from this trend. BSA believes that MESH is an important and evolving issue and gives notice that RP-551 will likely become a Standard in the next several years as BSA and partner organizations develop best practices.

## Applies to:

Day camp

Long-term camp



## STANDARD:

A camp that does not serve food in a dining hall shall provide sufficient guidance to participants on food storage, preparation and garbage disposal provisions so that participants are adequately prepared.

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. Food preparation, if any, prior to distribution to participants meets the requirements of Standards FS-601 and FS-602, as applicable.
- B. Guidelines for safe food preparation, storage, and disposal are provided in the camp literature to the participants in advance of arrival.
- C. The camp makes adequate provision for collection of unavoidable food preparation waste at reasonable frequencies and locations, and this information is communicated to participants in advance.
- D. For trek programs and outpost camps:
  1. The camp provides guidance on proper food preparation, storage and disposal as part of the trek or outpost instruction or during initial meal preparation on the trek or outpost.
  2. The camp makes adequate provision, either at the trek location or by portable methods, for food storage that will maintain food reasonably safe from animal or vermin intrusion.
  3. The camp makes adequate provision for collection of unavoidable food preparation waste at reasonable frequencies and locations on the trek or outpost, and this information is communicated to trek participants in advance.

## INTERPRETATION:

This standard is met if the camp provides sufficient guidelines in its written program materials provided to participants on how food must be transported, stored, prepared, and disposed of to maintain hygiene and health. For trek programs, staff must accompany the program participants on their initial trek meals to ensure proper understanding and ability to properly transport, store, prepare, and dispose of food wastes.

If a camp provides food to participants for their own preparation, the camp remains subject to the duty to comply with Standard FS-601 for the food it is providing relative to the program, e.g., the duty is greater if the camp provides all of the food and lesser if it provides only a small part such as an ice cream social. A camp providing food for preparation by participants remains subject to FS-602 for food handling until it provides the food to participants with appropriate instructions.

# CAMPS/PROGRAMS WITHOUT DINING HALLS

(Effective January 1, 2023)

FS-603

## Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

## VERIFICATION:

- Review of literature to ensure required information provided.
- Visual review of camp garbage collection procedures and handling.
- Review of trek crew equipment provision for food and garbage handling.
- Review of trek staff training crew members, when possible.

# REFRIGERATION UNIT MAINTENANCE AND TEMPERATURE CONTROL

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## STANDARD:

All camp refrigeration units are clean, sanitary, and able to achieve required temperatures.

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. A temperature of not more than 40 degrees F or 4 degrees C must be maintained for refrigerators. A temperature of not more than 0 degrees F or -18 degrees C must be maintained for freezers.
- B. When a refrigeration unit is in use, a temperature log is completed daily at each refrigerator and freezer. These logs must be verified and signed each day by the relevant area director.
- C. A nonmercuric thermometer is used in each refrigeration unit.
- D. Walk-in refrigerators and/or freezers have an opening device on both sides of the door and are self-closing.

## INTERPRETATION:

This standard does not cover kitchen and dining hall refrigeration equipment or trading post perishable food refrigeration equipment, which are covered by Standards FS-601 through FS-603. This standard covers health lodge medication refrigeration equipment and other refrigeration that is used for program purposes or community refrigerators made available to participants. This standard does not cover vending machines (unless containing perishable items), personal ice machines, or refrigeration appliances unless also used for food service or program purposes by camp participants. Original equipment supplied thermometers are acceptable if they are nonmercuric, accurate, and visible, and can meet the range requirements in Specific Requirement A.

## VERIFICATION:

- Visual inspection of the refrigeration units, thermometers, and charts
- Discussion with staff on procedures followed

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp



**STANDARD:**

All COPE and climbing facilities are properly installed and inspected in compliance with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America; Association for Challenge Course Technology Standards; and other governing jurisdiction regulations.

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. Program sites on BSA property are located where access is controlled or monitored and warning signs are posted.
- B. The COPE course, climbing area (natural and/or constructed), bouldering walls, and portable climbing structures are properly inspected annually by members of the council.
- C. All COPE course and artificial climbing structures shall receive a professional inspection pursuant to ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, Chapter 1, Sections B.1.2 and B.2 annually.
  1. This inspection shall be documented by a written report.
  2. The council shall prepare a written response to the inspection report within 60 days setting forth a schedule to correct any deficiencies.
  3. A council or camp may not operate a COPE or climbing course after a professional inspection finding of an imminent life safety deficiency until the deficiency is corrected and the correction is approved by a qualified person.
- D. Portable challenge structures (e.g., portable climbing walls, portable challenge courses) shall be set up, operated, maintained, inspected, and recertified according to manufacturer's recommendations.
  1. All custom fabricated portable challenge structures shall receive an acceptance inspection pursuant to ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, Chapter 1, Section B.1.1 and B.2 prior to use.
  2. All custom fabricated portable challenge structures shall also comply with Specific Requirement C.
- E. Climbing bolts and hangers installed on BSA property must have written council approval and have been properly installed and inspected twice annually by a qualified person and be specifically designed for climbing purposes. Pitons are never used in BSA climbing.
- F. All newly constructed COPE and climbing facilities must have an initial acceptance inspection pursuant to ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, Chapter 1, Section B.1.1 and B.2 prior to use. BSA requires an independent qualified person conduct this inspection.

**Applies to:**

**Camp  
properties**

**Day camp**

**Short-term  
camp**

**Long-term  
camp**

# COPE AND CLIMBING FACILITIES

FA-715

(Revised January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

## INTERPRETATION:

A COPE/climbing course or portable challenge structure should receive at least the following inspections annually under NCAP: a precamp/postcamp inspection by the council; an annual professional inspection under the ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, and an annual NCAP inspection (this will occur at least twice if the program is located at a long-term camp—once by the council and once by the zone). Some states may regulate zip lines or other COPE course elements as amusement rides, which may also require an inspection. Councils are responsible for ensuring compliance with all state and local laws.

The purpose of the precamp/postcamp inspection is for the council to assess what needs to be done to prepare the course for the next season. This fulfills requirements under Standard FA-701. It could also fulfill Specific Requirement B.

The purpose of the professional inspection is to ensure that the COPE/climbing course or custom-fabricated portable challenge structure physically meets life safety requirements under ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019. The inspector must prepare a written report confirming that the inspection conforms to Standard 03-2019, that the inspector is a qualified person, and setting forth any deficiencies and recommendations. The council has 60 days to prepare a written response setting forth the proposed corrective action (or disputing the finding) and a schedule by which it will be implemented. Corrective action must be verified by a qualified person or a competent person acting for a qualified person. This may occur during the inspection.

The purpose of the NCAP assessment is primarily to view the course in action to assess whether the staffing and program requirements of Standard PS-206 and SQ-409 are met and are primarily addressed in that standard. However, the NCAP assessment must also confirm that the professional inspection has occurred, that the council has responded, and that the review of the paperwork shows that the course is being maintained as necessary to protect life safety. If, based upon the written report and response, the NCAP assessment team has concerns that life safety may not be protected (for example, the report identifies a life safety issue that the response does not address at all), it should immediately contact the National NCAP staff advisor and identify those concerns in its report.

**Independent qualified inspector** means an inspector without a financial interest in the initial construction of the COPE or climbing course. After the initial inspection, any qualified inspector may conduct subsequent inspections.

**Properly installed:** Installed by a qualified person according to manufacturer's recommendations for the specified application/situation.

**Properly inspected:** Checked against a written standard or checklist developed by a qualified person and documented in writing.

**Professional inspection:** Defined by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) standards as: “An inspection carried out by a qualified person or competent person under the supervision of a qualified person to assess the condition of the course and identify whether there are any areas failing to meet standard or likely to fail to meet standard in the near term.” In this case, the qualified person directing the activities of the inspection must have extensive knowledge, training, and/or experience in maintenance and inspection of COPE and climbing facilities and equipment.

**Qualified person:** Defined in the Association for Challenge Course Technology standards as: “An individual who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate or professional standing; or who, by possession of extensive knowledge, training and/or experience in the subject field; has successfully demonstrated ability in design, analysis, evaluation, installation, inspection, specification or training in the subject work, project or product, to the extent established by this Standard.” Possession of a National Camping School certificate, standing alone, does not make a person a “qualified person” under the ANSI/ACCT standard for purposes of assessing course facilities and life safety.

For example, in item B, a person who develops the written maintenance checklist must have extensive knowledge, training, and/or experience in maintenance and inspection of COPE and climbing facilities and equipment.

Another example is item E, which specifies that climbing bolts must be installed and inspected by a “qualified person.” In this case, the person who installs or inspects climbing bolts must have training and experience installing and inspecting climbing bolts.

## VERIFICATION:

- During an NCAP assessment of a COPE/climbing course, the assessment team shall verify that the ANSI/ACCT inspection has occurred within the past year (within 12 months) by reviewing the professional inspection report and the council’s response. If the report is not available, or does not state that it was conducted in accordance with ANSI/ACCT Standard 03-2019, or does not state that the inspector is a qualified person, or the council’s response appears inadequate to address a health or safety concern, then the assessment team should notify [NCAP@scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@scouting.org).
- Physical inspection of elements and structures meeting the description of a COPE/climbing course

## Applies to:

Camp properties

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

# COPE AND CLIMBING FACILITIES

FA-715

(Effective January 1, 2023)

## Applies to:

Camp  
properties

Day camp

Short-term  
camp

Long-term  
camp

- Evaluation of program documents (may be submitted with declaration):
  - A: Inspection documents
    - Council self-inspection checklist and reports
    - Documentation of corrective actions
  - B: Inspection documents
    - Qualified inspector report for constructed facilities
    - Documentation of corrective actions
    - Access to a current edition of ACCT standards through a verified ACCT member
  - C: Manufacturer's documentation for portable climbing walls
  - D: Bolt and hanger installation and inspection records

## REFERENCES:

The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) standards are available to members online. The council must have a printed or digital copy available or at least one ACCT member to access the on-line standards.

Discounted membership rates may be available. Contact [NCAP@scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@scouting.org) for guidance on obtaining the discounted rate.

A list of professional ACCT vendors is found at [www.acctinfo.org/page/PVMList](http://www.acctinfo.org/page/PVMList)