



Instructions for Use

These change pages will update the 2025 NCAP Standards book to a 2026 Standards book.

To update the 2025 Standards book to the 2026 Standards, replace these page in the 2025 book.

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Discard or Do NOT Print this coversheet.



NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS





NATIONAL CAMP
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

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National Camp Accreditation Committee • National Council, Scouting America

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS

PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS

Scouting America 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 Scouting America-accredited camp.
2. Guide councils so that each camper and leader obtains a quality program consistent with the Scouting America brand.

The local council is responsible for maintaining Scouting America 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 Scouting America'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.

COUNCIL PROGRAM DESIGN, SAFETY, AND RISK REVIEW

(Revised January 1, 2026)

STANDARD:

Council standing committees review camp properties and camp program design and activities to ensure they support the council program, conform to Scouting America and council risk management and health and safety policies, and meet council quality objectives. The camp director is responsible for implementing the program and supervising staff and program activities in accordance with approved policies during camp.

Applies to:

Camp
properties

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

A. Plan for Review. The council committee responsible for the overall camping program has adopted a plan providing for review of each long-term camp activity, each day camp activity, and a generic list of short-term camp activities that results in each activity being actively reviewed at least once every three to four years, a minimum of three times every 10 years. The plan shall also call for a review of any serious incidents at each the camp or a camp activity during the prior year. The plan shall indicate the council committee or team responsible for completing the review.

B. Review Scope. The council committee or team responsible for reviewing an activity under the plan must review the activity, any syllabus, any program hazard analysis and any relevant Scouting America standards, policies or insurance requirements with an understanding of where and how the activity is usually conducted. For an incident, the council committee should review the incident, the activity at which it occurred, and any safety procedures or risk mitigation measures in place, and any relevant Scouting America standards, policies or insurance requirements. If the committee finds that additional safety or quality measures are required, these must be specified and, if necessary, approved using the council's normal procedures.

C. Recordkeeping. The council committee or a staff member must record the review and any adopted measures on a tracking sheet.

D. Camp director/camp leader responsibility.

1. *For long-term camps and day camps*, the council must communicate any required safety and quality measures to the camp director, make them available to the assessment team, and must ensure that the camp is adequately resourced to implement them. The camp director has primary responsibility to ensure that the measures are executed at the camp.
2. *For short-term camps*, the council must communicate any required safety and quality measures to the camp leader, short-term camp administrator and the staff advisor, who share responsibility to ensure that the measures are executed at the short-term camp. The council must ensure that the camp is adequately resourced to implement the required measures.

COUNCIL PROGRAM DESIGN, SAFETY, AND RISK REVIEW

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PD-112

Applies to:

Camp
properties

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

INTERPRETATION:

A “serious incident” requiring annual review is any incident involving more than Scout-rendered first aid, which resulted in an illness affecting three or more participants, which resulted in significant property damage or expense (as determined by the local council), or any item flagged by camp leadership as requiring review. If the camp reports no incidents, the review team should ensure that reporting requirements are being followed and take corrective action if needed.

VERIFICATION:

Effective until December 31, 2026:

1. Certification from the Scout executive and a council officer that the relevant council committees have reviewed and approved, as necessary, the camp program
2. Either (a) minutes of the relevant council committee meeting or meetings where the program, safety, and risk review were conducted (the minutes must reflect the participation of individuals with relevant competencies); or (b) a signed certification statement that such review was conducted from individuals in each of the following competencies if the camp offers a program including those activities: (i) aquatics; (ii) COPE/climbing; (iii) range and target activities; and (iv) enterprise risk management (formerly health and safety)
3. The assessment team shall review the tracking sheet to ensure that the review is occurring.
4. If the council has adopted additional procedures, the assessment team shall review a representative sample of those measures to ensure that they are being implemented.

Effective January 1, 2027:

1. Review of council’s plan of review and tracking sheet to ensure program reviews scheduled and completed as required by standard.
2. Discussion with the camp director of how informed of mitigation measures and how implemented.
3. If the council has adopted additional mitigative measures, the assessment team shall review a representative sample of those measures to verify implementation.

REFERENCES:

Guidance on conducting the PD-112 review is found in NCAP Guide to Conducting the PD-112 Program Design, Safety and Risk Review available at scouting.org/NCAP

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: ARCHERY, SLINGSHOTS, AND THROWING SPORTS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

STANDARD:

If offered, the camp operates safe, age-appropriate archery, slingshots and throwing sports programs.

Applies to:

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

A. Range Requirements.

1. An archery range shall be designed and posted in accordance with Design Guideline 313. Ranges using compound bows must complete a risk assessment pursuant to Standards PD-111 and PD-112 to determine if such bows may be safely used.
2. A slingshot range shall be designed in general accordance with Design Guideline 313 or 314 adjusted to account for the maximum range of travel and other safety risks identified in a risk assessment completed per Standards PD-111 and PD-112 before starting the program.
3. A throwing sports range shall be designed in general accordance with Design Guideline 350 adjusted to account for the maximum range of travel and other safety risks identified in a risk assessment completed per Standards PD-111 and PD-112 before starting the program.
4. An atlatl range shall be designed and posted in accordance with Design Guideline 313. Ranges must complete a risk assessment pursuant to Standards PD-111 and PD-112 to determine if atlatl may be used safely.

B. Standard Operating Procedures. Each archery, slingshot, atlatl, and throwing sports range and program shall have appropriate standard operating procedures developed and implemented for the range and activities offered. The standard operating procedures shall address:

1. **Qualified supervision**, which must be present at all times the range is in operation and may vary depending upon the program activity. Qualified supervision must meet the requirements of Standard SQ-407. The minimum ages, instructor-to-participant ratio, and training of each instructor or assistant must be specified in the standard operating procedures. Proof of training must be maintained.
2. **Required program equipment**, which must identify properly sized equipment for use with participants and any age-appropriate restrictions identified by the camp or council pursuant to Standards PD-111 and PD-112. The standard operating procedures shall address required regular inspections, maintenance, and, if applicable, appropriate condemning criteria for when equipment shall be retired.

Day camp

Short-term
campLong-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: ARCHERY, SLINGSHOTS, AND THROWING SPORTS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-213

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

3. **Equipment storage**, which shall address proper lock up and storage of equipment when not in use.
 4. **Safety**, which shall address safety procedures, required safety equipment, and standard first aid for reasonably foreseeable issues. For archery ranges, properly sized equipment such as finger tabs or gloves and forearm guards must be used by everyone as specified in the approved standard operating procedures.
 5. **Access to communication**, which shall address how first aid, emergency services, the range activities director or camp management shall be summoned when needed.
 6. **Slingshots**. Slingshot programs will follow requirements indicated in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*. Ammunition cannot include glass, steel, marbles, rocks, or any other hard objects that may ricochet (note: clay balls may be used). The standard operating procedures must specify the type of ammunition(s) that may be used.
 7. **Compound bows and throwing sports**. If the archery program will use compound bows or throw objects other than knives or tomahawks that are allowed by the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*, the council shall conduct a risk assessment pursuant to Standards PD-111 and PD-112 to address potential risks to participants. Additional safety, instruction, program equipment maintenance items necessary to accommodate compound bows shall be added to the standard operating procedures. Compound bows shall only be used on ranges approved for their use. The standard operating procedures shall indicate which ranges on camp property (see NCAP Standard SA-001), if any, are approved for compound bows.
 8. **Personal equipment**. The standard operating procedures must specify whether personal archery equipment is allowed and any limits on its use. If not specified, personal equipment is not allowed.
- C. **Range Operation**. The following requirements shall be met when an archery, slingshot, or throwing sports range is in operation:
1. Qualified supervision shall be present. The instructor-to-participant ratio set forth in NCAP Standard SQ-407 and reflected in the range's standard operating procedure shall not be exceeded. Councils may implement more stringent limitations when needed for program safety or quality reasons.
 2. Only programs approved for use on the range may be offered.
 3. Properly sized equipment is issued and used by all participants.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: ARCHERY, SLINGSHOTS, AND THROWING SPORTS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

4. Proper safety protocols shall be followed and participants have appropriate safety gear as required by the standard operating procedures.
 5. All equipment is in good repair.
 6. First aid equipment, supplies, and access to communication are available as set forth in the standard operating procedures.
 7. The standard operating procedures are available and followed. If the standard operating procedures are not available, the range must be shut down until located and implemented.
- D. **Sporting Arrows Program.** In this program, participants shoot Flu Flu arrows at foam disks launched into the air or rolled along the ground by a disk launcher manufactured by LaPorte or Atlas, or equivalent. The following additional requirements apply to sporting arrows programs:
1. Age appropriate requirement. This program is authorized for Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturers.
 2. Council risk review. Prior to offering the program, the council shall:
 - a. Convene a task force to review local, state and federal guidelines, including age restrictions; licensing and/or certification requirements and courses; equipment and personal protective equipment standards; and any other practices or procedures recommended by the original equipment manufacturer or other governing body and shall also evaluate costs, risks to participants, impacts on other camp programs and the camp environment.
 - b. Complete a risk and safety review as required by Standards PD-111 and PD-112 and adopt measures as may be needed to ensure the program conforms to the National Camp Standards and Scouting America's *Guide to Safe Scouting*.
 - c. The task force shall draft standard operating procedures as required by Specific Requirement B, which must include Specific Requirements D.1 and D.3 through D.5.
 - d. The task force report and safety and risk review must be reviewed and approved by the council's executive board or executive committee prior to initiating the program.
 - e. If the council elects to proceed, the council shall submit notice of its initiation of the program annually in the Notice of Intent to Operate.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: ARCHERY, SLINGSHOTS, AND THROWING SPORTS PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-213

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

3. **Ambient condition restrictions.** The program may not be offered if ambient wind speeds are greater than 30 mph. The program must be outfitted with a means of determining approximate wind speed.
4. **Equipment requirements.**
 - a. Only LaPorte Bowtrap, Atlas Apollo, or equivalent foam disk throwers for projecting the disks, are authorized.
 - b. Bows are limited to a maximum 26-pound pull.
5. In addition to the design requirements of Specific Requirement A.1, the Sporting Arrows course shall follow the Sporting Arrows Design Guide 316.

INTERPRETATION:

Archery is limited to simple or recurve bows unless the council's standard operating procedures provide for use of compound bows and the range is approved for their use. A compound bow is a bow that uses a system of pulleys and cables or similar system to make it easier to draw the bow. For Scouting America purposes, a universal draw length bow (such as a Genesis bow) is considered a recurve bow.

Atlatl is limited according to the standards listed in the Range and Target Activities Manual for size and materials. All other throwing sports are limited to items that can be thrown by hand without mechanical assistance and must not be prohibited in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). In case of doubt, application should be made for a waiver or variance under Standard SA-005.

VERIFICATION:

1. Observation of standard operating procedures available at program
2. Observation of procedures in practice including:
 - (a) Safety procedures and equipment in proper use
 - (b) Equipment in good repair
3. Review safety areas are properly marked and effective
4. Review of proof of training of instructors and assistants.

REFERENCES:

- Design Guidelines are available at scouting.org/outdoor-programs/.
- Staffing requirements are set forth in Standard SQ-407.
- Additional information on administering the program is found in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual* available at scouting.org/outdoor-programs/.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

STANDARD:

If offered, the camp operates safe, age-appropriate firearms and devices programs.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
campLong-term
camp

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. **Range Requirements.** Firearms activities are confined to ranges designed and approved for that use. An approved range is:
 1. A commercial range allowing use of the firearm type; or
 2. A range at a camp property designed in accordance with guidelines at scouting.org/outdoor-programs and approved for use of that firearm type by the council operating the camp property (See SA-001).
 3. For BB devices only, a range designed in accordance with guidelines at scouting.org/outdoor-programs and used as part of a council-operated program.
 4. Specialty programs must meet range design requirements set forth in Specific Requirements H through K.
- B. **Age-Appropriate Restrictions on Device and Firearm Use.** Use of devices and firearms by program participants is limited as follows:
 1. Cub Scouts (Tiger through Arrow of Light programs) may only use BB devices in council-operated programs.
 2. At long-term camp only, Cub Scouts (Webelos and Arrow of Light programs only) may use pellet rifles on a range meeting the requirements of Specific Requirement A.
 3. Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturers may use BB devices, chalk ball devices, pellet rifles, Airsoft guns, .22-caliber rimfire bolt-action rifles, shotguns, muzzle-loading rifles and muzzle-loading shotguns on ranges meeting the requirements of Specific Requirement A. If magazines are used, range commands must include "magazines out after firing all your shots" to ensure the firing line is safe and all shots are fired. Except as expressly provided in these standards, tubular magazines for rifles are prohibited.
 4. Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturers who are 14 years of age or older, or are 13 years of age and have completed the eighth grade, may participate in the NRA FIRST Steps Pistol Orientation. Except as expressly provided in these standards, no other pistol program is allowed. Program equipment is limited to pistols and revolvers as follows: .177 pellet pistol; .22 long rifle rimfire; .38 caliber special; or 9 mm only.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-214

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

- C. **Firearm Equipment Requirements.** Safe, age-appropriate equipment is maintained in good repair and must meet the following requirements:
1. .22-caliber rimfire, bolt-action rifles must have a trigger pull in excess of 3 pounds.
 2. Pellet rifles (CO₂, pump, break barrel, etc.) are limited to single-shot, designed for target shooting with a look comparable to approved .22 rifles, and have a velocity of 500 to 540 feet per second, with a minimum 2.5 pound trigger pull. Pellet rifle propellant is limited to CO₂ cylinders or air compressor/scuba tanks. If scuba 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 range and target activities is conducted by qualified adults with appropriate controls. Scuba tanks used for range and target activities shall not be used for scuba purposes.
 3. A shotgun is defined as a 20-, 16-, or 12-gauge pump action, break action or semiautomatic shotgun. Consult the *National Range and Target Activities Manual* for additional guidance. No other shotgun type may be used. Trigger pull must be 3.5 pounds or more.
 4. A pistol or revolver is defined as .177 pellet pistol, .22-caliber long rifle rimfire pistol, .38-caliber special, or 9 mm pistol. Trigger pull must be 2.5 pounds or more for single action, 6.5 pounds or more for double action, and both for single action/double action pistols. Pistols/revolvers not meeting these standards are not allowed.
 5. Any firearm for which trigger pull is specified shall be tested with an appropriate weight or scale at least once a week while in use. If any mechanism fails, the firearm is immediately removed from service until repaired and tested. Test documentation is maintained.
 6. The use of personal firearms and personal ammunition is prohibited in all Scouting programs at a camp property (see Standard SA-001). Personal firearms and personal ammunition may be used at a commercial firearm range, subject to restrictions regarding caliber, gauge, and action as described in this standard or in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*. Councils may adopt additional restrictions in their standard operating procedures.
- D. **Standard Operating Procedures.** Each device or firearms range and program shall have appropriate standard operating procedures developed and implemented for the range and activities offered. The standard operating procedures shall comply with applicable law and address the following:

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

1. **Qualified supervision**, which must be present at all times the range is in operation and may vary depending upon the firearms used and program activity. Qualified supervision must meet the requirements of Standard SQ-407. The appropriate ratio of adult instructor to youth participants must be specified for each firearm and program type. The training required for each instructor or assistant (and their responsibilities) must be specified.
 2. **Required program equipment**, which must identify properly sized equipment for use with participants. The standard operating procedures shall address required maintenance and, if applicable, appropriate condemning criteria for when equipment shall be retired.
 3. **Equipment storage**, which shall address proper lock up and storage of equipment when not in use. Safe, separate and locked storage (can be in the same building) is provided for firearms, ammunition, and CO₂ cylinders and bulk tanks.
 4. **Safety**, which shall address safety procedures, required safety equipment and standard first aid for reasonably foreseeable issues. Use of approved shooting glasses and ear protection is required for all participants and instructors. Ear protection is not required for BB devices and pellet rifles.
 5. **Access to communication**, which shall address how first aid, emergency services, the range activities director or camp management shall be summoned when needed.
 6. **Personal equipment at commercial ranges**. Councils may adopt additional restrictions on use of personal firearms or ammunition at commercial ranges when used to support a Scouting program.
- E. **Range Operation**. The following requirements shall be met when a firearms range is in operation:
1. Qualified supervision shall be present. The number of active participants on the firing line shall not exceed the ratio set forth in Standard SQ-407 or the standard operating procedures, whichever is more restrictive.
 2. Only firearms and programs approved for use on the range may be offered.
 3. Properly sized equipment is issued and used by all participants.
 4. Proper safety protocols shall be followed and participants have appropriate safety gear as required by the standard operating procedures.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
campLong-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-214

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

5. All equipment is in good repair. First aid equipment, supplies, and access to communication are available as set forth in the standard operating procedures.
 6. The standard operating procedures are available and followed. If the standard operating procedures are not available, the range must be shut down until located and implemented.
- F. **Council Risk Review for Specialty Program Adoption.** Prior to offering any of the programs in Specific Requirements G to J, the council shall:
1. Convene a task force to review local, state and federal guidelines, including age restrictions; licensing and/or certification requirements and courses; equipment and personal protective equipment standards; and any other practices or procedures recommended by the original equipment manufacturer or other governing body and shall also evaluate costs, risks to participants, impacts on other camp programs and the camp environment.
 2. Complete a risk and safety review as required by Standards PD-111 and PD-112 and adopt measures as may be needed to ensure the program conforms to the National Camp Accreditation Program Standards and Scouting America's [Guide to Safe Scouting](#).
 3. The task force shall draft standard operating procedures as required by Specific Requirement D, which must include the requirements set forth in the standards.
 4. The task force report and safety and risk review must be reviewed and approved by the council's executive board or executive committee prior to initiating the program.
 5. The council shall submit notice of its initiation of the program annually in the Notice of Intent to Operate.
 6. The specialty program may thereafter operate only in accordance with these standards and the approved standard operating procedures.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

G. Specialty Program: NRA FIRST Steps Pistol Orientation Program.

Instruction shall follow the NRA FIRST Steps Pistol Orientation Program. No sections shall be moved or changed. Program participation is limited as set forth in Specific Requirement B.4.

H. Specialty Program: Cowboy Action Shooting Program. Instruction shall follow the Cowboy Action Shooting Program section in the current edition Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.

1. Before moving to the shooting positions, each participant shall participate in a cowboy action shooting safety briefing utilizing the outline and materials provided in the the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.
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. Different courses of fire consistent with the *National Range and Target Activities Manual* may be used at different sessions.
3. Each youth participant shall be assisted by an instructor at each shooting position.
4. For this specialty program only, .22-caliber handguns, bolt-action or lever action .22 rifles, and 12- or 20-gauge shotguns are authorized for this program. Tubular magazines may be used on lever action rifles but only the number of rounds for each participant may be loaded. Only council-approved firearms and ammunition shall be used.
5. In addition to Specific Requirement A, each cowboy action shooting range is designed in accordance with the Cowboy Action Shooting Program section in the *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.
6. 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.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-214

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

- I. **Specialty Program: Chalk Ball Program.** Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturers may participate in the chalk ball program. Instruction shall follow the chalk ball program section in the current edition Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.
 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 chalk ball program section in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.
 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 Chalk Ball Program section in the *National Range and Target Activities Manual* 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 CO₂ canisters. Alternatively, the camp will need an approved CO₂ cylinder (two 50-pound cylinders are recommended) and several 20-ounce CO₂ 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 F).
 8. The Laporte throwing system and Flashball® program, or any program shooting a flying target, are not authorized under this standard.
 9. Each range is designed in accordance with Design Guideline 351.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

INTERPRETATION:

A “commercial firearm range” is a supervised facility that offers a controlled environment for safe firearm practice. It will provide shooting lanes, targets, and may offer equipment rentals and training in safe firearm handling and marksmanship. Standard operating procedures are required for each firearm type used on-site. Scouting’s range and target activities must follow all of Scouting’s range and target activities policies or range standard operating procedures that are equivalently stringent, including no variation from Scouting’s limitations on firearms used. These ranges must be operated by a licensed business, a government entity or a nonprofit. Additionally, a commercial range should have its own liability insurance coverage.

BB devices, chalkball devices, and other equipment are further defined in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*.

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

VERIFICATION:

- Observation of standard operating procedures available at program
- Observation of procedures in practice including:
 - o Safety procedures and equipment in proper use
 - o Equipment in good repair
 - o Syllabus followed for any Specialty Program
- Review safety areas are properly marked and effective
- Review of proof of training of program supervisor, range supervisor, instructors and assistants, as needed
- Review of age, equipment

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES: FIREARMS AND DEVICES PROGRAMS

(Revised January 1, 2026)

PS-214

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

REFERENCES:

Staffing standards are set forth in Standard SQ-407.

Design Guidelines are available at scouting.org/outdoor-programs/.

Sample Standard Operating Procedures and Specialty Program materials are available in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*, available at: scouting.org/outdoor-programs/.

STANDARD:

Medical care is under the direction of the council health supervisor, who is a currently licensed physician practicing medicine in the jurisdiction 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 or equivalents are required. CPR/AED must address both adult and child/pediatric subjects.
- 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 (nremt.org).
- 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, 2026)

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 jurisdiction in which the camp is located or is currently a Nationally Certified First Responder listed on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (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:

1. Documentation of age
2. Camp health officer and backup, if any, qualifications
3. Statement from EMS provider as to response time or Google maps or Mapquest printout showing response time to nearest EMS
4. Relevant certificates on file

All may be submitted with the declaration.

REFERENCES:

The Camp Health Officer’s Training Course is located at scouting.org/health-and-safety/training-2/ and scroll down to long-term or short-term/day camp training.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

STANDARD:

If offered, the range and target activities program and each range is adequately staffed by qualified persons.

Applies to:

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. **Program supervision.** The range and target activities program is supervised by a range activities director, at least 21 years of age, who holds a valid certificate of training from the Range and Target Activities Section of National Camping School (NCS), except as noted below.
1. The range activities director must hold current USA Level 1 Archery and National Rifle Association (NRA) instructor credentials in each firearm discipline (rifle [also includes BBs and pellets], shotgun, muzzleloading, and pistol) offered at the camp.
 2. For long-term camps, the range activities director must be present in camp when any firearms range is in use.
 3. An NCS-trained range activities director is not required if the camp only offers archery and throwing sports under Standard PS-213 and only offers a BB device, chalk ball, or Airsoft program and no other firearms activities under Standard PS-214.
 4. If an NCS-trained range activities director is not available but required, the camp may be granted a waiver-by-rule so that the range and target activities program may be operated for one season by a currently certified military, law enforcement, 4-H, or NRA (ML4) instructor. Evidence of certification shall include a military range control card, law enforcement instructor credentials from the NRA or state certifying entity, 4-H instructor credentials and/or NRA instructor credentials. NRA coach credentials do not qualify. All credentials must be current; if no expiration date is stated, the credential must have been issued within 5 years before the end of the camping season at which the individual would serve.
- B. **Range supervision.** At all times a range and target activities range at a camp is in operation, one or more qualified persons shall be present at the range who meet the requirements of the Range Supervision Chart applicable to the devices, firearms, archery or throwing sport equipment being used. The range supervisor is responsible for safety and adherence to all applicable standards, policies and procedures. All required certifications must be current from the certifying agency.

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

SQ-407

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

Range Supervision Chart

| SQ | Camp and Range Type | Range Supervision Required | Alternate Supervision Option (requires waiver) |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 1. | Any camp[^] Archery range | Scouting America archery rangemaster* or USA Archery Level 1 instructor, 18 or more years old | None |
| 2. | Any camp[^] Sporting Arrows Range | USA Archery level 1 instructor, 18 or more years old, and review Sporting Arrows section of <i>National Range and Target Activities Manual</i> | None |
| 3. | Any camp[^] Throwing sports range (except slingshot) | Individual, 18 or more years old, meeting training requirements in camp's approved standard operating procedures | As provided in approved standard operating procedures and 18 or more years old |
| 4. | Any camp[^] Slingshot range | Scouting America BB rangemaster* or NCS range activities director or NRA rifle instructor or ML4** instructor** All 18 or more years old | None |
| 5. | Any camp[^] BB range | Scouting America BB rangemaster* or NCS range activities director or NRA rifle instructor or ML4** instructor** all 18 or more years old | None |
| 6. | Any camp[^] Pellet rifle range <i>Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, Venturers any camp; Webelos and Arrow of Light long-term camp only</i> | NCS range activities director or NRA rifle instructor; All 21 or more years old | ML4** instructor in the discipline offered AND NRA range safety officer or equivalent RSO from ML4** all 21 or more years old |
| 7. | Long-term camp; Rifle, shotgun or muzzleloading range | NCS range activities director with current NRA instructor credential for firearms at range OR NRA instructor with current credentials for the firearms at range; All 21 or more years old | ML4** instructor in the discipline offered AND NRA range safety officer or equivalent RSO from ML4** all 21 or more years old |
| 8. | Day camp or Short-term camp; Any firearms range except BB/pellet | NCS range activities director with current NRA instructor credentials for firearms at range OR Both NRA instructor with current credentials for firearms at range AND NRA range safety officer; all 21 or more years old | ML4** instructor for firearms at range AND NRA range safety officer or equivalent range safety officer from ML4** all 21 or more years old |
| 9. | Any camp[^] Pistol range <i>Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, Venturers only</i> | Both NCS range activities director with current NRA pistol instructor credential AND NRA range safety officer; all 21 or more years old | NRA pistol instructor AND NRA range safety officer all 21 or more years old |
| 10. | Day camp or Short-term camp Cowboy action range | Each station must have NRA instructor credentials for the firearm (separate certifications required for each firearm) AND NRA RSO; all 21 or more years old | None |
| 11. | Long-term camp Cowboy action range | Each station must have NRA instructor credentials for the firearm (separate certifications required for each firearm); all 21 or more years old | None |
| 12. | Any camp Chalk Ball range <i>Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, Venturers only</i> | NRA range safety officer 18 or more years old | None |
| 13. | Any camp Atlatl range <i>Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, Venturers only</i> | Instructor over the age of 18 and trained by NCS range activities director | None |

[^] Camp as defined in NCAP Standard SA-001.

* Archery or BB Rangemaster is trained by a National Camping School range activities director or National Rifle Association rifle instructor (BB guns only). This individual is in charge of the firing line at any time it is in operation.

** ML4 – Rifle instructor from military, law enforcement, 4-H in the discipline offered. These individuals also must review Cub Scout section of the *National Range and Activities Manual* and be familiar with Cub Scout range and target activities if program is offered to Cub Scouts.

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

C. Range Instructor/Participant Ratios and Instructor Training

Requirements. Except as provided in Specific Requirements D through G, the following instructor:maximum number of participant ratios shall be met:

1. **Archery ranges:** 1 instructor to 8 participants except sporting arrows ranges, where the ratio is 1 instructor to 3 participants. Archery staff must be trained by a range supervisor or firing line supervisor who is a USA Archery Level 1 or higher instructor, who must issue a training course pocket certificate. The certificate must be renewed every two years. The range supervisor and staff supervising the firing line must be 18 years of age, but other staff assisting with the program may be younger.
2. **Slingshot ranges:** 1 instructor to 4 participants for Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturers; 1 instructor to 1 participant for Cub Scouts. Instructors and assistant/volunteers must be the age required by and trained in accordance with the approved standard operating procedures.
3. **Throwing sports ranges** (other than slingshot): 1 instructor to 4 participants unless otherwise provided in camp's approved standard operating procedures, which may be more restrictive. Instructors and assistants/volunteers must be the age required and trained in accordance with the approved standard operating procedures.
4. **Rifle, pellet rifle, and BB ranges:** 1 instructor to 8 participants. For each additional 8 participants or fraction thereof, the minimum requirement is an 18 or more year old instructor trained by the range activities director in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures using, at a minimum, the NRA FIRST Steps three-hour training (for rifle and pellet guns) or the BB rangemaster training for BB devices in the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*, as applicable.
5. **Muzzleloading rifle:** 1 instructor to 8 participants for instruction. 1 instructor to 1 participant when loading and firing.
6. **Shotgun or muzzleloading shotgun range:** 1 instructor to 6 participants for instruction. 1 instructor to 1 participant when loading and firing. Each instructor must hold current NRA instructor credential.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

SQ-407

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

7. **Atlatl ranges:** 1 instructor to 4 participants unless otherwise provided in camp's approved standard operating procedures, which may be more restrictive. Instructors and assistants/ volunteers must be the age required and trained.
8. **Range supervisor as an instructor.** At long-term camps only, the range supervisor under Specific Requirement B may be counted as one of the instructors for purposes of the instructor-to-participant ratio. At day camps, short-term camps, and long-term camps, alternative supervision (SQ-407 A.4) where two individuals are specified as the required range supervision, one of the supervisors must serve as range safety officer and may not serve as one of the instructors.

D. **NRA FIRST Steps Pistol Orientation Program.** The range supervision shall be a current NRA RSO or NRA Chief RSO, who may supervise up to six instructor:participant pairs. The instructor:participant ratio shall be one instructor to one participant ratio with each instructor being a current NRA Pistol Instructor (not Assistant or Apprentice). The individual serving as RSO may not serve as an instructor.

E. **Cowboy Action Shooting Program.**

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 range activities director may also serve as instructor if they are certified in the firearm used at the shooting position.
2. The instructor-to-participant ratio when on the range working with firearms in this program is one instructor to every one participant, regardless of the firearm (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio).
3. The range supervisor must hold a current NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) certification.

F. **Chalk Ball Program.**

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 chalk ball is one instructor to every one participant (1:1 instructor-to-participant ratio).

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

INTERPRETATION:

An NCS-trained range activities director includes an NCS-trained shooting sports director until the expiration of their NCS certification.

The **program supervisor** is the individual responsible for supervising the camp's range and target activities program. The program supervisor must be an NCS range activities director for a long-term camp, day camp, or short-term camp that offers a firearms program other than BBs. For a long-term camp only, the range activities director must be at the camp at any time any of the firearms programs (other than BB) is operating. For day camps and short-term camps, the range activities director does not need to be at camp as long as the director has reviewed and approved the program and staffing. An NCS trained range activities director is NOT required for those camps that only offer archery, throwing sports, BB gun, chalk ball, or Airsoft programs.

In addition, the range activities director shall have current NRA, USAA or Scouting America certifications as an instructor for each range which they may personally supervise (archery, throwing sports, rifle, including pellet and BB guns; muzzle loading; shotgun; and/or pistol). An NCS range and activities director may also serve as a range supervisor if they are physically present on the range and have a current instructor card for the bows, throwing implements or firearms being used.

The **range supervisor** is the individual or individuals responsible for supervising a specific range. A range supervisor must be a current instructor in the bows, throwing implements or firearms used at the range. 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 instructor card for the bows, throwing implements or firearms being used on the range.

"Approved standard operating procedures" are standard operating procedures developed in accordance with Standards PS-213 and PS-214 and approved pursuant to council procedures. At slingshot and throwing sports ranges, Scouting volunteers or parents may serve as additional instructors if instructed and qualified under the approved standard operating procedures.

Shooting at camp properties other than as part of a camp (camp as defined by Standard SA-001) subject to this Standard must meet the requirements of the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) and the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual*. The [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) requires different supervision outside of the supervised camp environment.

An NRA RSO or NRA coach certification is not considered an "instructor" qualifying certification because the training differs from that of an NRA instructor.

Applies to:

Day camp**Short-term
camp****Long-term
camp**

RANGE AND TARGET ACTIVITIES PROGRAM STAFF

(Revised January 1, 2026)

SQ-407

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

VERIFICATION:

- Documentation of age
- Relevant NRA, US Archery, Scouting America certificates on file (may be submitted with declaration). Note that Scouting America, NRA, and US Archery certificates have different validity periods. All certifications must be checked for currency. An NCS range activities director certification requires at least one currently effective NRA instructor certification to be valid.
- Observation of program implementation

REFERENCES:

Additional recommendations for operating the range and target activities program at a camp are found in the Scouting America *Range and Target Activities Manual* available at: scouting.org/outdoor-programs/.

(Revised January 1, 2026)

STANDARD:

The camp requires the current Scouting America medical forms for all staff and participants and has parent/guardian authorizations for emergency treatment for all minors.

Applies to:**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:****A. Long-term camps and day camps.**

1. Long-term camps: Upon arrival, or earlier as allowed by camp policy, each camper, adult leader, and staff member must present to the camp health officer or designee an up-to-date Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record form signed by a licensed medical professional. Parts A, B, and C are required for camps of greater than 72 hours (and are recommended for all camps regardless of length).
2. Day Camps: Upon arrival, or earlier as allowed by camp policy, each camper, adult leader, and staff member must present to the camp health officer or designee an up-to-date Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record. Parts A and B are required only for day camps that are under 72 hours in length.
3. Health forms and permission forms must be on file in a secure location accessible to appropriate staff members while the camper, adult leader, or staff member is in attendance.

B. Short-term camps.

1. Upon arrival, each leader of a unit must have for each camper and adult leader an up-to-date Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record form. Staff members, adult volunteers, and youth not attending with a unit must present to the camp health officer or designee an up-to-date Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record form. Parts A and B are required for short-term camps.
2. Health forms and permission forms must be kept in a secure location accessible to the unit leader and camp staff while the camper or adult leader is in attendance. For those not attending with a unit, health forms and permission forms must be on file in a secure location accessible to appropriate staff members while the camper, staff member or volunteer is in attendance.

C. Campers' medical forms must be available to adults authorized to provide camp health care and to adults accompanying minors off-site where emergency health care may be needed.

Day camp

Short-term
campLong-term
camp

MEDICAL INFORMATION

HS-503

(Effective January 1, 2026)

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

- D. Health information is shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- E. National training courses, as defined in the Interpretation to Standard SA-001, require the Annual Health and Medical Record Parts indicated in the course syllabus.
- F. Electronic Health Information Systems. A camp may use an approved electronic health information system if the camp has determined that it is secure, allows prompt retrieval and printing of records in an emergency, is accessible during power outages, and provides protection of individual privacy. The electronic health information system may accept, organize, retain, print, and transmit AHMR information so long as the original document was manually or digitally signed in accordance with local law. An electronic health information system is approved if listed as approved on the NCAP website or by a variance issued pursuant to Standard SA-005.

INTERPRETATION:

Annual Health and Medical Record (AHMR) requirements for a participant are based on the duration of the camp session and not the duration of the entire camping season. So, if the camp session the participant is attending is 72 hours or longer, Parts A,B and C are required. If the camp is 72 hours or less, Parts A and B are required. AHMR requirements for camp staff are based upon the duration of the entire camping season. Councils and camps may require Parts A, B, and C as a matter of local policy.

Part C of the Annual Health and Medical Record is to be completed and signed by a certified and licensed health care provider, which is a physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, or as stated on the current Annual Health and Medical Record, No. 680-001. If only Parts A and B are required, then the signature of a certified and licensed health care provider is *not* required.

The camp has a written policy that addresses the health form requirements for parents and visitors who will spend less than 72 hours at the camp and not participate in activities with a risk element.

The camp has written policy setting forth how staff and participant privacy interests in their medical information will be protected.

VERIFICATION:

- Observation of the file of medical forms and spot-check of completeness, without excessive intrusion into the privacy of an individual
- Discussion with the camp director or a member of the camp medical staff regarding the procedures for maintaining confidentiality of the records balanced by accessibility on a need-to-know basis

REFERENCES:

The Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record, No. 680-001 available at scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/

Current list of approved electronic health information system providers posted on scouting.org/ncap site under Additional Resources

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

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026)

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Council MESH Implementation Plan. The council has developed a MESH implementation plan including the following elements:

- Determination of whether the council health supervisor is willing/capable of addressing camp mental health preparation and, if not, identification of a council health supervisor designee to assist in development of the council camp MESH policies and plans.
- Identification of professional MESH resources available within the council service areas, services they provide, and how they can be accessed.
- Council needs assessment, which shall review camps, camp populations, camp activities, and locations and determines, with guidance from the council health supervisor/designee, needs and services to meet those needs.
- A training plan for camp leadership that addresses:
 - Likely mental health needs of camp population.
 - Awareness/recognition of symptoms of frequently occurring mental health problems likely to occur in the council's camps.
 - Assessment of available resources.
 - Appropriate de-escalation techniques.
- Guidance on when and where to get additional help/resources and whom to notify
- Implementation of camp MESH Implementation Plan.
- Incident reporting.

Camp MESH Implementation Plan. Each long-term camp and multi-day day camp has a MESH implementation plan including the following elements reviewed and approved by the council health supervisor/designee:

- Training for camp leadership in recognizing and initial support for MESH incidents and awareness training for additional staff, with training on in-staff referral and escalation.
- Identification of a qualified mental health professional or network on call to assist camp leadership in responding to MESH incidents.
- A MESH response guide, including policies or guidance on handling of expected incidents and when escalation to outside resources or transfer out of camp environment is appropriate. Policies and guidance should also address proper communication

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026)

RP-551

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

with council leadership, family, and outside agencies in a way that both protects and respects the individuals with the MESH incident.

- Identification and training of MESH incident response team.
- Parent information for inclusion in parent/leader guide, including notes such as camp is not the time to change up medication and risks of omitting information from AHMR.

MESH Response Guide for Short-Term Camps. The council has a short-term camp MESH response guide for short term activities that addresses elements of Specific Requirement B appropriate for the general short term camp experience reviewed and approved by the council health supervisor/designee. For short term camps that in the judgment of the council health supervisor/designee have unusual risks, a MESH implementation plan specific to the camp is developed.

Annual Review. Each year, the council in conjunction with its council health supervisor/designee, reviews MESH incidents at its camps and makes appropriate adjustments to the council and camp MESH implementation plans, training plans and response guides.

INTERPRETATION:

The council health supervisor/designee used in this standard is either the council health supervisor, if capable and willing, or that individual's designee to act on their behalf on mental health issues.

The Recommended Practice will remain in place for the indefinite future and be updated as Scouting learns more. The prior goal of adopting a standard is deferred until Scouting has a stronger evidence base on what measures are effective.

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.

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026)

REFERENCE:

Scouting America's Safe Scouting Committee has developed a resource to assist councils and camps in developing a MESH plan that provides general direction and helpful questions as well as lists of resources. It may be found at:

[filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-064\(23\)-MESH-Planning-Template.pdf](https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-064(23)-MESH-Planning-Template.pdf)

Additional information can be found at the Alliance for Camp Health at:

allianceforcamphealth.org/education-and-resources/mesh-resources

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2027)

RP-551

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

The council has developed MESH plans as recommended by this Recommended Practice and consistent with Scouting America's Mental, Emotional, and Social Health (MESH) Planning Template for Councils, communicated the plan to camp leadership, and made available resources as outlined in the plan.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Council MESH plan elements.

1. The council has identified whether the council health supervisor is willing/capable of addressing camp mental health preparation and, if not, has identified a council health supervisor designee to assist in development of the written council camp MESH policies and plans. The name and qualifications of the council health supervisor or designee are stated in the plan.
2. The plan identifies professional MESH resources available to the council, the services that they provide, and how they can be accessed.
3. The plan includes a needs assessment, which shall review camps, camp populations, camp activities, and locations and determines, with guidance from the council health supervisor or designee, needs and resources or services to meet those needs.
4. A written plan for camp leadership that is consistent with Scouting America's MESH Planning Template for Councils, and includes the following elements:
 - a. Likely mental health needs of the camp population (participants, staff, leaders and visitors);
 - b. Awareness/recognition of symptoms of frequently occurring mental health problems likely to occur in the council's camps;
 - c. An assessment of resources available to camp leadership;
 - d. Appropriate de-escalation techniques;
 - e. Guidance on when and where to get additional help/resources and whom to contact for such help;
 - f. Direction on how to implement the camp MESH plan; and
 - g. Incident reporting, including to Scouting America, the council and any reporting required to an authority having jurisdiction.

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2027)

B. **Long-term Camp MESH plan.** Each long-term camp and multi-day day camp has a MESH plan that meets the requirements of this Recommended Practice, is consistent with Scouting America camp staff MESH training resources, and is approved by the council health supervisor/designee. The plan shall include the following elements:

1. Training for camp staff in recognizing and responding to MESH incidents;
2. Identification of a qualified mental health professional or network on call to assist camp leadership in responding to MESH incidents;
3. Guidance on proper communication with council leadership, family, and outside agencies in a way that both protects and respects the individuals with a MESH incident; and
4. A MESH response outline, which may also be a separate stand-alone pamphlet, which provides guidance on handling of MESH incidents, when escalation to outside resources or transfer out of the camp environment is appropriate, and in-camp reporting protocols.

C. **Short-term camp MESH plan.** The council has a plan that includes elements of the Long-term Camp MESH plan (see Specific Recommendation B) that are appropriate for general short-term camp experiences reviewed and approved by the council health supervisor/designee. For short-term camps that in the judgment of the council health supervisor/designee present unusual risks, the council develops a camp MESH plan for that camp including the elements of Specific Recommendation B.

D. **Communication to camp leadership.** The camp leadership of each long-term camp or multi-day day camp has completed the MESH training recommended by this Recommended Practice prior to staff week. The camp leader or designee of any short-term camp and the camp health officers of any camp have completed an orientation on the short-term camp MESH plan applicable to the camp prior to the start of the camp. The training or orientation includes how to access the resources provided for in the plan and any required reporting. Records of this training are retained and made available for any assessment.

E. **Annual review.** Each year, the council in conjunction with its council health supervisor/designee reviews MESH incidents at its camps and makes appropriate adjustments to the MESH plans, staff training, and MESH outlines as appropriate.

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT

(Effective January 1, 2027)

RP-551

Applies to:

Day camp

Short-term camp

Long-term camp

INTERPRETATION:

Camp leadership for purposes of this Recommended Practice includes the camp director, program director, camp health officer, and camp commissioner (if any) for a long-term camp or multi-day day camp. For short-term camps, camp leadership for purposes of the orientation includes the camp leader or designee and the camp health officer. The council may train additional camp leadership at its discretion but the absence of an additional individual is not a deviation from the Recommended Practice.

The council health supervisor/designee is either the council health supervisor (see Standard HS-505), if capable and willing, or that individual's designee to act on their behalf on mental health issues.

Sole reliance on the "988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline" service is not allowed unless the council health supervisor/designee determines in writing, after reasonable investigation, that no additional MESH resources are available.

VERIFICATION:

1. Certification page for council MESH plan signed by council health supervisor/designee signed within last 15 months.
2. Copy of the camp MESH plan with certification statement signed by camp leadership (outlined in Interpretation).
3. Discussion with camp leadership of how MESH incidents are handled under camp MESH plan and reporting.

REFERENCES:

Scouting America's SAFE Scouting Medical Subcommittee has developed resources to assist councils and camps in developing MESH plans. These resources provide general direction, questions and answers, and list some resources at the following locations:

- [filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-064\(23\)-MESH-Planning-Template.pdf](https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-064(23)-MESH-Planning-Template.pdf)
- scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/MESH-Facilitator-Guide-01132025.pdf (MESH Facilitator Guide for Camp Staff Training)
- scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/MESH-Camp-Staff-Training-01132025.pptx (MESH Camp Staff Training Slides)

Additional information can be found at the Alliance for Camp Health at: allianceforcamphealth.org/education-and-resources/mesh-resources

STANDARD:

Each camp property and camp shall comply with the current Authorization to Operate and meet notification and declaration requirements as defined in the specific requirements. A council chartered by the National Council is granted authorization to issue an NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration for day camps and short-term camps in accordance with these standards as long as they adhere to the National Camp Accreditation Program standards and any other provisions required by the council's authorization to operate.

Applies to:**Camp
properties****Day camp****Short-term
camp****Long-term
camp****SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

- A. Authorization to Operate. Each camp property or camp must comply with the following:
1. A *camp property* shall have a current Authorization to Operate issued by the National Council and shall comply with the applicable terms, conditions, and commitments of that Authorization to Operate.
 2. A *long-term camp* shall have a current Authorization to Operate issued by the National Council and shall comply with the applicable terms, conditions, and commitments of the Authorization to Operate for both the camp and camp property.
 3. A *day camp or short-term camp* shall have a current NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration and a NCAP Site Appraisal Form for the camp and location issued by the council in accordance with Standard AO-802, unless forbidden by its Authorization to Operate. An NCAP Site Appraisal form is required only if the day camp or short-term camp occurs on a non-NCAP accredited camp property.
- B. Corrective action plan or plan of improvement. Each camp or camp property shall have completed, or be in compliance with, any corrective action plan or plan of improvement issued for the camp or camp property.
- C. Publication of accreditation status. Each council, camp property, and long-term camp has published its accreditation status in its leaders' guide, website, and registration materials.
- D. Notification. Each council has filed the required Notice of Intent to Operate for camp properties and long-term camps with the National Council, Outdoor Programs.

AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE

AO-802

(Revised January 1, 2026)

Applies to:

Camp
properties

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

E. Declaration.

1. Until December 31, 2026, each council has submitted its declaration of readiness for long-term camps to the camp assessment team lead by May 15 for camps starting in June, July, or August, or a date 30-60 days before the start of camp established by the zone assessment coordinator for long-term camps which take place at other times of the year.
2. After January 1, 2027, each council has submitted its declaration of readiness by electronic file share including all required elements for long-term camps to the camp assessment lead by May 15 for camps starting in June, July, or August, or a date 30-60 days before the start of camp established by the zone assessment coordinator.

INTERPRETATION:

The National Council will issue an Authorization to Operate to each council. The Authorization to Operate will identify those camp properties and long-term camps that the council may operate using the trademarks and trade dress of Scouting America.

Unless otherwise stated in the Authorization to Operate issued to a council, the council may issue a NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration form that authorizes the operation of a day camp or short-term camp. The process for issuing the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration form shall follow the procedures and meet the conditions of these standards.

An Authorization to Operate is current if it has not expired or been terminated. If the Authorization to Operate has expired, but the council in a timely manner applied for a renewal, the existing Authorization to Operate remains in effect until such time as the National Council issues or denies the renewal authorization to operate. A day camp or short-term camp has a current Authorization to Operate if both the council's Authorization to Operate and the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration form are current.

A corrective action plan and plan of improvement are defined in Standard SA-004.

An electronic file share system means a password-protected or otherwise secured Sharepoint, Dropbox, or similar system of the council's choice that can store and share files electronically with the council, camps, and assessment team.

VERIFICATION:

- For long-term camps, review a copy of the council Authorization to Operate identifying the camp property and long-term camp, and ensure the camp and camp property are complying with any applicable terms, conditions, or commitments.
- For day camps or short-term camps, review a copy of the council Authorization to Operate to ensure that it does not forbid the council to operate such camps. Review the NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration forms. Ensure that the camp (and camp property, if located on one) are complying with any applicable terms, conditions, or commitments of the Authorization to Operate or NCAP Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration form.
- For camp properties, review a copy of the council Authorization to Operate identifying the camp property, and ensure the camp property is complying with any applicable terms, conditions, or commitments.
- All returning staff in the same position will have NCS certifications available and that any new staff (or staff obtaining new NCS certifications) will have NCS certifications available or proof of registration at NCS (or a waiver or variance, as applicable). Missing certifications must be provided during the assessment.

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

STANDARD:

The camp has insurance meeting Scouting America or governing jurisdiction minimum requirements, whichever is more stringent.

INTERPRETATION:

Relevant insurance typically includes:

- Scouting America commercial general liability insurance
- Property insurance to include Business Interruption and Extra Expense (replacement cost recommended)
- Automobile liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 for owned or non-owned vehicles. Unlicensed vehicles do not require automobile liability insurance.
- Workers' compensation (must meet state requirements)
- Accident and sickness (councilwide program recommended)

Additional insurance may be required for trek or high-adventure programs. Examples of additional insurance councils may wish to consider include flood insurance (if relevant), and crime/theft of funds. Policies for outside group rentals are covered with this standard.

The council must provide a written assessment in its application of its risks and how it will address those risks, either through insurance or self-insurance. If self-insurance is selected, the council must indicate what assets it will use to provide the self-insurance.

VERIFICATION:

- A list of required insurance policies and their amounts, and certification from council that it has copies of insurance policies or certificates of insurance

Applies to:

Camp
properties

Day camp

Short-term
camp

Long-term
camp

