



# NCAP Circular No. 22

NCAP elevates camps to new levels of excellence...

National Council, Scouting America

October 1, 2024

## 2025 National Camp Standard Changes

The National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP) is pleased to announce the 2025 revisions to the National Camp Standards. The National Camp Accreditation Committee reviews the National Camp Standards annually for standards in need of revision or clarification based upon developments in National policy and procedures, societal developments, safety, health, legal risk, and programmatic changes to the Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting programs, assessment results and input from camps and councils.

### The Standards Revision Process

The standards revision process typically starts in one of three ways. The most common way is that a National subject matter expert group will contact the standards chair and state that a revision may be needed. This starts a dialogue between the standards chair, National Outdoor Programs staff, and the subject matter experts on the nature of the change, its advantages and disadvantages, its workability at long-term, short-term and day camps, and its impact on risk. The subject matter experts typically propose language or concepts, the NCAP standards group will revise or modify, and the subject matter experts will review and revise or approve until a final proposal is ready. The standards chair and/or National Outdoor Program staff will then circulate the proposed change through BSA Health & Safety, legal, risk management

and program development, as appropriate, for additional input. After all of this input is gathered, the standards group will prepare a final recommendation that is approved by the National Camp Accreditation Committee to go out to the field for comment. For the 2025 revisions, the notice and request for comment went out in NCAP Circular No. 20.

Base upon feedback received from the notice and request for comment, the NCAP standards group will revise the proposal to address valid and constructive comments and then send the revised draft back to the subject matter experts and, if necessary, the other National entities. If all indicate agreement, the standards chair then proposes the revisions to the National Camp Accreditation Committee for approval. The committee reviews and may approve, modify, or reject proposals. In this case, the National Camp Accreditation Committee approved the standards as revised after the comment period.

Sometimes the standards chair will initiate an inquiry to the subject matter experts about whether a change in the standards is needed. If the subject matter experts agree, then the process is much like the one set forth above.

Rarely, an outside occurrence

will cause a change in the National Camp Standards. The year 2024 saw two such incidences. The first was a decision by National program leadership to revise the Range and Target Activities program of Scouting America to emphasize safety and the introduction of safe firearms use as a hobby, consistent with most of the Scouting America merit badge programs. This was a Scouting-wide change of which NCAP was one part. These changes are discussed in more detail in **NCAP Circular No. 21**. Readers interested in learning more about Scouting's range and target activities programs should consult that Circular and the Scouting America *National Range and Target Activities Manual* released on or about September 1, 2024. The second occurred in late summer when Scouting America learned that the American Red Cross was altering its lifeguard instruction program in a way that effectively curtailed Scouting America's ability to continue to offer the BSA Lifeguard. Changes to the Scouting America program to reflect this change are discussed on page 2 of this Circular.

As always, NCAP solicits suggestions on improvements in the National Camp Standards to assist in elevating camp performance for our youth, which may be emailed to [NCAP@scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@scouting.org).

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# BSA Lifeguard Discontinued; Problem Trees

## BSA Lifeguard Retired

After a thorough evaluation, Scouting America has made the decision to retire the BSA Lifeguard certification program, effective **December 31, 2024**.

Over the past decade, lifeguard training across the aquatics industry has evolved significantly. While we highly value our partnership with the American Red Cross, their teaching materials will no longer be available for Scouting’s use in the BSA Lifeguard program. Additionally, Scouting America does not have the resources required to develop and maintain a stand-alone lifeguard training curriculum that meets the rigorous standards set by state and federal regulators.

Moving forward, we encourage local councils to partner with established certifying agencies, such as the American Red Cross, YMCA, StarGuard Elite, and Ellis & Associates. These organizations offer high-quality training that will enable us to continue supporting lifeguard certification for both summer camps and year-round aquatic activities.

## Key Transition Details:

**End of Certification Authority:** Effective December 31, 2024, BSA Lifeguard Instructors and BSA Aquatics Instructors will no longer be authorized to certify BSA lifeguards.

**Instructor Transition Opportunities:** Certified BSA Lifeguard Instructors and BSA Aquatics Instructors will have the option to participate in a crossover course to become American Red Cross Lifeguard Instructors. Candidates can contact their local Red Cross chapter and take the eight-hour Lifeguarding Instructor Crossover/Re-Entry-BL course (AP-HSSAQU804-BL-r.24).

Persons certified as an American Red Cross Lifeguard, can transition to becoming a lifeguard Instructor by taking the Lifeguarding Instructor-BL course (AP-HSSAQU803-BL-r.24). This is a 16-hour course. Again, contact the local Red Cross chapter or search ARC’s Take-A-Class site for courses near you.

Transition opportunities are also available from the YMCA, StarGuard Elite, Ellis & Associates and other recognized lifeguarding training providers.

We are working with the ARC and host councils to provide ARC Lifeguarding Instructor courses prior to National Camping School courses at selected locations this spring. Preliminarily, this would be a two-day course prior to NCS. As these courses are added, we will update the NCS website and notify councils.

**Expiration of Current Certifications:** Individuals currently certified as BSA Lifeguards may continue to use their certification until it expires.

We are committed to working closely with local councils and with each of you to maintain the high standards of safety and preparedness expected by our Scouts and leaders. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [outdoor\\_programs@scouting.org](mailto:outdoor_programs@scouting.org).

## Managing Hazard Trees

Many Scouting America camps are located in forested areas. Trees provide cover, shade, and cooler temperatures. They are a valued resource at camp. At times, however, trees can become a hazard to camp and participants. Camps are encouraged to be deliberate in their review and handling of hazardous trees.

**Frequency of review.** NCAP recommends that hazard trees be evaluated and documented during your precamp/postcamp inspection. This gives time to respond.

**Identifying hazard trees.** The most obvious hazard trees are those that have died. These trees are more susceptible to losing branches or to falling than living trees. If near a camp site, structure, or other area where campers are present, they should be removed.

Some living trees present a similar hazard. Look for trees that lean toward structures or camps; that have obvious damage to branches, infections, or similar signs of ill-health or stress. Also look for trees that have become unbalanced with too much weight on one side that may pull the tree over. In some cases, trimming by an arborist may salvage the tree. In other cases, removal is the only option.

**Removing.** Make sure you follow Standard FA-712. If the job is too big or fraught, bring in a professional to remove the tree!

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## 2025 Revisions to the National Camp Standards

The following revisions to the Scouting America National Camp Standards were proposed for comment in **NCAP Circular No. 20**. This article presents the proposed change, discusses the comments received, any adjustments or modifications to the proposed standards, and sets forth the final revisions approved by the National Camp Accreditation Committee.

NCAP received over twenty comments on the proposed revisions, including from Scout executives, camping professionals, NCAP assessors, and camp personnel. NCAP appreciates the efforts of the commenters to improve the National Camp Standards and Scout camping.

Courier font represents the original proposal, comments received, etc. Arial font represents the final action of the National Camp Accreditation Committee, generally in red-line/strikeout format. *Explanatory remarks from the National Camp Accreditation Committee appear in italics.*

Questions about revisions to the National Camp Standards should be directed to Eric Hiser, National Standards Chair (Eric.Hiser@scouting.org), Brian Gray, NCAP Staff Advisor (Brian.Gray@scouting.org) or to NCAP@scouting.org.

### SA-001. NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS APPLICABILITY

In **NCAP Circular No. 20**, NCAP had proposed to add a definition of "covered personnel" and to provide guidance in the Interpretation on multi-council camps.

tation on multi-council camps.

NCAP received five comments, two of which supported the change as written, two of which recommended that National events (such as Order of the Arrow conclaves or conferences sponsored by national committees) should be addressed. A commenter also asked about why NOAC is excluded.

#### NCAP response to comments:

The comment about camps that are sponsored by a national entity are addressed by recognizing the role of the sponsor in the final Interpretation. Order of the Arrow activities are generally subject to NCAP if they meet the definition of a "camp" in Standard SA-001. NOAC is excluded because it is a national activity at a contracted hotel or university. Conclaves and similar activities meet the definition of a "camp." Order of the Arrow trail crews is part of the underlying "camp" program even though sponsored by the Order of the Arrow. NCAP agrees that it would be useful for the Field Operations Manual to address NCAP compliance.

#### *Revised Standard SA-001 effective January 1, 2025:*

### SA-001. NATIONAL CAMP STANDARDS APPLICABILITY

[Add a new Specific Requirement C as follows]

C. **Covered personnel.** All NCAP, National Camping School personnel and certification holders, and council personnel with camping responsibilities, as described in Standard SA-006, and all camp staff and camp personnel, as described in Standard SQ-401, must comply with the National Camp Standards in the exercise of their duties.

[Add a new paragraph before "Long-term control" in the Interpretation]

When the national council or a national council entity (such as the Order of the Arrow or a national committee) sponsors a camp within the boundaries of a local council, the national sponsor shall be responsible for compliance with the National Camp Standards in cooperation with the local council in which the camp will occur. The sponsor shall present a plan for addressing NCAP compliance to the local council, which shall issue a local council authorization and assessment declaration upon receipt of an adequate plan. If multiple councils collaborate to hold a camp, they shall agree in writing on how NCAP compliance will be maintained and upon that agreement, the council within whose boundaries the camp is offered shall issue the local council authorization and assessment declaration. The assessment of the camp shall be returned to the council issuing the local council authorization and assessment declaration for its files. Long-term camps may require a waiver or variance if not within the scope of an existing authorization to operate.

#### **Rationale for the change:**

*The standard is changed to make it clear that all NCAP, Na-*

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*tional Camping School (NCS) staff and certificate holders, council staff with camping responsibilities, and camp staff/camp personnel must comply with the national camp standards.*

*The Interpretation is expanded to clarify responsibility for NCAP compliance in a nationally-sponsored or multi-council collaboration camp. Based on comments received, the revised Interpretation provides that the sponsor (a national entity such as a committee or task force or the Order of the Arrow) should assume responsibility for NCAP compliance in conjunction with the council on whose camp property (if at a camp property) or within whose bounds the camp will be held. In multiple council collaborations, the councils will agree in writing. Once an appropriate plan/agreement is made, the council on whose camp property or within their bounds will host the camp will issue the Local Council Authorization and Assessment Declaration. The assigned assessment personnel will return the assessment to the council issuing the declaration. If the proposed nationally-sponsored camp or multi-council collaborative camp is a long-term camp, a waiver or variance may be required if not within the scope of the local council's existing authorization to operate.*

### **Proposed change to Standard SA-003:**

#### **SA-003. ASSESSMENT REQUIRED**

*[Proposed change in scoring nomenclature]*

NCAP seeks input from the field on whether the scoring of Recommended Practices could be clari-

fied. NCAP seeks input on which of the two following scoring regimes is clearer and easier to understand in application:

#### Scoring System 1

Yes = recommended practice is applicable and satisfied

No = recommended practice is applicable and not satisfied

NA = not applicable (e.g., does not apply to the camp at all)

#### Scoring System 2

A = Achieved = recommended practice is applicable and achieved

DNA = Did Not Achieve/ Attempt = recommended practice is applicable but was not attempted or not achieved

NA = recommended practice is not applicable at this camp

#### **Comments from the Field**

Commenters #4, #6, #14, #18 stated that Scoring System #1 should be used because it is clearer and avoids confusion between DNA and NA.

Commenter #7 stated a preference for Scoring System #1 as it gives camps a stronger incentive to attempt the recommended practices.

Commenter #8 and #13 stated a preference for Scoring System #2.

#### **NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP appreciates the responses of the commenters and will follow the majority's recommendation of scoring system #1.

#### **Revised standard SA-003 effective January 1, 2025:**

#### **SA-003. ASSESSMENT REQUIRED**

Based upon the feedback received from the field NCAP will transition assessment of the Recommended Practices to Scoring System #1:

**Yes** = recommended practice is applicable and satisfied

**No** = recommended practice is applicable and not satisfied

**NA** = not applicable (e.g., does not apply to the camp at all)

#### **Rationale for the change:**

*Based on feedback from the field, NCAP agrees that Scoring System #1 is clearer and less likely to be confused with the scoring of the standards. It also agrees with commenter #7 that it provides clearer encouragement to camps to try to achieve recommended practices, which are helpful to improving the camp experience. The score sheet will be revised.*

#### **Proposed change to Standard SA-006:**

#### **SA-006. TRAINING OF NCAP PERSONNEL ~~NCAP-TRAINED AND CERTIFIED PERSONNEL~~**

#### **Rational for the change:**

*The change is being made to make Standard SA-006 the training standard for personnel serving in NCAP roles.*

*There were no comments on this*

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*proposed change.*

### **Proposed New Standard SA-007**

In NCAP Circular No. 20, NCAP proposed to create a new Standard, SA-007, Responsibility of Personnel with Camp Responsibilities, which set forth the requirement that NCAP and National Camping School, camp staff and camp personnel, and council personnel with camping responsibilities must comply with the National Camp Standards and establishing potential disciplinary consequences for willful, reckless or grossly negligent failure to abide by the standards.

Comments on the proposal:

Commenters #4, #11 and #21 indicated that in paragraph three, assessment "teach" should be "team." This will be corrected.

Commenter #5 states that staff should be "assumed to act with best intentions" before assuming that incorrect interpretations are willful. The same commenter stated that camps should have the ability to decertify poor NCAP assessors—both if they are belligerent or if they are incompetent. NCAP agrees that the first assumption is that camp staff is acting with good intentions and the assessment team should educate. Only if the staff and camp director refuse to take corrective action

should any referral to the NCAP staff advisor be made. NCAP agrees that camps should call poor assessor performance to NCAP's attention and will work on ways to regularize an assessor evaluation for use by camps.

Commenter #13 supported the proposed change.

Commenter #15 supported the proposal but believed membership standards should be addressed at the local council level.

Commenter #18 noted that there are language differences between Standards SA-006 and SA-007 that should be addressed before they are finalized. The commenter also stated that while supportive of the proposal, the commenter was concerned that it was not well vetted in terms of the process and criteria for membership action and questioned whether there were other ways that the message could be communicated that may cause less risk to the NCAP/local council relationship.

Commenter #21 stated that "camps are not people" and suggested that "camp leadership" be substituted for "camp."

NCAP response to comments:

NCAP appreciates the comments in response to this change. NCAP agrees with commenter #5 that the assumption should be that noncompliant conditions are the result of

misunderstanding and that education and counseling are the appropriate first steps. If those steps do not succeed, however, NCAP must take action to protect the health and safety of camp participants and the Scouting brand. NCAP also agrees with commenter #21 that a "camp" cannot make a complaint and has substituted camp director and council NCAP staff advisor.

NCAP also hears the concerns from the field about belligerent or incompetent NCAP personnel. NCAP personnel are subject to the same standard of knowledge and behavior. If a camp or council experiences inappropriate conduct, they should notify the zone assessment coordinator and the national NCAP staff advisor. NCAP will investigate and take appropriate action.

NCAP also heard the concern from the field about displacement of the local council in maintaining discipline. NCAP agrees that if the local council takes appropriate action, the need for NCAP action is eliminated. The Interpretation is revised to make this clearer. NCAP would not take action on membership status; it would merely refer the concern to the appropriate Scouting authority having jurisdiction over the member in question. The wording of both the standard and interpretation

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are revised to clarify this intention.

NCAP believes these changes should address the concerns expressed by com-

menters #5, #15 and #18.

Procedures will be added to the National Standards Manual, set forth later in this NCAP Circular. Be-

cause this is a new Standard, it is set forth in full page format to ease review and understanding.

***Final Standard SA-007 effective January 1, 2025:***

### **[NEW] SA-007. RESPONSIBILITY OF PERSONNEL WITH CAMP RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Effective: January 1, 2025**

**STANDARD:**

**All NCAP personnel, National Camping School certification holders, camp staff, camp personnel and council staff with camping responsibilities shall comply with and uphold the National Camp Standards in a manner that achieves the goal of the standard in the performance of their duties. Failure to comply with and apply the standards in their intended fashion may be grounds for discipline, including but not limited to revocation of NCAP certification or banning from future responsibility for or service at a BSA accredited camp or camp property.**

**INTERPRETATION:**

Scouting expects all individuals involved in Scout camping to uphold the standards of Scouting America as set forth in the National Camp Standards and to maintain the quality and safety of Scout camping. Standards and their Specific Requirements are to be interpreted to achieve the health, safety and program quality purposes of the Standard. If a Specific Requirement specifies that the camp has an item such as, but not limited to, a helmet, bow, first aid kit, refrigerator or other item, that item must be present, maintained, fully functional in a safe fashion, and staff or participants, if applicable, expected to use it are trained or instructed in its use and the use of any accompanying safety gear or procedures. Similarly, when a Standard requires a plan or procedure, that plan or procedure must be up-to-date, reflect current facilities, equipment, and staffing, and address the purpose of the relevant standard or requirement. Disregard of the National Camp Standards and camp policies and procedures that implement them is grounds for a noncompliant finding and, if willfully, recklessly or grossly negligently maintained by an individual, for discipline, including but not limited to banning from future service as camp staff or camp personnel.

If a standard is unclear, camp staff or personnel must seek guidance as directed by their camp director. If a camp director is unclear, they should seek guidance from the council NCAP chair and/or their professional advisor. If the standard remains unclear, guidance should be sought from [NCAP@Scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@Scouting.org) or by calling the National NCAP Staff Advisor. In appropriate circumstances, a written NCAP interpretation may be issued by the National Camp Accreditation Committee. Such interpretations are binding on NCAP, the local council and the camp. A form is available on the NCAP website to bring unclear standards to NCAP's attention.

NCAP assumes that all individuals with Scouting camping responsibilities are proceeding with good intentions and noncompliance is the result of misunderstanding. NCAP personnel should first seek to educate or counsel a to achieve the standards. If, however, an NCAP assessment team finds that an individual has willfully, recklessly or negligently disregarded a National Camp Standard and refuses to correct the violation when counseled and, after discussion with the camp director, the issue persists, the assessment team leader shall notify the zone assessment coordinator and the National NCAP staff advisor. Similarly, if a camp director or council NCAP staff advisor believes an NCAP assessor has willfully, recklessly or grossly misconstrued the National Camp Standards, they should contact the zone assessment coordinator and National NCAP staff advisor immediately. The NCAP Committee will investigate, consult with the local council, and ensure appropriate action is taken in both cases.

Procedures for investigation and resolution are set forth in the NCAP Standards Manual.

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### **Rationale for the change:**

*The NCAP standards are part of the Scouting America's Commitment to Safety and the Scouting America's Strategic Road Map Imperative to be a "Leader in Youth Safety". Compliance with the NCAP standards is a critical step toward meeting this organizational imperative.*

*Scouting America and NCAP are fortunate to work with many high quality professional and seasonal staff and Scouting volunteers. These individuals strive to fulfill the intent of the National Camp Standards and bring a high quality, safe program to our Scouts and participants. In a few cases NCAP has encountered staff or volunteers who have disregarded the purpose and requirements of the standards and potentially placed Scouts and participants at risk by their actions. An example of disregard of concern would be interpreting a standard or its specific requirements in a way that defeats the objective intent of the standard. In such cases, it may be necessary for NCAP to act to preserve the health and safety of participants and the integrity of the Scouting America brand. Similarly, there are occasional reports of NCAP assessment personnel applying an undue interpretation or bullying a camp. NCAP will not tolerate bullying of either national or local council personnel during an NCAP interaction.*

*If an issue arises and cannot be resolved by education or counseling during an NCAP assessment, the assessment team should raise it with the camp director and see if it can be resolved. If not, the NCAP team should note the noncompliant item professionally in its report and, if the case meets the standard, refer it to the zone assessment coordinator and national NCAP staff advisor for further action. Similarly, if a camp experiences incorrect interpretations by an assessor, they should appeal and if inappropriate behavior, the camp director in consultation with the council NCAP staff advisor should notify the zone assessment coordinator and national NCAP staff advisor.*

*Based upon comments from the field, NCAP's national staff advisor will investigate and consult with local council leadership after discussion with NCAP leadership. If the local council has taken appropriate action, NCAP will usually defer to the local council. If the local council has not taken appropriate action, NCAP may proceed as outlined in the Standards Manual and, in the case of NCS certificate holders, may refer the issue to NCS for investigation and action. Similarly, if NCAP receives complaints about NCAP personnel, NCAP will investigate and, if warranted, either drop the offending person from future NCAP involvement or in more egregious cases revoke their certificate and/or bar them from future NCAP service.*

*Also, based on the comments, NCAP clarifies that it would not take any membership status action but would only refer the concern to the appropriate membership standards authority at either the local or national council, as appropriate.*

*NCAP appreciates the broad support—from local councils camps and the assessment community, volunteer and professional alike—for developing and maintaining a professional quality assessment program to support Scout camps and camping.*

### **Proposed change to Standard PD-112**

In Circular No. 20, NCAP proposed to revise Standard PD-112 to make the process and scope of the council program design, safety and risk review clearer. The major changes included adding a "plan for review," that shows how the council will cover its camp programs, provid-

ing a longer time frame for the review to occur (over three years, for example, instead of every year), clarifying that an annual review of incidents is needed and the required recordkeeping, and defining more clearly responsibility for implementing measures identified during the council risk review.

### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #8 stated that it would be useful for NCAP to provide an example of such a tracking sheet.

Commenter #13 supported the changes but suggested that NCAP should develop training in conducting the review.

Commenter #18 stated that NCAP should provide an example tracking sheet and that much like

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the roll out of short-term camp administrators, training and assistance particularly for small councils would be needed.

Commenter #21 stated that the way Requirement A is written, it's not clear that the ERM committee is what's intended. Consider changing the first sentence of A to "The council committee responsible for the overall camping program has adopted a plan providing for independent review (e.g., Enterprise Risk Management committee) of each long-term camp activity". Commenter #21 also

noted that in the "ratio-nale for the change," it should be "scored" not "score" and "completely" not "completed."

**NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP appreciates the comments and will develop a tracking form to assist councils in both the periodic review function and demonstrating that they are complying with the intent of Standard PD-112.

In response to commenter #21, based on long-standing NCAP practice, NCAP does not prescribe the structure of local councils, which remain free to

organize as best fits their needs within the restrictions of Scouting's Rules and Regulations and policies. While NCAP and the National Council believe an enterprise risk management committee is best, a local council could substitute a committee of its board or create a special ad hoc committee comprised of individuals of appropriate expertise to undertake the review.

Because of the extent of changes, Standard PD-112 is being presented in full page format.

**Revised Standard PD-112 effective January 1, 2025:**

**PD-112. COUNCIL PROGRAM DESIGN, SAFETY AND RISK REVIEW**

*[Add Specific Requirements to the Standard as follows]*

**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 years or more frequently. The plan shall also call for a review of any significant incidents at each camp 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, 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. Recording.** The council committee or a staff member must record the review and any adopted measures on a tracking sheet.
- D. Camp director's or leader's 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.

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### INTERPRETATION:

A “significant incident” requiring annual review is any incident involving more than Scout-rendered first aid, which resulted in an illness affecting multiple 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:

- The assessment team shall review the tracking sheet to ensure that the review is occurring.
- 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.

### Rationale for the change:

*The purpose of these changes is to clarify the process for review of camp programs at long term camps, day camps, and short-term camps. NCAP recognizes that it is not feasible for enterprise risk management or similar committees to review every activity at every camp every year and engage in a meaningful review, particularly where the council operates multiple camps. Instead, NCAP requires that councils develop a plan that will enable their enterprise risk management committee (or other committee charged with this responsibility) to review each year’s incidents for trends and corrective actions and to review a set number or percentage of overall camp activities so that all activities are reviewed at least once over a three-year cycle. The plan for review should be written and available for assessment team inspection as should the tracking document showing that the review was completed.*

*NCAP is not mandating a specific form of review although it has uploaded an example form on [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP). For some councils it may be advantageous to bring in outside experts or additional volunteers to assist the primary committee where specialized knowledge of the program or risks may be needed. NCAP supports processes that councils find meet their needs.*

*Assessment teams should focus on whether the council has a plan and whether there is evidence that it is implementing the plan to review incidents and camp activities and has considered risks in its decisions. It is not the role of the assessment team to second guess the council’s decisions but assessment teams should hold councils accountable for implementing their self-designed program. If a council is implementing its program and an assessment team believes that the program is inappropriate, the program should be scored “compliant” and the issue forwarded to the zone coordinator or the NCAP Staff Advisor, who will reach out and discuss the team’s concerns with council leadership. Only after such a discussion would NCAP decide if any additional action is necessary. On the other hand, if a council has completely failed to undertake any review under its plan, that would warrant a noncompliant finding.*

### Proposed change to RP-159

#### RP-159. TRADING POST

NCAP proposed to add a recommendation to RP-159 that trading posts “provide appropriate menstrual products.

#### Comments on the proposal:

Commenter #13 supported the proposal and suggested changing “period” to “cycle.” Commenter #15 supported the proposal but

stated that the health lodge may be a better location, which was echoed by commenter #22, who stated that their council had provided in the health lodge with success.

#### NCAP response to comments:

NCAP agrees that the health lodge is likely a better location than the trading post. NCAP is altering its proposed revisions to RP-159 slightly

to reflect these comments and is adding similar language to Standard HS-506, On-Site Treatment Procedures.

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**Revised RP-159 and Revised Standard HS-506 effective January 1, 2025:**

### RP-159. TRADING POST

[Revise bullet point list by adding a new fourth bullet as follows]

- Unless provided through the health lodge, provide appropriate menstrual products with sensitivity that needs vary.

### HS-506. ON-SITE TREATMENT PROCEDURES

[Add a new paragraph to the end of Interpretation as follows:]

#### INTERPRETATION:

Procedures should address support for menstrual needs, including staffing, when referral to outside providers may be necessary, and menstrual products to be maintained either at the health lodge or elsewhere with sensitivity to young Scouts experiencing menstruation for the first time or irregularly and the need for various types and sizes of products.

#### Rationale for the change:

*As Scouting serves more girls and young women, it needs to ensure that their needs are met. For many girls, the camp environment may be the location of their first menstrual cycle and can cause menstrual cycles to occur erratically, making planning difficult. The camp must be prepared for these occurrences. A variety of sizes and types of products may be needed.*

**Final changes to Standard PS-201:**

### PS-201. AQUATICS: GENERAL

[Revise Specific Requirement H by

adding to end:]

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.

If Scouts are towed behind or allowed to swim from the boat, then the engine must be turned off prior to any entering or leaving the water. There must be a designated observer or lookout in addition to a qualified boat operator. The lookout and the boat operator will both visually inspect the water entirely around the boat and confirm by a head count during a buddy check that everyone in the party is either securely on board or well clear of the propulsion system before the engine is restarted.

#### Rationale for the change:

*This revision was requested by the Health and Safety and Aquatics teams after NCAP Circular No. 20 went to the field.*

*There are cases when Scouts will enter and exit the water from a boat. In these cases, care must be taken to ensure that the Scouts (and adults) are either back on the boat or well clear of it before the propulsion system is restarted to prevent inadvertently injuring a person in the water if too close to the propeller or running into a person in the water given limited maneuverability.*

**Proposed changes to Standard PS-206:**

### PS-206. COPE AND/OR CLIMBING PROGRAMS

NCAP proposed to re-

quire, beginning January 1, 2026, that a consistent posted process is used and vocalized to ensure that clothing, head protection, environment, connections, and knots are double checked in any belayed events.

#### Comments on the proposal:

Commenter #10 asked whether the proposed change would "obsolete" RP-256. The commenter also expressed some concern that it is inappropriate to "post" signs or posters on non-Scout properties or at a natural rock face.

Commenter #13 supported the change and noted that in Specific Requirement C.9 is should be "clothing, head protection, helmet and harness, environment, connections and knots".

Commenters #15 and #18 supported the change.

Commenter #21 noted that in the "rationale for the change" "enhances" should be "enhance."

#### Responses to comments:

While both NCAP and the National COPE & Climbing Subcommittee strongly support CHECK, they are aware that some camps and programs have developed alternative call out programs that achieve the same objective. So long as the camp's program meets all the elements of the standard, the camp may continue to use its program although NCAP and the

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National COPE & Climbing Committee prefer CHECK because it promotes national consistency. On the posting requirement, the “posting” does not need to be permanent. For example, a sandwich board or flipchart could be set out at a natural rock face and used while everyone is gearing up and climbing and then removed when the climb is done and everyone is off the rock face. NCAP has changed “post” to “display” to make this clearer. NCAP will correct the reference to CHECK in Specific Requirements C.4 and C.9.

**Revised Standard PS-206 effective January 1, 2025 and January 1, 2026, as specified:**

### PS-206. COPE AND/OR CLIMBING PROGRAMS

#### SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

[Revise Specific Requirements C.4 and C.9 to read as follows]

C....

4. Prior to any activity using life safety systems, participants are trained in:
  - Proper belaying technique
  - Backup belay technique
  - Belay transfers
  - Signal use
  - CHECK (see RP-159) or equivalent procedure
  - Equipment use
9. Until December 31, 2025, a consistent process is used by all COPE and climbing staff to ensure that clothing, helmet and harness 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 take down of life safety systems.

Not later than January 1, 2026, a consistent posted or displayed process is used and verbalized by all COPE and climbing staff to ensure that clothing, helmet and harness 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 take down of life safety systems.

#### Rationale for the change:

*Scouting America and other COPE and climbing providers have determined that mnemonic processes enhances compliance and safety. Based on experience and observation, NCAP is moving to further the benefit provided by these programs by making two enhancements: first, posting or displaying the mnemonic process, such as CHECK, used at the COPE/Climbing site to remind staff and participants to use the process; and second, requiring the parties going through the CHECK or similar mnemonic process to call out each step in a call/response format. Addition of a vocalization step helps ensure that all participants use the process.*

*One year of phase in time is*

*provided to allow development of training, signs, and other aids to implementation. Councils and camps are encouraged to implement this change as soon as the training and aids are ready.*

#### Proposed changes to Standard PS-222:

### PS-222. ADVENTURE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

NCAP has determined that the basic Scouting program provides sufficient safeguards for winter camping (i.e., camping during the winter season). The adventure threshold is triggered only if the camp is delivered using skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, sledging or sledding as part of the program.

[Delete Specific Requirement C.11.g]

C. Programs and Activities Covered.

11. Any of the following activities when they also meet the definition of a “trek program”:

~~g. Winter camping~~

#### Comments on the proposal:

Commenter #4 asked whether dog-sledding should continue to fall within the Adventure Standard.

Commenter #13 supported the proposal.

Commenter #21 asked whether “skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing” be added to C.11.e?

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**NCAP response to comments:**

Dog-sledding is a form of sledging or sledding and remains subject to Standard PS-222. See Specific Requirement C.11.e. Skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing are subject to Standard PS-222 if they occur in a trek activity. See Specific Requirement C.4. NCAP interprets skiing to include snowboarding and will revise Requirement C.4 appropriately.

**Final changes to Standard PS-222:**

**PS-222. ADVENTURE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

[Delete Specific Requirement C.11.g]

C. Programs and Activities Covered.

- 4. Cross-country or downhill skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing
- 11. Any of the following activities when they also meet the definition of a “trek program”:  
  - ~~g. Winter camping~~

**Rationale for the change:**

*NCAP has determined that the basic Scouting program provides sufficient safeguards for winter camping (i.e., camping during the winter season). The adventure threshold is triggered only if the camp is delivered using skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, sledging or sledding as part of the program. NCAP also realized that with the increased interest in snowboarding that it should be added explicitly to the standard.*

**Proposed changes to Standard PS-223:**

**PS-223. OTHER CAMP PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

NCAP proposed to revise the standard by moving the date for submittal as part of the application for authorization to the 2026 round and clarifying that programs addressed by a merit badge pamphlet or Scouting America program guide did not require a specific syllabus or program hazard analysis. NCAP proposed to list approved program guides on the NCAP website.

**Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #13 supported the proposal.

NCAP authorization reviewers raised concerns about the implementation timeline and whether rolling this standard out through the authorization process is the most protective approach because some camps may interpret the standard not to require these activities until they are called for in the authorization process.

Commenters #12 and #13 suggested the following literature as potentially meeting the “Program Guide” criteria under Standard PS-223:

- Aquatics Supervision (The manual)
- Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety
- Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water

Rescue

- Aquatics Staff Guide (2024 version in coordination)
- Aquatics Management Guide (2024 version in coordination)
- BSA Lifeguard Instructor Manual (2024 version in draft)
- Belay On
- Shooting Sports Manual
- Conservation Handbook

Commenter #12 noted that the cited aquatics materials would cover almost any program offered at most Scout camps but that the aquatics subcommittee believes a PHA and risk assessment should be conducted for any aquatic amusement features, such as an iceberg, blob, etc.

**NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP appreciates the comments and suggested program features. NCAP agrees with the authorization reviewers’ comment that this standard should apply broadly to all camps and not be rolled out as part of the authorization review process. NCAP agrees that if this comment is adopted, more time and training should be provided to local councils prior to verification of the standard. Based upon those suggestions and to better integrate Standards SA-002, PD-111, PD-112 and PS-223, NCAP is making the changes outlined below.

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*Revised Standards SA-002 and PS-223 effective January 1, 2025:*

### SA-002. AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

[Add new Specific Requirements as follows]

D. Application required. When required by the National Camp Accreditation Committee but not less frequently than once every five years, a local council shall submit an application for an authorization to operate a Scout camping program.

1. The application shall be submitted on the approved NCAP forms, shall include all required information indicated on those forms, shall address each camp property and long-term camp that the council intends to operate during the term of the authorization to operate, which is normally five years.
2. Effective January 1, 2026, the application shall include, for each long-term camp and the group of day camps and short-term camps generically, a copy of the council's plan of review and current tracking sheet required pursuant to Standard PD-112, Specific Requirements A and G. In addition for any program or activity at a camp authorized pursuant to Standard PD-111 or Standard PS-223, a statement of the program or activity, an identification of the program syllabus used, and an identification of the program hazard analysis supporting the program, with an indication of the date they were last reviewed under either Standard PD-112 or

on an individual program or activity basis. The information required may be combined into a single tracking sheet at the council's discretion.

### PS-223. OTHER CAMP PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

#### STANDARD:

**If offered, other programs and activities not addressed in Standards PS-201 through PS-222 are conducted in a fun and safe manner, in accordance with the BSA National Camp Standards, Guide to Safe Scouting, and Age-Appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities, and with any program- or activity-specific procedures specified by the council pursuant to Standards PD-111 and PD-112.**

#### SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:

- A. Program Guide or Syllabus. Each activity shall be conducted in accordance with an approved Scouting America program guide or an approved council syllabus. The program guide or syllabus shall be available for review by the authorization team or the assessment team.
- B. Program Hazard Analysis. Each activity shall be conducted in accordance with a program hazard analysis prepared in accordance with Standard PD-111 and reviewed and approved by the council pursuant to Standard PD-112.

#### INTERPRETATION:

~~Starting with the January 1, 2025, round of authorization review, councils will be asked to submit a comprehensive list of programs and activities for each camp with appropriate program hazard analy-~~

~~sis (PHA) (see Standards PD-111 and PD-112) no more than five years old supporting each activity. Programs authorized under Standard PS-223 and addressed by current BSA merit badge pamphlets or an approved Scouting program guide may satisfy this requirement by a reference to the merit badge pamphlet or approved Scouting America program guide unless the council or camp has identified a unique issue requiring additional safety procedures. A list of Scouting America program guides satisfying this requirement is maintained on [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP). If no approved Scouting America standard or program guide addresses the program or activity, then the council must develop an appropriate syllabus and hazard assessment pursuant to Standard PD-111 and Standard PD-112. The approved syllabus and risk management provisions from the risk review shall be followed.~~

All activities must comply with law. See Standard AO-801.

#### VERIFICATION:

Beginning January 1, 2026, NCAP will begin assessing compliance with the following documentation requirements for programs and activities authorized by Standard PS-223:

- Review of program syllabi and program hazard analysis for proof of council review and approval pursuant to either Standard PD-111 or Standard PD-112. For camps that have completed authorization review in 2026 or later, this review should address any new programs or activities authorized under Standards PD-111 and PS-223.

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### Rationale for the Change:

The original standard is split into two parts, with those aspects aimed at the application process separated into Standard SA-002, Authorization to Operate Required, new Specific Requirement D, providing specifics of what must be provided during the authorization process. What must be provided is essentially the same as the program hazard and risk review now required by Standard PD-112.

In Standard PS-223, the standard is clarified by stating in Specific Requirement A that for program activities not covered by one of the National Camp Standards Program Specific (PS) Standards, then the council must indicate whether it is relying on a Scouting America approved program guide (e.g., something like a merit badge pamphlet, Aquatics Supervision or similar) or has developed a council syllabus for the program. Specific Requirement B then states that for programs not covered by a Scouting America approved program guide, the council must develop an approved program hazard analysis under Standard PD-111 and have it approved pursuant to Standard PD-112. An existing program hazard analysis may be extended to cover the program or activity if it undergoes appropriate review. A list of BSA program guides satisfying this requirement will be available on [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP) no later than January 1, 2025.

### Proposed changes to Standard SQ-401. Camp Staff Qualification: General

NCAP proposed to rewrite Standard SQ-401 to make current BSA policy clearer by addressing registra-

tion, age, and special cases separately. It also clarifies the handling of camp staff and camp personnel after September 1, 2023 changes. NCAP also proposed to clarify the policy that allows escorted volunteers to provide program during the day while accompanied by camp staff to enrich Scouting programs or to the use of Cub Scout leaders and parents to supplement camp staff when supervised or when walking dens between program areas so long as there are multiple individuals and at least one is a registered leader requiring a background check.

### Comments on the proposal:

Commenter #7 indicated it would be good if the standard provided how to access the International Department.

Commenter #13 supported the proposal.

Commenter #18 stated that it was not clear that proposed Specific Requirement A.3 fully captures the transition requirements and believes that they are limited to 30 days.

### NCAP response to comments:

NCAP agrees with commenter #18 that the original draft did not fully capture all of the nuances of youth protection policy on this point. Both the standard and interpretation were revised to bet-

ter reflect youth protection policies.

Because of the extensive changes to Standard SQ-401, it is being presented in full page format on the next page.

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### **SQ-401. CAMP STAFF QUALIFICATION: GENERAL**

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Applies to: Long-term camps; Short-term camps; Day camps

#### **STANDARD:**

**All camp staff are appropriately registered as members of Scouting America. All other camp personnel who are not registered members of Scouting America meet equivalent criteria pursuant to Standard PD-109. All camp staff meet required age restrictions.**

#### **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD:**

##### **A. Additional registration requirements for long-term camp staff and long-term camp personnel.**

1. Long-term camp staff 17 years of age and younger during their time at camp must register using the registration category “Council Camp Staff Youth” if at a local council camp or “National Camp Staff Youth” if at a national high adventure base.
2. Long-term camp staff 18 years of age and older at any time during their time at camp must register using the registration code “Council Camp Staff Adult” if at a local council camp or “National Camp Staff” if at a national high adventure base.
3. The registration requirements in Specific Requirement A.1 and A.2 apply even if the person is already registered in another capacity. Individuals who turn 18 years of age during the camp season must provide both applications and may continue to serve after their 18th birthday in accordance with current youth protection standards while their application is processed and background check conducted.
4. Contractor personnel at a long-term camp must either be registered in accordance with Specific Requirements A.1 or A.2 or meet equivalent criteria under Standard PD-109.

##### **B. Minimum age requirements.**

1. Long-term camp staff and camp personnel must be 15 years of age or older at the start of camp except as provided herein.
2. Long-term camp staff counselors-in-training (CITs) and day camp staff must be 14 years of age or older.

##### **C. Compliance with labor laws.**

1. Camp staff and camp personnel 14 or 15 years of age cannot perform hazardous duty, such as working on or operating a motor vehicle and maintenance or operation of power-driven equipment. Camp staff and camp personnel must also comply with the SAFE Project Tool Use guidance. Whichever is more stringent controls.
2. Camp staff and camp personnel 14 or 15 years of age may not work more than 8 hours in any day; work more than 40 hours in any week; or work before 7 am at any time or after 7 pm except from June 1 through Labor Day when the evening hour is extended to 9 pm.
3. All camps must assure compliance with both federal and state labor laws. State labor laws vary and may require a seasonal camp staff application, a letter of agreement along with a written position description and access to a camp staff manual prior to starting work and may differ from Specific Requirements 1 and 2 above. Some states require work permits.

##### **D. International camp staff.**

1. International camp staff must be 18 years of age or older, have been approved by the Scouting America International Department, and may not hold any camp staff position for which National Camping School training is mandatory.
2. International youth/visitors may not serve on camp staff.
3. The local council is responsible for adhering to all U.S. State Department requirements.

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### E. Miscellaneous requirements.

1. 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.
2. The camp has a staff organization chart and a policy specifying minimum staff requirements.
3. The camp has an open door policy that encourages staff to raise any youth protection, safety, health or standards compliance concerns with their supervisor or the camp director or, if the camp director is the source of concern, the Scout Executive or designated council executive board member. This policy is communicated to the staff during training.

### INTERPRETATION:

*[Revise the first three bullets as follows]*

- Camp staff includes all personnel, paid or volunteer, working under the direction of the council or camp management, who work at a camp or interact with camp participants unless they work for a contractor. Camp staff includes employees, CITs, and continuing volunteers (e.g., camp commissioners, and volunteers asked by the camp management to assist program on an ongoing basis).
- Camp personnel includes all personnel, working under the direction of the council or camp management and employed by contractors working at the camp, who do not typically interact with camp participants as part of their assigned duties. Examples might include kitchen, commissary or warehouse staff working for a food service contractor or staff working for a qualified scuba contractor.
- 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; (2) parents and volunteers in day camps who assist in program while day camp staff are present and provide supervision; and (3) parents and volunteers in day camp who assist by walking youth between program areas supervised by day camp staff, so long as there are at least two adults and at least one adult is a registered volunteer in Scouting America

*[Add new paragraph at the end]*

Camp staff who turn 18 years of age at a camp must follow Scouting America youth protection policy applicable to this change in status.

### REFERENCES:

The U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division issues “Child Labor Provisions for Nonagricultural Occupations under the Fair Labor Standards Act” at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/childlabor101.pdf> which provides general guidance on child labor issues at the federal level. Consult your state labor department for state laws.

Scouting America’s youth protection policies addressing change in status during an event appear here:

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/gss01/#a>

The SAFE Project Tool Use guidelines are available at:

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/toc/>

The specific guidance is found in the Appendix at the bottom of the page.

Information on the process for hiring International Camp Staff members is found at the following link:

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/se-packet/2024-03-25/2024-International-Camp-Staff-Program-Info-Sheet.pdf>

An example of Scouting America’s open door policy is found in the Camp Staff Employee Handbook Template, section 9 and is made available to Scout executives.

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### **Rationale for the changes:**

These changes make current Scouting America policy clearer by addressing registration, age, and special cases separately. It also clarifies the handling of camp staff and camp personnel after September 1, 2023, changes. Camp staff are all employees and volunteers, except as excluded in bullet three, who report directly to the council and its camp director. Camp personnel are individuals who report primarily to a contractor who is responsible to the camp director or council. Camp staff must be registered as outlined in Specific Requirements A.1 or A.2. Camp personnel must be registered under Specific Requirements A.1 or A.2 or may meet alternative requirements in accordance with Standard PD-109. Careful attention to the requirements of Standard PD-109 is required.

These changes do not affect current Scouting America policy that allows escorted volunteers to provide program during the day while accompanied by camp staff to enrich Scouting programs or to the use of Cub Scout leaders and parents to supplement camp staff when supervised or when walking dens between program areas so long as there are multiple individuals and at least one is a registered leader requiring a background check. Questions should be directed to National Outdoor Programs staff at [outdoorprograms@scouting.org](mailto:outdoorprograms@scouting.org).

A reference to Scouting America materials on hiring international camp staff was added at the request of commenters during the standards review process.

[Originally proposed as change

to Standard SQ-402 and moved to SQ-401.E] Scouting America's commitment to the safety of its members, participants and staff requires that camp staff is comfortable raising concerns about youth protection, safety, health and standards compliance issues with supervisors and the camp director. In addition, good governance requires that if the problem potentially involves the camp director, an alternative, either the Scout Executive or a designated member of the council's executive board is an alternative resource for these concerns to be expressed. The Scout Executive may designate a senior professional staff member with responsibility for camps, safety or youth protection as an alternate.

### **Final administrative changes to Standard SQ-402:**

#### **SQ-402. CAMP STAFF TRAINING: GENERAL**

[Revise course names as follows]

B.2. Understanding and Preventing ~~Peer-on-Peer Youth-on-Youth~~ Abuse Training for Camp Staff. All camp staff must also complete Understanding and Preventing ~~Peer-on-Peer Youth-on-Youth~~ Abuse Training for Camp Staff, No. 430-149, during staff training and prior to commencing work with youth campers....

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Understanding and Preventing ~~Peer-on-Peer Youth-on-Youth~~ Abuse Training for Camp Staff, No. 430-149, is available online at [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP)

### **Proposed change to Standard SQ-403. Camp Management**

NCAP proposed to revise Standard SQ-403 to clarify that the difference in wording between the "camp director" and "program director" requirements does not make the program director position optional except as specifically discussed in the standard.

#### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #13 supported the proposal.

Commenter #15 supported the proposal but added that NCAP should clarify whether a program director can supervise multiple camps.

#### **NCAP response to comments:**

In answer to commenter #15, either the camp director or the program director at a reservation (multi-camp camp property) may support all of the camps, but one or the other must be individual to each camp. This is discussed in the existing language of Standard SQ-403 and is to ensure that each camp has at least one top leader giving full-time attention to the safety and quality of the camp.

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### Revised Standard SQ-403:

#### **SQ-403. CAMP MANAGEMENT**

[Revise Specific Requirements A and B as follows]

##### **A. Camp director. ...**

2. ...

- c. For long-term camps, has completed Camp Director Understanding and Preventing Peer-on-Peer Youth-on-Youth Abuse Training for Camp Directors.

##### **B. Program director of a long term or day camp. Long-term camps and day camps must have a program director for the camp, base or reservation (in multiple camp facilities) meeting the following requirements:**

3. ...

- c. For long-term camps, has completed Camp Director Understanding and Preventing Peer-on-Peer Youth-on-Youth Abuse Training for Camp Directors.

#### **Rationale for the change:**

*Understanding and Preventing Peer-on-Peer Abuse Training for Camp Directors has had its name updated from Youth-on-Youth to Peer-on-Peer.*

*Camps have experienced confusion due to the difference in wording between Specific Requirement A for camp directors and Specific Requirement B for program directors, leading some long-term camps and day camps to conclude that a program director is optional. The language change clarifies Scouting America's position that all long-term camps and day camps require both key*

*leaders, except for trek program camps, which may substitute a trek director for the program director.*

#### **Proposed changes to Standard SQ-406:**

NCAP proposed to revise Specific Requirements A and B of Standard SQ-406 to make them clearer. It also proposed to revise Specific Requirement B to better conform to the scuba changes made in the 2024 standards changes.

#### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #11, on behalf of the national aquatics subcommittee, stated that the subcommittee would like to see Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat added to Specific Requirement B.2 (which currently requires Current certification in CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer or Health Care Worker and American Red Cross First Aid (or equivalents)).

#### **NCAP response to comment:**

NCAP agrees with commenter #11 and will add Safe Swim Defense to the requirements for swim area supervision and Safety Afloat to the requirements for boating area supervision.

#### **Additional changes to Standard SQ-406 due to change in American Red Cross lifeguard policies**

*As discussed on page 2 of this Circular, the American Red*

*Cross terminated the program that allowed Scouting to train BSA Lifeguards using American Red Cross materials. This change has required some revisions to the standards.*

### Revised Standard SQ-406:

#### **SQ-406. AQUATICS STAFF**

[Revise Specific Requirement A and B as follows]

##### **A. Program supervision. At all camps:**

1. The aquatics director is 21 years of age or older.
2. The aquatics director holds either (a) or (b) and meets any additional requirements under (c):
  - a. A current certificate of training as a BSA Aquatics Instructor from a National Camping School; OR
  - b. If an individual trained as a BSA Aquatics Instructor is not available, the camp may apply for and be issued a waiver that would allow a person 21 years of age or older, currently trained by the American Red Cross as a Lifeguard Instructor, in Lifeguard Management, and as a Water Safety Instructor (all three required) and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer or Health Care Worker to fill the position for one season. The waiver will require the individual to review the Swimming and Water Rescue and Paddle Craft Safety PowerPoint presentations at [www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs](http://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs) under the Aquatics tab and to review the relevant sections of Aquat-

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ics Supervision, No. 34346;  
AND

- c. State or local regulation may require previous lifeguard experience and should be reviewed to ensure compliance.
3. The aquatics director is currently certified as an ~~BSA Lifeguard~~, American Red Cross Lifeguard; or equivalent training recognized by state legislation or regulation (a “valid lifeguard certification”) and is currently trained in American Red Cross First Aid and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer or Health Care Worker, or equivalents.
4. For long-term camps, the aquatics director holds no other staff position and lives on-site if youth participants or staff remain on the premises overnight.
5. If a scuba activity is the only aquatics activity at the camp, then the requirements of Standard PS-203 must be met in lieu of Standard SQ-406. Specific Requirements A through C. Specific Requirements D through F continue to apply.

### B. Aquatic Area Supervision.

~~Camps with separated aquatics areas on camp property or reservation. At all camps~~ Each aquatics area shall be supervised by a person, 18 years of age or older, who holds the following training and credentials when the aquatics director is not physically present at the area:

[Revise Specific Requirements 3, 4, 5, and add new B.6 as follows]

3. For a swimming area, current certification in Safe Swim Defense and either a cur-

rent BSA Aquatics Instructor card from National Camping School or American Red Cross Lifeguard Management training

4. For a boating area, current certification in Safety Afloat and at least one of the following: (a) a current BSA Aquatics Instructor card from National Camping School, (b) current Scouting America Paddle Craft Safety training, or (c) an instructor rating from the American Canoe Association or other national boating organization appropriate for the activity
5. For adventure or trek activities, other than scuba, comply with Standard SQ-411 for activities that occur on trek and off camp property or Specific Requirement D for swimming activities at a non-Scouting America owned or operated swimming facility
6. For scuba activities, comply with Standard PS-203 in lieu of Standard SQ-406. Specific Requirement B.

### REFERENCES:

The current list of equivalent training for American Red Cross First Aid and American Red Cross CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer may be found at:

<https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/CPR-for-BSA-Lifeguard-Equivalent-Options-02132024.pdf>

### Rationale for the changes:

*The changes to Specific Requirement A are being made to increase the clarity of the requirements for the aquatics director by making it clearer what the alternative is to the BSA Aquatics Instructor and clarifying that the other require-*

*ments must be met by all aquatics directors, regardless of whether they are a BSA Aquatics Instructor or meeting the alternative requirements. The second change clarifies that when scuba is the only aquatics activity, the requirements of Standard PS-203 apply in lieu of Specific Requirement A through C. Specific Requirements D and F would apply if those options are used in delivery of the scuba program although the outside providers under Specific Requirement D must also meet the requirements as a qualified scuba contractor under Standard PS-203. If a PWC program is offered as part of the scuba program, then both Standards PS-203 and SQ-406 must be met.*

*BSA Lifeguard is deleted because Scouting America will not be offering it after late 2024. BSA Lifeguard cards remain “valid lifeguard certifications” if recognized by state law until they expire. They cannot be renewed.*

*The changes to Specific Requirement B are being made to clarify that each separate aquatics area requires an area supervisor who is 18 years of age or older and holds current relevant training. NCAP defines a “separate aquatics area” as an area, separated by distance or other barriers, that a single individual cannot meaningfully observe, control, and direct emergency response activities. An example of a single aquatics area might be a regular pool and a shallow play pool within a common fence line. An example of separate aquatics areas would be a pool and a lake front separated by a fence and several hundred feet or two pools on either side of the shower house. Specific Requirement B is also being revised to add*

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*Safe Swim Defense for swimming areas and Safety Afloat for boating areas and to address scuba programs, which must meet the requirements of Standard PS-203 during the scuba program. Sites that alternate between scuba and other aquatics programs during the same camp must meet the requirements of Specific Requirement B when the non-scuba programs are running.*

*Finally, councils and camps are urged to find alternative methods to train lifeguards needed for camp operations as outlined in page 2 of this Circular. Lifeguard training should be completed prior to staff week to allow time for site-specific and program-specific training.*

### **Proposed changes to Standard SQ-412:**

NCAP proposed to revise Standard SQ-412 to make it clearer that local councils and camps will determine the training requirements for first year camper director if the National Camping School option is not selected. NCAP encourages all camps to attend National Camping School, particularly where a program has not been as strong as the council and camp would like for more than one year.

### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #7 stated that the standard should clarify whether the outdoor skills and first year camper directors are different individuals or if they can be the same individual.

Commenter #13 supported the proposal and believes

it may help improve the quality of first year camper programs.

Commenter #15 vigorously supported the proposal.

Commenter #21 questioned whether the reference to Bobcat still is appropriate given the 2024 changes to the Cub Scout program.

### **NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP is not seeking to dictate how camps structure their staff and is aware that many camps have first year camper programs reporting up through the outdoor skills programs. What NCAP is seeking to achieve is assurance that the individual directing the first year camper program has appropriate skills and qualifications. If the area director is the outdoor skills director, then the first year camper director should have these skills. If the camp has multiple staff providing first year camper programming, then the director for those multiple staff should have the training or skills outlined. If the outdoor skills director is combined with the first year camper position with no first year camper staff, then the outdoor skills director would need to meet both set of criteria.

**Revised Standard SQ-412 effective January 1, 2025:**

### **SQ-412. OTHER PROGRAM STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

*[Revise Specific Requirement D as follows]*

D. In a Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scout day camp or long-term camp, if a first-year camper program is offered, the first-year camper director is at least 18 years of age and holds a valid certificate of training from the Outdoor Skills section of the National Camping School or has equivalent skills as determined by the council.

### **INTERPRETATION:**

*[Add new bullet point as follows]*

- First year camper director. Camps offering a first year camper program must have a director with the appropriate NCS certification or equivalent skills. Equivalent skills means prior camp staff experience and prior multi-year experience as a new Scout assistant Scoutmaster or Troop Guide (for Scouts BSA) or den leader or den chief (for Cub Scouts) or relevant experience as a Venturing or Sea Scouting advisor or unit officer.

### **Rationale for the change:**

*The change clarifies that for first year camper programs, local councils may determine whether the candidate has “equivalent skills” based upon their prior experience in the Scouting program. The fundamental intent is that the candidate has both prior camp staff experience (so they have experiences to draw upon about camp to help guide the first year campers) and experience working with “new*

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*to Scouting” youth so that they are familiar with common questions and misconceptions and can put the youth at ease to enjoy and gain the most from the camp experience. It is also useful if the candidate has strong experience with the first year program for Scouts BSA (Scout through First Class ranks).*

### **Proposed changes to Standard HS-505:**

NCAP proposed that camp health care policies should address whether the camp will stock or administer, as appropriate, preventative drugs and devices such as Narcan or epinephrine as necessary and appropriate for the camp community. Policies should also address appropriate staffing and sensitivity to the needs of the more diverse populations in camp that may need medical care or intervention.

### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #13 supported the change.

Commenter #18 stated that NCAP may also want to comment on Albuterol or a bronchodilator. These are even more common than use of an epi-pen. Scouts who leave their rescue inhaler behind in their tent or misplace while at camp have needed this intervention, and when the health officer doesn't need to go search for the youth's inhaler this can be very beneficial.

Commenter #21 suggested rewording the discussion about Narcan as follows: Change “Narcan, epinephrine as necessary” to “Narcan or epinephrine pens, as necessary.” Commenter #21 also questioned how the comment in the final paragraph about air quality exposure was related to the proposed changes.

### **NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP agrees with commenter #18 that Albuterol or bronchodilators are another appropriate addition if allowed by state law. It has clarified, in response to commenter #21, that health care policies should address air quality related issues due to increased public and regulatory awareness after recent wildfire events.

*Revised Standard HS-505 effective January 1, 2025:*

### **HS-505. MEDICAL CARE POLICIES (COUNCIL AND CAMP)**

#### **INTERPRETATION:**

*[Add new paragraph at end]*

Council health care policies should address whether the camp will stock or administer, as appropriate, preventative drugs and devices such as Narcan, epinephrine pens, Albuterol or bronchodilators as necessary and appropriate for the camp community. Policies should also address appropriate staffing and sensitivity to the needs of the more diverse popula-

tions in camp that may need medical care or intervention.

Council health care policy may need to address restrictions on staff or participant activities in case of wildfire smoke exposure.

#### **Rationale for the change:**

*Some camps may find themselves in situations where campers or camp visitors experience the need for preventative drugs and devices such as Narcan or epinephrine pens. The Interpretation is revised to make it clear that local councils and camps may arrange for provision of such devices if there is a perceived need as part of Scouting's commitment to safety. While Scouting does not condone illicit drug use or prescription sharing, not all Scouting families have access to reliable pharmacies or the ability to fully control access to their medications. Similarly, camps and participants are unable to fully prevent possible exposure to insect stings and bites that may result in an anaphylactic shock.*

*The council in consultation with the council health supervisor should also evaluate whether its service plan and personnel will alleviate potential patient and staff discomfort that may hinder proper diagnosis and treatment to the extent reasonably practicable. For example, teenagers may find it difficult to discuss certain physiological symptoms with a member of the opposite sex, particularly when they are near the same age. Councils should consider staffing solutions, such as having volunteers of both sexes on call, to help alleviate such situations.*

*Finally, with the increase in prevalence of wildfires in some areas, affected councils and*

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*camp should evaluate whether their state has issued exposure guidelines or whether exposure guidelines should be adopted in consultation with their council health supervisor. Councils and camps must comply with any applicable state or local law.*

### **Proposed changes to RP-551:**

NCAP proposed to revise RP-551 to reflect lessons learned and guidance obtained at the National Outdoor Conference and in discussions with mental, emotional and social health (MESH) providers and to respond to requests from local councils that it provide a more structured approach to addressing this issue.

### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #13 supported the proposal but noted that it would require changes to "a lot" of existing BSA and NCS train-

ing to fully implement.

Commenter #18 supported the proposal and thanked NCAP for its work in this area.

Commenter #21 had several comments. (1) Recommended using "associate council health supervisor (mental health) in lieu of "designee" and make this change throughout; (2) in Specific Requirement A.4.b, replacing "frequency" with "frequently"; (3) in the "rationale for the change," replace "resource" in the first paragraph with "provide"; and (4) suggested "precipitously" may be preferable to "precipitately."

### **NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP appreciates the comments. In light of comment #13, NCAP will

change the effective date of RP-551 as revised to January 1, 2026 and publish both versions of RP-551 in the 2025 National Camp Standards Manual. NCAP has accepted most of the comments of commenter #21 and has standardized on the term "council health supervisor/designee" to reflect that decisions under this recommended practice should be made by the council health supervisor, if willing and capable, or by that person's designee for mental health issues, if the council health supervisor is not willing or capable. This approach makes the recommended practice more concise.

Because RP-551 is being wholly rewritten it is provided in full page format.

### **Revised RP-551 effective January 1, 2026:**

## **RP-551. MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH (MESH) SUPPORT**

*[Replace the existing Recommended Practice in its entirety]*

### **RECOMMENDED PRACTICE**

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

1. 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.
2. Identification of professional MESH resources available within the council service areas, services they provide, and how they can be accessed.
3. 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.
4. A training plan for camp leadership that addresses:
  - a. Likely mental health needs of camp population.
  - b. Awareness/recognition of symptoms of frequently occurring mental health problems likely to occur in the council's camps.
  - c. Assessment of available resources.

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- d. Appropriate de-escalation techniques.
- e. Guidance on when and where to get additional help/resources and whom to notify
- f. Implementation of camp MESH Implementation Plan.
- g. Incident reporting.

**B. 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:

1. 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.
2. Identification of a qualified mental health professional or network on call to assist camp leadership in responding to MESH incidents.
3. 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 with council leadership, family, and outside agencies in a way that both protects and respects the individuals with the MESH incident.
4. Identification and training of MESH incident response team.
5. 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.

**C. 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.

**D. 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.

### REFERENCES:

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:

[https://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:

<https://allianceforcamphealth.org/education-and-resources/mesh-resources>

### Rationale for the change:

*Scouting continues to work to improve and enhance its awareness of and ability to support staff, camper and visitor mental, emotional and social health needs. The first version of this Recommended Practice called on councils to develop resources to assist their camp leadership in addressing this growing issue. Councils and camps have requested additional guidance on the development of appropriate MESH support for staff and participants. At the 2023 National Outdoor Conference, several MESH subject matter experts presented on the elements of a camp MESH plan. This replacement recommended practice provides more detail based*

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*upon the experiences shared at the National Outdoor Conference and gained by Scouting America national support teams. The new recommended practice provides structure and calls on the council to assess the needs of its specific staff and camper population and to develop an appropriate implementation strategy and then to provide its camp leadership with those resources. While Scouting America initially hoped to convert this Recommended Practice into a Standard in three to five years time, experience has shown that the topic is complex and that Scouting can learn from experts and partners in this area. It is important, however, that Scouting and camps keep moving forward and building capacity to address this area of camper needs. Accordingly, Scouting America will keep the Recommended Practice in place during this process rather than moving too precipitously to a standard.*

*Scouting America remains committed to providing more resources to councils and camps to support MESH efforts and councils and camps are encouraged to monitor the NCAP Circular, Health and Safety webpage, and NCAP webpage, for more resources. Councils and camps are encouraged to communicate successes and lessons learned to NCAP and the National Health and Safety Team.*

### **Proposed changes to Standard FA-713:**

NCAP proposed to update the interpretation of Standard FA-713 (Hazardous Materials) to reflect changes in regulatory terminology and provide

clearer guidance on how SDS should be handled.

#### **Comments on the proposal:**

Commenter #13 supported the proposal.

Commenter #17 supplied a revised version of the proposal to more clearly distinguish between pesticides (regulated by EPA) and other chemicals (primarily regulated under OSHA).

Commenter #20 stated that "within reasonable proximity" had been over-interpreted by an NCAP assessor to require a camp ranger to keep the SDS with him in his truck or back hoe and recommended adding additional language to more closely track the Hazardous Communication Standard.

Commenter #21 asked whether there should also be an awareness requirement, i.e., that staff who will be using hazardous materials be made aware of safety risks and that SDSs are available near where the materials are used or stored?

#### **NCAP response to comments:**

NCAP agrees with the commenters' proposals in large part and is mostly adopting the proposed language in lieu of its initial proposed change. NCAP will continue to distinguish between "consumer use" to make it

clear that councils do not need to obtain SDS for materials brought in for personal use by staff. It has also simplified the proposed training from that suggested by commenter #20 to remind councils that training is required. The details of that training are as required by OSHA or the state equivalent under Standard AO-801.

### **Revised Standard FA-713 effective January 1, 2025:**

#### **FA-713. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

##### **STANDARD:**

**All hazardous materials are used under prescribed methods and are handled and stored under correct methods. Staff handling hazardous materials should be made aware of the risks and how to access and interpret the label or SDS.**

##### **INTERPRETATION:**

Hazardous materials are any products that are either a physical hazard (such as corrosive or flammable) or a health hazard (toxic). Such products include those regulated as pesticides as well as items such as paints, acids or cleaning solvents. Hazardous materials do not include consumer products (other than pesticides) brought on-site by staff or campers for personal use only and used in a consumer fashion.

When pesticides such as insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, disinfectants and water treatment chemicals (such as chlorine) are used, they must be approved for those uses by the US EPA. Use instructions on the product label-

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ing must be strictly followed.

All containers of hazardous materials must be properly labeled. Labels must not be removed or defaced. If hazardous materials are transferred to another container, the new container must be marked appropriately unless it will be used only by the person filling the container during a single work event and will then be returned to the primary container or discarded.

Current Safety Data Sheets (SDS) must should be readily accessible to staff in their primary work area, are used or stored, including in trek situations. Handling and storage instructions on the labels and SDSs of all hazardous materials must be carefully followed. Disposal of hazardous materials or their containers is done according to label instructions or in accordance with applicable regulations. The camp complies with all of OSHA's Hazard Communication Standards.

SDS sheets for chemicals no longer in use must be kept for 30 years after last use unless the camp keeps another record documenting employee exposure. Current and no longer in use SDS sheets should be kept separately to minimize burden and confusion. Electronic records are acceptable so long as they are readily accessible to staff and backups are available in the event of power or system outage.

It is recommended that at the close of each camp season the camp review all hazardous materials on the property and dispose of those which are expired, unusable, or unsuitable for the camp environment.

### VERIFICATION:

[Add new bullets as follows]

- Observation of hazardous material use and storage areas and whether SDS are available within reasonable proximity.
- Cross-reference of observed chemicals with SDS sheets and check a sample of SDS sheets to ensure they are current (within last three years).
- Discussion of when the camp last reviewed chemicals in storage and retired expired, unusable or unsuitable items.

### REFERENCE:

Requirements for hazardous communication are found at 29 CFR Section 1910.1200

### Rationale for the change:

*The change to the standard and interpretation is to clarify the handling of hazardous materials and provide more guidance on expectations for hazard communication. In addition, it is a recommended practice that camps review and dispose, appropriately, hazardous materials that are expired, unusable or unsuitable for the camp environment. This reduces the risk of unintended exposure or release. "Readily accessible at the primary place of employment" does not require that the SDS be "at hand" at all times but must be readily accessed at a place the staff would be or can easily reach during the normal work day and does not require them to request access from camp management or supervision.*

*The relevant OSHA regulation is provided in the reference to assist camps with questions. Camps must assure compliance with any additional state or local require-*

*ments. Standard AO-801.*

### Revised Standard AO-805 effective January 1, 2025:

*NCAP received a comment, in response to the "Request for Additional Comment" in NCAP Circular No. 20 that the duplicative discussion of safety data sheets (SDS) in Standards FA-713 and AO-805 be eliminated. NCAP agrees that Standard FA-713 is the more appropriate place for the general discussion of SDS and is therefore revising the discussion in Standard AO-805, Interpretation, as follows, to more correctly discuss their use in that standard:*

### AO-805. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

#### INTERPRETATION:

*[Revise paragraph in Interpretation as follows]*

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for hazardous materials present in a program area should be consulted in preparing emergency response plans for that area for hazardous materials must be immediately accessible. SDS sheets should be available at the specific area where the material is used, and a composite set of SDS sheets should be maintained at the camp office.

### Revised Standard AO-808 effective January 1, 2025:

### AO-808. REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNCIL REPORTING

*[Revise Specific Requirement B as follows]*

**B. Camp.** At camp, the camp director, or camp leader for a short-term camp, shall ensure that all required reports are filed within the times set forth on the Scouting America Incident

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Report page. The camp director or camp leader shall notify the professional advisor of all incidents requiring reporting, including those requiring notice to the National Crisis Communication Support team (PR@scouting.org), occupational injury reporting, and U.S. Coast Guard reporting. If the professional advisor or Scout executive cannot be reached within the required times, the camp director or camp leader shall make any required reports.

### **Rationale for the change:**

*Short term camps don't always have a "camp director" but may have another title, such as camporee chair, conclave director, or similar. The requirement is revised to use the more generic term "camp leader" to cover these variable titles.*

### **Call for Additional Comments on the National Camp Standards**

In NCAP Circular No. 20, NCAP requested comment on any other aspects of the National Camp Standards or proposal that caused concern. NCAP received the following comments and offers the following responses:

**Comment:** Commenter #2 stated that the NCAP assessment requirements are unclear on whether camp properties standards should be assessed by the Zone team during a long-term camp assessment in addition to the council self-assessment process. In particular, the question was directed at Standards FA-704 and FA-705.

**NCAP Response:** This comment is answered by Standard

SA-003, Specific Requirement A.3, which states that the zone team conducting a long-term camp assessment will also assess the property, including any applicable facilities (FA) standards.

**Comment:** Commenter #2 noted that Standards SQ-406 (aquatics staff) and SQ-409 (COPE and Climbing staff) apply to camp properties as well as camps but standards SQ-407 (range and target, firearms) and SQ-408 do not and inquired about the apparent inconsistency.

**NCAP Response:** Standard SQ-406's application to camp properties is limited to Specific Requirement F, which applies to the pool operator, which is inherently tied to the property and not the camp. SQ-409 applies to camp properties because the COPE and Climbing standards apply to any COPE/Climbing course on council properties so that there is appropriate supervision of all COPE/Climbing activities. SQ-407 and SQ-408 apply to range and target activity programs to make it clear that they apply at short-term camps away from camp properties. The staffing and program design standards apply regardless of where the program is operated.

**Comment:** Commenter #9 stated that current standard FA-710, garbage and sewerage service, should have an emphasis on recycling or waste reduction added. The commenter stated that this would be consistent with BSA's brand and outdoor ethics.

**NCAP Response:** NCAP also received a request from the national outdoor ethics and conservation subcommittee to consider adding a plastics recycling pro-

gram to the National Camp Standards. NCAP will take both this and the subcommittee's request up for evaluation.

**Comment:** Commenter #13 recommended changing "Peer review evaluator" to "Training program evaluator" in last sentence on this page to be consistent with the language in Standard SQ-409.B.2.b.

**NCAP Response:** NCAP agrees and will make this typographic change in the next standards revision.

**Comment:** Commenter #14 requested that the ANSI COPE inspection be removed from Standard SA-003 because it is already in Standard FA-715 and is not an "NCAP assessment"; rather it is an inspection by an outside organization.

**NCAP response:** NCAP will consider this change for a future revision. The ANSI inspection is highlighted because of its importance.

**Comment:** Commenter #16 on behalf of National Risk Management recommended that Standard AO-803, Interpretation bullets be revised as follows:

- Fire and extended risk on buildings (replacement cost recommended) be replaced with Property insurance to include Business Interruption and Extra Expense (replacement cost recommended)
- In automobile bullet, replace "unowned" with "non-owned" vehicles.
- In the additional insurance paragraph, delete "business interruption" as it would now appear in the bullets above.

**NCAP response:** NCAP agrees and will make these

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changes starting in 2026.

**Comment:** Commenter #16 on behalf of National Risk Management recommended the following changes to the introductory matter on page 1 for the goals of NCAP:

- Promote the health, safety, and well-being of every camper, leader, visitor, and staff member while participating in a BSA-accredited camp. This includes outside group and organizational rentals.

**NCAP Response:** NCAP will evaluate this requested change in light of the scope and reach of the National Camp Standards.

**Comment:** Commenter #17 suggested changes to Standard AO-805 including the following:

- Review of written agreements (may be submitted with declaration). The current standards do not clearly include any requirement that a camp needs to alert the appropriate local responders when they will be in session. Prior to 2019, the standard included the following requirement which provided the basis for this verification. This type of requirement could be added to the standard as A 12: “The camp has communicated its emergency needs to its responder agencies, such as hospital, fire, and law enforcement.” While in some cases, the local agencies may be in regular contact with the camp or camp property, there are many times, such as day camps where the camp is held off of Council property and responders could be unaware of the activity. The camp needs to document the communication and an acknowledgement from each of those responder agencies prior to the start of camp, regardless of whether or

not it includes an aquatics activity.

- Additionally, AO-805 includes the following: Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for hazardous materials must be immediately accessible. SDS sheets should be available at the specific area where the material is used, and a composite set of SDS sheets should be maintained at the camp office. This statement is duplicative of the requirements from FA-713. If it is retained in AO-805, there should at least be a reference to FA-713 for additional information.

**NCAP response:** NCAP will review the recommendation to restore notification to local authorities. NCAP is not inclined to adopt the suggestion that camps must obtain “an acknowledgement” from the responder because these are not always readily forthcoming. NCAP agrees that the reference to SDS can be removed from Standard AO-805 because this topic is fully addressed in Standard FA-713, which is applicable to both camps and camp properties. This change is reflected in the changes listed above.

Questions about the National Camp Standards or the Calls for Additional Comment or Input may be directed to Eric Hiser, National Standards Chair, at [eric.hiser@scouting.org](mailto:eric.hiser@scouting.org) or to Brian Gray, NCAP Staff Advisor, at [brian.gray@scouting.org](mailto:brian.gray@scouting.org).

### New Section of NCAP Standards Manual, Page 19

As noted in the discussion of new Standard SA-007, NCAP was asked to add a more detailed procedure for addressing actions under SA-007 to the Manual.

### NCAP SUPERVISION OF NCAP and CAMPING PERSONNEL

The National Camp Standards establish training and certification requirements for NCAP and camping personnel. Standard SA-007 sets forth Scouting America’s expectations that all NCAP, National Camping School certificate holders, and camp staff and personnel will uphold the intent and letter of the National Camp Standards to elevate the performance of Scouting America camping. In rare cases, an individual may be encountered who refuses to apply the National Camp Standards as intended even after counseling by NCAP personnel or, conversely, NCAP personnel may be perceived as exceeding their mandate and intruding into the local council or camp’s prerogatives. This section of the Manual sets forth how NCAP will address these situations.

#### Camp Staff and Personnel

NCAP personnel should assume that camp staff and personnel are working with good intentions. NCAP personnel when faced with noncompliance with a standard should try counseling and explanation of the standard, its specific requirements and interpretation to educate camp staff or camp personnel on what is intended. If camp staff or personnel is resistant or belligerent, NCAP personnel should take the issue to the camp director. If the camp director resolves, the matter is concluded. If the camp director refuses to address, the NCAP personnel should file an incident report with the National NCAP staff advisor and the zone assessment coordinator.

The NCAP staff advisor and zone assessment coordinator will consult with appropriate NCAP lead-

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ership to determine whether any action is warranted. If action is warranted, generally the National NCAP staff advisor and zone assessment coordinator will contact the Scout Executive to seek resolution. If the Scout Executive resolves the situation, in most cases no further NCAP action is warranted.

### NCAP Personnel

If a council or camp or other NCAP personnel believe that an NCAP certificated assessor is abusing their position of trust, they should contact the zone assessment coordinator and the National NCAP staff advisor. The zone assessment coordinator, zone assessment lead and national staff advisor will investigate and if they believe the complaint is warranted, they may suspend the assessor from further NCAP responsibilities. Similarly, if there are concerns about an NCAP authorization team member, concerned individuals should contact the national authorization chair and the national NCAP advisor, who will investigate and may suspend the authorization team member from further NCAP responsibilities. Concerns about other NCAP personnel should be directed to the National NCAP staff advisor.

### NCAP Action

In exceptional circumstances, where there is significant risk to program quality or participant safety, substantial abuse of trust, or the local council refuses to take appropriate action, NCAP line leadership may determine that action is necessary. Such action might include: (1) a written reprimand; (2) revoking an individual's NCAP certification; (3) a recommendation to National Camping

School to revoke a National Camping School certificate and/or barring the individual from attending future National Camping Schools; (4) banning an individual from ongoing or future responsibility with NCAP or any responsibility for or service at any NCAP regulated camp or camp property; or (5) in cases where the Scouter Code of Conduct may have been violated, referral to appropriate Scouting America or local council authorities for further investigation.

In cases (1), (2) and (4), NCAP will provide notice to the affected individual of the alleged misconduct, the proposed sanction, and provide an opportunity for the individual to respond in writing before NCAP takes final action. A panel of the National Camp Accreditation Committee will review the written complaint, any response from the individual, and other relevant information and render a decision. In cases (3) and (5), NCAP will forward the information about the incident to the responsible Scouting authority.

*[Add to the Appeals page]*

### Appeals of NCAP Disciplinary Action Against an Individual Pursuant to Standard SA-007

If a member of camp staff or camp personnel receives a written reprimand or is banned from ongoing or future service at a camp or camp property by NCAP (and not the local council), or if an NCAP certification holder receives a written reprimand, is suspended from NCAP service, has their NCAP certification revoked, or is banned from future service in NCAP or at a camp or camp property by NCAP, they may appeal such action by submitting a notice of appeal of disciplinary action to the National

Camp Accreditation Committee at [NCAP@scouting.org](mailto:NCAP@scouting.org). The committee will appoint a panel of at least three members to hear the appeal and will affirm, reverse or modify the decision.

Appeals of local council decisions are heard in accordance with local council procedures.

### Change to “Commercial Firearm Range” Definition in Standard PS-214

After questions from local councils and discussions between NCAP, Risk Management, Health & Safety and Range and Target Activities, the definition of “commercial firearm range” in the Interpretation of Standard PS-214 is revised as follows:

#### 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 ~~may~~ be operated by a licensed business, a government entity or a nonprofit. Additionally, a commercial range should have its own liability insurance coverage.

#### Rationale for the change:

*The change clarifies the possible ambiguity of “may”. Insurance coverage is strongly recommended.*

## NCAP National and Zone Leadership

NCAP Position	Name	Email Address
<b>National Chair Special Projects</b>	Carl Nicolaysen* Jason Kasiorek*	cnicolaysen@esoen.com jkasiorek@comcast.net
<b>Staff Advisor</b>	Brian Gray	Brian.Gray@Scouting.org
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<b>Authorization Chair Vice Chair Team Leads</b>	Steve Phillips* Bob Hemmerly* Don Dare* Larry Healey* Ken Estes* Bob Longoria* John Young* Doug Ferguson*	shp1aa@gmail.com msgtbobh@gmail.com ddare@wate.com lahealey@comcast.net johnkestes@comcast.net rjlongo3@comcast.net youngarea7@gmail.com hdfergusonjr@msn.com
<b>Assessment Chair Vice Chair Lead Zones 1-8 Lead Zones 9-16 Zone 1 Coordinator Zone 3 Coordinator Zone 4 Coordinator Zone 5 Coordinator Zone 6 Coordinator Zone 7 Coordinator Zone 8 Coordinator Zone 9 Coordinator Zone 10 Coordinator Zone 11 Coordinator Zone 12 Coordinator Zone 13 Coordinator Zone 14 Coordinator Zone 15 Coordinator Zone 16 Coordinator</b>	Barry Simays* Randy DeFrank* Bob Miller* Jay Cash* Lee Welch Cap Casperson Chuck Gitzen Brent Worley Peter Erdelyi Fritz Maxwell Gray Strickland David Ehrlich George Bacalles John Willemain Dave Carlson Jim Korcienski Bobby Bloodworth Jeff Irving Matt Kamat	barry.simays@gmail.com rrpd@twc.com ramag64@aol.com jayhcash@gmail.com leland4811@gmail.com casperc@p@gmail.com cfgitzen@usfamily.net brentw@wallties.com perdelyi@cromedesign.com fritz.maxwell@sbcglobal.net gray@graystrickland.com dehrlich2@gmail.com gbacalles@gmail.com johnwillemain@comcast.net carlsonbsa@gmail.com jimmyk@ptd.net rbloodworth@reagan.com jeffreyirving@cox.net matthew.kamat@gmail.com

\*National Camp Accreditation Committee

## Future NCAP Developments

**December 2024. Requested date for consideration of changes to the 2026 National Camp Standards.** Please send requests to Eric Hiser at Eric.Hiser@scouting.org with a copy to NCAP@scouting.org.

NCAP is always open to feedback and questions. If you have questions that cannot be answered by your council NCAP chair or zone NCAP coordinator, please email **NCAP@scouting.org** or reach out to a relevant member of the NCAP national leadership team.

*Please always download and use current NCAP forms from [www.scouting.org/NCAP](http://www.scouting.org/NCAP)*