



COMMISSION FOR ACCREDITATION OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES

To: Accredited agencies, applicant agencies, and accreditation visitors

From: James Garges, CAPRA Chair

Subject: Winter 2012 CAPRA Update

Date: January 7, 2013

Thank you for your continued support of CAPRA and the accreditation process. As evidenced by the growing list of agencies seeking accreditation, our profession recognizes the value of accreditation. In times of budget cuts and downsizing, accreditation is still important for many agencies to pursue for the first time and for others to maintain. It demonstrates that an agency is well managed, proactive, reviews its management practices against the standards of practice developed by park and recreation professionals, and is providing cost-effective and comprehensive services.

The Commission met on October 16, 2012 and December 11, 2012 and voted to implement the following changes to go into effect immediately. These changes have been reflected in the [CAPRA Accreditation Handbook](#).

SUBMITTING THE VISITATION REPORT

It is important to note that the visitation report is a report to the Commission and when approved, the Commission sends the report to the agency. Thus, within fourteen (14) days of the completion of the visit, the visitation team chair sends a digital copy of the visitation report to the Accreditation Manager at CAPRA@nrpa.org and to the Commission lead and second reviewer.

Once the report has been received by the Commission lead and second, they have fourteen (14) days from the date of receipt to review the report and provide any feedback to the visit chair. It is important to resolve any questions related to the visitation report before the report is forwarded to the agency. The Commission lead and/or second reviewer may contact the visitation chair to seek clarification and ask that revisions be made prior to the report being submitted to the agency. Any items the lead and/or second request the visit chair to change in the report must be noted on the Affirmation Sheet on the last page of the report. Once the appropriate changes have been made, the lead and second will review it again, and if the report is ready to be sent to the agency, each will sign the Affirmation sheet and submit it to the Accreditation Manager at CAPRA@nrpa.org. If only one of the Commission Reviewers feels strongly that the report should not be released to the agency, the CAPRA Chair will review the report and make the final determination on the disputed item.

Once approved, the Accreditation Manager will send a cover letter and the approved visitation report to the agency – one electronic copy via email to the agency contact and one printed copy via regular mail to the agency director.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS UPDATE

CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes four phases: training of agency staff on the accreditation process, development of the agency self-assessment report, the onsite visitation, and the Commission's review and decision. At least one person from the agency must attend a CAPRA approved training on the current set of standards within the five (5) years prior to submitting the preliminary application. The onsite visitation follows the agency's development of its self-assessment report. If accreditation is granted by the Commission at its meeting following the onsite visit, the agency will develop a new self-assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between onsite visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards.

INITIAL ACCREDITATION APPLICATION UPDATE

Each agency that decides to seek initial accreditation shall file an Application for Accreditation with the Commission. This completed application and payment of the \$100 application fee are submitted to the Accreditation Manager. If an organization seeks CAPRA accreditation, but has a separate park department and recreation department, one form may be completed including both departments. The Commission requires that at least one person from the agency attend a CAPRA approved training on the current set of standards within the five (5) years prior to submitting the preliminary application. The Commission strongly encourages the agency to purchase the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*. This unique publication is designed to effectively demonstrate the management practices embodied in the CAPRA Standards.

PILOT FOR TWO-DAY, TWO-VISITOR VISITS

In order to reduce cost to agencies and to encourage other agencies to pursue the process of accreditation, a pilot process has been developed and will be tested on two upcoming visits. The agency will provide their self-assessment report, including all evidence of compliance, to a three-person team in advance for review in an electronic format. Then, two members of the three-person team will participate in the onsite visit for two days instead of three days. The two-person, two-day visit will allow the visit team to participate in facility tours, interviews, and physical review of any concerning documents. The Commission will determine if this is a viable option for future visits during the summer 2013 meeting.

MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

Once an agency has been accredited, the maintenance of its accreditation is contingent upon fulfilling the following requirements:

1. Being reviewed and approved by the Commission on a continuing basis every five (5) years or, in particular cases, as often as required by the Commission.
2. Compliance with standards set by the Commission for the duration of the five-year period between reviews.
3. Submitting an annual report and fee each year, all agencies regardless of accreditation cycle are invoiced in January. Agencies are notified at least thirty (30) days prior to the due date of the annual report and fee.

- a. If an agency is non-compliant with submitting the annual report by the March 1st deadline, the following steps will be taken:
- i. The Accreditation Manager will send an email to the agency director and agency contact within one month from the annual report due date to follow up on the status of the submission of the report.
 - ii. If the annual report has still not been submitted, the Accreditation Manager will call the agency director and/or agency contact within one month of the email to follow up on the status of the submission of the report.
 - iii. If the annual report has still not been submitted, a letter will be sent to the agency director with a copy to the agency contact within one month of the phone call to follow up on the status of the submission of the report.
 - iv. If the annual report has still not been submitted, the agency will be assessed a fee of 10% of their annual fee within one month of the letter.
 - v. If the annual report has still not been submitted, the agency will be placed on the Commission's fall meeting agenda for discussion of possible revocation of the agency's accreditation status due to non-compliance with the annual report submission requirement.

The agency must be successfully reviewed and reaccredited on a continuing basis every five years, or as required by CAPRA.

KNOWLEDGE CENTER ON NRPA CONNECT

Showcase your agency's accreditation standards documents by logging in and posting them to the Knowledge Center within [NRPA Connect](#). The Knowledge Center will quickly become a valuable resource for agencies looking for examples of the accreditation process, and we are asking for the assistance of the currently accredited agencies to populate this great resource with their materials. If you have documents you wish to share, follow these steps to post them:

1. Log in to [NRPA Connect](#)
2. Click on [Knowledge Center](#)
3. Click on the "Accreditation" folder
4. Click on the "CAPRA" folder
5. Click on the appropriate standard folder
6. Click on the "Add Document or Photo" link
7. Locate your document, name it, and provide a brief description
8. Click on "Upload File" at the bottom of the page

UPCOMING TRAININGS

The list of upcoming CAPRA trainings can be found online at:

<http://www.nrpa.org/Professional-Development/Accreditation/CAPRA/CAPRA-Trainings/>

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place in the spring 2013.

Please contact CAPRA@nrpa.org with any questions regarding these changes. Thank you for your support.