

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation  
American Psychological Association  
750 First St. NE  
Washington, DC 20002

April 1, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The *Accreditation Operating Procedures* (AOP) now outlines training requirements for programs at the master's, doctoral, doctoral internship, and postdoctoral levels. Following the approval of the AOP with additions for master's-level programs by the APA Board of Directors in February of 2022, the APA Commission on Accreditation (APA-CoA) began working to develop corresponding documents.

Implementing Regulations (IRs) are official policy documents that “elucidate, interpret and operationally define” the Commission on Accreditation’s (CoA) policies and procedures. IRs are divided into several different sections (A through E), which are subject to regular review and revision by the CoA. While the IRs for doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral residency programs are already developed, the CoA, through the CoA Master’s Work Group, has made edits to several IRs in Section D, which correspond to the AOP-M.

The following Implementing Regulations (IRs) were changed following the approval of the AOP-M and are being put forth for public comment:

1. D.2-4. Policy on Scheduling Site Visits
2. D.3-1. Site Visitor Nomination
3. D.3-2. Site Visitor Selection
4. D.3-3(b). Providing Site Visit Team with Programs’ Responses to Reports
5. D.3-10. Special Site Visits
6. D.3-11. Site Visit Team Composition
7. D.4-1. CoA Executive Committee
8. D.4-5. Monitoring of Programs on “Accredited, Inactive” Status
9. D.4-9. Addressee and Distribution of CoA Decision Letters
10. D.8-1. Confidentiality and Public Disclosure of Information
11. D.8-2. Procedures for Notification of CoA Actions in Accordance with the Secretary of Education’s Standards for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies
12. D.8-3. Policy on Regard of Actions by Institutional Accreditors and State Agencies
13. D.8-5. Implementation Procedure for Notification by the Commission on Accreditation of Final Decisions of Denial/Revocation of Accreditation, Denial of a Site Visit, or Probation to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Appropriate State Licensing Agency, and Appropriate Institutional Accrediting Agency

In accordance with the APA "Policies for Accreditation Governance" and U.S. Department of Education regulations for notice and comment, the CoA will make the proposed revisions available for a sixty (60) day period of public review and comment. The comment period is scheduled to begin at 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time on April 1, 2022 and will continue through 5:00pm Eastern Daylight Time on May 31, 2022.

To promote thoughtful discussion, the CoA is providing an electronic-based form for public comment submission. Comments and other information including users' identities will be public, while email addresses used in the registration process will be kept confidential. The CoA will consider all comments received and make appropriate revisions should they be deemed necessary prior to approval of the final versions of the IRs.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation at (202) 336-5979 or [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org). On behalf of the CoA, thank you for your review and comments.

#### **D.2-4. Policy on Scheduling Site Visits**

(Commission on Accreditation, October 2004; revised February 2005, February 2016, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

After a program has been authorized for a site visit, that visit must take place during the assigned program review cycle ([master's and](#) doctoral programs: January-March and August-December; internship and postdoctoral residency programs: January-March, April-August, September-December). In unusual situations, the CoA may grant an extension. Under these circumstances, the program may be required to update, revise, or create new self-study materials. A self-study for [master's and](#) doctoral programs expires after two accreditation cycles; a self-study for internship and postdoctoral programs expires after three accreditation cycles. See sections [7.M](#), 7.D, 7.I, and 7.P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures* for further information regarding the site visit.

### ***D.3. Regulations related to the site visit and to site visitors***

#### **D.3-1. Site Visitor Nomination**

(Commission on Accreditation, amended March 1998; revised October 2013, October 2015, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

The CoA invites nominations or self-nominations of individuals to serve as APA accreditation site visitors. Site visitors are classified either as health service psychology site visitors (~~psychologists~~ [professionals](#) trained and qualified within the scope of accreditation), or generalist site visitors (trained and qualified in areas of psychology outside the scope of accreditation).

The CoA relies on site visitors who are engaged in educational activities and participate in training programs like those accredited by the CoA. Criteria are maintained for inclusion and retention in the site visitor pool. Nominators of potential site visitors must consider the following required background characteristics before submitting a nomination:

#### ***Health service psychology site visitors:***

- Have a doctoral degree from an APA accredited program and have a minimum of five years of professional experience subsequent to completion of the doctoral degree. This experience may include postdoctoral training.
- Are involved as faculty or training staff in an APA accredited training program, or have an association with an APA accredited training program within the past five years
- If primarily engaged in independent service delivery, have a formal recent (within the past five years) association (e.g., adjunct faculty, external supervisor, didactics) with an accredited training program
- Are knowledgeable about, educational, professional, and scientific issues in psychology
- Are active members of professional (including scholarly) organizations within psychology
- [For masters-level programs, individuals may be selected who hold a master's degree if they also have at least five years of experience as a master's level practitioner and/or expertise in master's program delivery.](#)

#### ***Generalist site visitors (for doctoral program site visits):***

- Have a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution and have a minimum of five years of postdoctoral professional experience
- Have involvement as faculty in a doctoral department or school, within a regionally accredited institution, with responsibility for delivering graduate psychology education that is not substantially online (or if retired, have had such association within the last five years).
- Are knowledgeable about, educational, professional, and scientific issues in psychology
- Are active members of professional (including scholarly) organizations within psychology

The CoA makes a special effort to ensure diversity among site visitors. The Commission encourages the nomination of members of underrepresented groups.

Nominators must provide a brief statement about why they think the nominee has the appropriate background and expertise to be included in the site visitor pool. A copy of the nominee's resume/vita must accompany the nomination. All nominations must be submitted by mail or e-mail to the Office of Program Consultation and Consultation, American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002-4242.

### D.3-2. Site Visitor Selection

(Excerpted from Section 3 of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*; Commission on Accreditation, October 1989; revised October 2006, October 2015, revised for public comment, February 2022)

#### Background:

Peer review is a central feature of the accreditation process. Maintaining and enhancing quality in education and training programs is accomplished through review by knowledgeable and experienced professional peers. In the process of peer review by the CoA, the Commission enlists site visitors as direct observers in order to assist CoA in making a complete assessment of a program's operations. In this way, site visitors play an important role in gathering information for CoA. However, site visitors do not make accreditation decisions. The accreditation decision is based on the professional judgment of the CoA, considering information from the program, the site visitors and other sources as set forth in the Accreditation Operating Procedures. Due to the critical importance of fair and unbiased review, the CoA establishes procedures for the selection of site visitors. These procedures are intended to maintain integrity of the peer review process and are designed to ensure that site visitors are knowledgeable about the characteristics of the program under review. In meeting these goals, the Commission is responsible for the process of overseeing site visitor assignments. This responsibility is consistent with practices of other professional accrediting bodies, particularly in the health professions, and serves as an important safeguard to ensure both the appearance and practice of a thorough, unbiased, and fair peer review process.

#### Composition of site visit teams:

1. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education requires that an accrediting body shall have:  
*"602.15 (a) (4) Educators and practitioners on its evaluation, policy, and decision-making bodies, if the agency accredits programs or single-purpose institutions that prepare students for a specific profession"*. In accordance with this standard for recognition, the Commission requires that each master's, doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral site visit team includes a designated visitor who represents the educational perspective and one who represents the practice perspective. The designated educator will ~~be a psychologist who~~ regularly engages within their his/her professional role in teaching and training in psychology. The designated practitioner must be licensed or credentialed at the doctoral level (or at the master's level if visiting a master's program) and regularly engage within their his/her professional role in the delivery of psychological services.
2. Site visit teams for master's and doctoral programs will include a Chair and at least two other members. Site visit teams for internship and postdoctoral residency programs will include a Chair and at least one other member.

#### Selection of site visitors:

1. In order to enhance a fair and unbiased peer review process, the Commission appoints Chairs of site visit teams. The CoA will maintain a database of ~~psychologists-individuals~~ qualified to chair the site visit teams based on experience as site visitors and professional background and experience compatible with the program under review. The selected Chairs will be notified prior to appointment in order to confirm availability during the relevant review cycle and to identify issues of bias or conflict of interest (see IR E.3-2, Conflict of Interest Policy for Site Visitors). Similarly, the programs will be responsible for notifying CoA of issues of bias or conflict of interest following notification of Chair appointments and must provide the CoA with documentation of the perceived bias or conflict of interest. Alternative Chair appointments will be made only if the initial appointments raise issues of bias or conflict of interest. Chairs will consult with the program regarding the specific dates of the site visit.
2. The second (and third) member of the site visit teams will be selected by programs from lists of five eligible visitors or each position on the team. For all programs, the list of eligible members for

second visitors will be constructed based on experience in areas of health service psychology compatible with the training aims of the program under review. For master's programs, the list of eligible members will be constructed to include at least one member based on experience in psychology in master's program delivery and/or master's level practice. For doctoral programs, the list of eligible members for the third visitors (i.e., generalists) will be constructed based on experience in psychology in an area outside the scope of accreditation. For internship and residency programs, the lists of eligible members will be constructed based on familiarity with the type of training setting. For postdoctoral residencies in a recognized specialty, the additional members will have experience and expertise in the recognized specialty.

3. The second (and third) members will confirm their availability during the relevant review cycle prior to inclusion on lists. Identification of bias or conflict of interest shall be an ongoing duty of the site visitors and programs. Additional names for second (and third) members will be provided only for cases in which programs notify the CoA in writing of either potential or actual conflicts of interest or bias, or unavailability of all the individuals on the list(s). In such cases, programs must provide the CoA with documentation of perceived conflicts of interest or bias. Based on information provided by programs, the CoA will assess whether a potential conflicts of interest or bias are demonstrated.
4. In special circumstances, programs may request an additional site visitor (e.g., if two programs at one institution are having a combined visit). The CoA also may request that programs have an additional site visitor (e.g., if a specific SoA-related concern is being investigated).
5. Following selection of site visit teams, programs are responsible for coordinating dates of the site visit within the assigned cycles and ensuring the availability of site visitors for those specific dates.

### **D.3-3(b). Providing Site Visit Team with Programs' Responses to Reports**

(Commission on Accreditation, July 2007; revised February 2016, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

Site visitors who participate in at least two site visits during a year are currently provided with aggregate data based on evaluations provided by the programs they have visited. All site visitors receive copies of decision letters for the programs they visit once a final decision has been made (see Implementing Regulation D.4-9).

In the interest of providing further feedback to site visitors, all site visitors will also receive copies of programs' responses to site visit reports for those programs which they have visited, beginning with site visits scheduled in 2008. Site visitors will have the opportunity to review the program's response to their findings.

Site visitors receive these materials only in the interest of providing feedback on their performance with the intent being to improve future reports. The CoA and Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation do not expect, and will not accept, any responses regarding the contents of these materials from site visitors. At the time the site visitors receive a copy of the response to their report, the CoA will already have made a decision on the accreditation status of the program. Therefore, the process does not permit additional responses from site visitors regarding these materials. In accordance with Sections [7.2M](#), 7.2D, 7.2I, and 7.2P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, the program being reviewed has the right to provide the final comments that will be part of its record.

### **D.3-10. Special Site Visits**

(Commission on Accreditation, November 2001; revised April 2005, February 2016, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

In certain cases, the Commission may request an invitation from a program for a special site visit. The special site visit is viewed by the Commission as an opportunity to interact directly with the program. It affords the Commission the opportunity to collect information as to the program's operation and to address questions that are not fully answered by the record before the Commission. In that regard, special site visits are intended to be beneficial to both the Commission and the program. A special site visit team may include one or more members of the Commission, or other individuals selected by the Commission.

Examples of special site visits include, but are not limited to cases in which:

- Further clarification is needed
- Closer monitoring is needed
- A complaint warrants further examination

See Sections [7.1.1M](#), 7.1.1D, 7.1.1I, and 7.1.1P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*.

### **D.3-11. Site Visit Team Composition**

(Commission on Accreditation, March 2003; revised July 2017, revised for public comment, February 2022)

The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education requires that an accrediting body shall have:

*602.15 (a) (4) Educators, ~~and~~ practitioners and/or employers on its evaluation, policy, and decision-making bodies, if the agency accredits programs or single-purpose institutions that prepare students for a specific profession.*

In accordance with this criterion for recognition, the Commission will require that each site visit team have a designated visitor who represents the educational perspective and one representing the practice perspective. The designated educator will be an individual psychologist who regularly engages within their his/her professional role in teaching and training in psychology. The designated practitioner will be someone who holds appropriate licensure or certification and regularly engages within their his/her professional role in the delivery of psychological services to individuals, families, groups, or communities.



#### ***D.4. Regulations related to Commission on Accreditation decision-making process***

##### **D.4-1. CoA Executive Committee**

(Commission on Accreditation, October 1998; revised November 2003, January 2007, July 2007, July 2008, February 2016, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

There will be an Executive Committee appointed by the CoA Chair to act for the CoA between meetings on accreditation matters other than the making of program decisions as outlined in Sections [8M](#), 8D, 8I, and 8P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*. Members of the Executive Committee will be selected to represent the diversity of constituent groups responsible for nominating members of the CoA. The Executive Committee will include at least one member each in [their his/her](#) first, second, or third year of the CoA, as well as the Associate Chairs for Program Review and Quality Assurance who are elected to facilitate CoA business.

#### **D.4-5. Monitoring of Programs on “Accredited, Inactive” Status**

(Commission on Accreditation, July 2000<sup>5</sup>; revised April 2005, October 2007, February 2016, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

##### **Inactive Programs:**

According to Sections [8.2.d M](#), 8.2.d D, 8.2.d I, and 8.2.d P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, a [master’s or](#) doctoral program that has not admitted students for two successive academic years or an internship or postdoctoral residency program that will not be accepting funded interns/residents for a given training year may request to be placed on “accredited, inactive” status by the Commission on Accreditation (CoA). All changes in accredited status must be approved by the CoA. “Accredited, inactive” status is granted by the CoA for a period of one academic/training year at a time. The CoA will receive annual updates from the program and will determine the date of the next site visit on a case-by-case basis. A program on “accredited, inactive” status must pay its annual accreditation fees.

For programs requesting an extension of inactive status beyond one year, the CoA will request that the program provide the additional relevant domain-related information with the program’s annual report or via correspondence at a set renewal date.

A program on inactive status that wishes to admit students/interns/residents for the following academic/training year must notify the CoA of this intent so that the program’s accredited status may be reviewed and changed as necessary.

##### **Master’s and Doctoral Programs:**

[Master’s and d](#)Doctoral programs not admitting students for two consecutive years are viewed as systematically “Phasing Out” of the program. A program that has notified the CoA that it is in the process of closing will be monitored through the use of annual updates on each student’s progress through the program and information regarding the adequacy of program support and resources for those students in the program. Therefore, upon notification of the program’s phasing out, the CoA will request from the program detailed information about the phase-out plan and will determine a time certain for a receipt of a focused self-study and site visit based upon the date of the most recent site visit. This will be done to ensure the quality of the program for students matriculating during the phase-out process. Based on the provided phase-out plan, the CoA will also establish an end date for program accreditation.

[Master’s and d](#)Doctoral programs not accepting students for one year need to notify the CoA about that decision as a substantive change (see Implementing Regulations [C-27 M](#), [C-27 D](#), ~~[C-24 I](#)~~, ~~[C-20 P](#)~~).

##### **Internship and Postdoctoral Residency Programs:**

Internship and postdoctoral residency programs need to notify the CoA about the decision to be inactive for a given training year ([see Implementing Regulation C-24 I or C-20 P](#)). The program cannot accept any interns/residents for the year of “accredited, inactive” status. Since inactive status is approved on an annual basis, the program will need to seek inactive status each year.

Standard I: Institutional and Program Context for Internship Programs in the *Standards of Accreditation* (SoA): states that:

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<sup>5</sup> This policy subsumes and replaces the Implementing Regulation “Systematic ‘Phasing Out’ of Old Programs,” July 1997.

*B.4. Funding and budget*

- a. Interns are provided financial support. Financial support should be set at a level that is representative and fair in relationship to both the geographic location and clinical setting of the training site.*
- b. The program must have financial support for faculty/staff and sufficient and dependable training activities for the duration of the year or years of the contract with interns.*
- c. Funding for the program should be represented in the institution's operating budget and plans in a manner that enables the program to achieve its training aims.*

Standard I: Institutional and Program Context for Postdoctoral Residency Programs in the SoA states that:

*B.4 Funding and budget sources*

- a. A program must have stable and sufficient funding to conduct the training necessary to meet its aims.*
- b. All postdoctoral residents must be financially supported at a level consistent with comparable doctoral level professionals training at the same site or in the region.*

Therefore, consistent with the SoA, an internship or postdoctoral program on “accredited, inactive” status cannot have an intern/resident enrolled in the program.

#### **D.4-9. Addressee and Distribution of CoA Decision Letters**

(Commission on Accreditation, July 2000; revised July 2006, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))

Consistent with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) policy statement regarding the need for accreditors to keep institutional executives appropriately informed at all stages of the review process, the CoA will address any correspondence that provides the results of a CoA vote on the accreditation status of a program (e.g., decision letters, review of a response to a reporting requirement) to the president/CEO of the institution, with a copy of that letter to the training director and to other administrators with responsibility for the program. In the case of **master's and** doctoral training programs, the CoA expects the content of such correspondence to be shared with current core faculty and students, and in the case of internship and post-doctoral programs, with current core supervisors and interns/residents.

This is in accordance with Standard V of the *Standards of Accreditation for Health Service Psychology* for doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral programs:

*The program demonstrates its commitment to public disclosures by providing accurate and complete written materials and other communications that appropriately represent it to all relevant publics.*

The CoA also recognizes the vital role site visitors play in the accreditation process and the need for continuing feedback to the site visitors about their participation in the accreditation process. Therefore, the CoA provides the program's visiting team with a copy of any letters generated by the CoA in the decision-making process (including, but not limited to, letters requesting more information and the final decision letter).

Site visitors are informed about the program review process, as well as about confidentiality and sensitivity issues in relation to receiving information about the CoA's decisions. Therefore, they are asked to read and destroy their copies of such letters. All programs being reviewed for initial or continuing accreditation are informed of this policy at the time they are assigned to a review cycle.

Letters of an informational nature will be addressed directly to the training director.

### **D.8-1. Confidentiality and Public Disclosure of Information**

*(Accreditation Operating Procedures, Section 8; revised October 2004, February 2016, October 2019, [revised for public comment, February 2022](#))*

Lists of both the status of accredited programs and the year of each program's next scheduled site visit as well as of all accreditation decisions (as defined in AOP 8.2 [M](#), D, I, and P) and voluntary withdrawals from accredited status will be published on the accreditation website annually. In addition, after each meeting of the CoA, the published lists of accredited programs will be updated as necessary by an addendum of all accreditation decisions (as defined in AOP 8.2 [M](#), D, I, and P) and voluntary withdrawals from accredited status, the CoA will make public notice of such decisions and actions no later than 30 days after the meeting, the Department of Education will be notified of such decisions and actions, and the decisions and actions will also be available through other means as appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of programs for which appealable decisions have been reached and the time for submitting an appeal has not run out, the CoA will note that the decision is appealable. If an appeal has been filed, the CoA will note that the decision is under appeal. The CoA will share the accreditation status of programs with regional and specialized accrediting bodies, the public, and state licensing boards, as appropriate.

The CoA will notify the U.S. Department of Education of any accredited program that the CoA has reason to believe is failing to comply with financial aid responsibilities as outlined in Title IV of the Higher Education Act, or any purported fraud and abuse by accredited programs, and its reasons for such concern. The CoA also will take action to correct in a timely manner any incorrect or misleading information released by an accredited program about the accreditation status of the program and the CoA's accrediting actions with respect to the program.

In addition, the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation will make any additional disclosures required by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and in those instances when the CoA is legally required to disclose such information.

All other information, and the records used in accreditation decisions, will be kept confidential by the CoA.

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<sup>6</sup> For the most current information on accredited program status, please consult the lists of accredited [master's](#), doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral programs on the CoA's Web site at [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/programs/index.aspx](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/programs/index.aspx).

**D.8-2. Procedures for Notification of CoA Actions in Accordance with the Secretary of Education’s Standards for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies**

(Commission on Accreditation, October 1997; revised October 2004, July 2009, July 2010, July 2011, February 2016, October 2019, February 2021)

This implementation procedure outlines the steps that will be taken by the CoA, consistent with the Secretary’s requirements and with Section 5 (Confidentiality and Public Disclosure of Information) of the CoA’s *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, to provide information on CoA activities, actions and decisions to the Secretary, State agencies, other accrediting agencies, and the public.

1. Information to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE)

Item	Appropriate Section Reference in USDE Regulations	How Often and/or When
Lists of Accredited Programs	602.27(b)	Annually
CoA annual report (contains the CoA’s accrediting actions as defined in AOP 8.2 M, 8.2 D, 8.2 I, and 8.2 P for that year)	602.27(a)	Annually
Summary of CoA’s major accrediting activities during previous year (annual data summary)	602.27(c)	If requested
The name of any accredited program that the CoA has reason to believe is failing to comply with Title IV, HEA program responsibilities or is engaged in fraud or abuse, and the CoA’s reason for such concern	602.27(e)	As needed
Notification of any proposed change in policies, procedures, or accreditation standards that might alter the CoA’s scope of recognition or compliance with the criteria for recognition	602.27(d)	As needed
Notification of decision to award initial accreditation or decision to renew accreditation	602.26(a)(1), and (a)(2)	No later than 30 days after decision
Final <sup>7</sup> decision to place program on “accredited, on probation” status	602.26(b)	At same time program is informed <sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The term “final” as used throughout this Implementing Regulation encompasses the following: In the case of appealable decisions (denial of accreditation or a site visit to an applicant program, probation, or revocation), the CoA’s accreditation decisions become final either (1) 30 days after the program is notified of the CoA’s decision and the program elects not to appeal, or (2) if the program elects to appeal the decision, after receipt of the appeal panel report if the appeal panel upholds the CoA’s decision. All decisions are made public within one day of institutional notification.

<sup>8</sup> Note: Programs placed on accredited, on probation status or those that receive a final decision of denial or revocation are required to disclose this action to all current and prospective students within 7 days of notice.

Item	Appropriate Section Reference in USDE Regulations	How Often and/or When
Final <sup>7</sup> decision to deny or revoke accreditation, deny a site visit to an applicant program, or place program on “accredited, on probation” status	602.26(b)(1), and (2)	At same time program is informed, but no later than 30 days after decision is final <sup>8</sup>
All accreditation decisions as defined in AOP 8.2 <a href="#">M, 8.2 D, I, and P</a> with appeal status	Per request of the Department of Education	No later than 30 days after the CoA meeting in which the decision is made
Program decision to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation	602.26(e)(1)	No later than 30 days after notification is received by the CoA
Program decision to allow accreditation to lapse	602.26(e)(2)	No later than 30 days after date on which accreditation lapses
Brief statement summarizing the reasons for denial or revocation of a program’s accreditation or denial of a site visit / program’s comments on action (if any)	602.26(d)	No later than 60 days after decision is final

## 2. Publicly-Available Information

Unless otherwise noted, items below appear in electronic form on the accreditation website.

- Current lists of accredited ~~internship and doctoral~~ programs ([i.e., masters, doctoral, doctoral internship, and postdoctoral residency](#))
- Program review cycles for current year
- Standards of Accreditation, *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, and *Implementing Regulations*
- List of current CoA members, including their academic and professional qualifications and relevant employment/organizational affiliations
- List of current office staff, including the academic and professional qualifications of the principal administrative staff
- Important accreditation dates for the current year, including CoA meeting dates
- A statement of reasons for denial or revocation of accredited status or denial of a site visit, in accordance with CoA procedure for notice of such actions
- In addition to being contained on website and in other published materials, upon request, a program decision to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation 30 days or more after notification is received by CoA
- Upon request, a program decision to allow accreditation to lapse
- CoA annual report, which includes CoA membership composition and diversity, a summary of program review decisions, policy changes, and other CoA activities throughout the year
- When published, aggregate statistics on accredited programs drawn from the Annual Report Online

## 3. Information to State Licensing Boards

All state psychology licensing boards will receive the following:

- Updated list of accredited masters, doctoral, and internship programs (annually)
- Updated *Standards of Accreditation and Accreditation Operating Procedures* (following publication of updated versions)
- CoA annual report (annually)

4. Information to Other Accrediting Agencies

All accrediting agencies that are currently or were previously recognized either by the Secretary of Education or the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA)/Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA); and/or are members of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA), will receive the following information:

- CoA annual report (annually)
- Updated list of accredited masters, doctoral and internship programs (annually)
- *Updated Standards of Accreditation and Accreditation Operating Procedures* (following publication of updated versions)

In addition, the regional or national body that accredits any institution housing a program and the State agency that authorizes that institution (masters and doctoral programs ~~only~~) will be notified of the CoA's action with regard to that program, as follows:

- CoA decisions to award initial accreditation or renew accreditation: no later than 30 days after decision
- Final decisions of "accredited, on probation" status, denial of a site visit, or denial or revocation of accreditation: at the same time the program is informed but no later than 30 days after decision becomes final
- A statement of reasons for denial or revocation of accreditation or denial of a site visit in accordance with Implementing Regulation D.8-4.
- Decisions by accredited programs to voluntarily withdraw from accreditation: no later than 30 days after CoA is notified
- Decisions by accredited programs to allow accreditation to lapse: no later than 30 days after the date on which accreditation lapses.
- Upon request, CoA will share with the institutional accrediting agency or State approval agency information about the accreditation status and any adverse action it has taken against such a program.



**D.8-3. Policy on Regard of Actions by ~~Regional-Institutional~~ Accreditors and State Agencies**  
(Commission on Accreditation, October 1998, revised October 2004, February 2016, revised for public comment, February 2022)

In accordance with Section 602.28(b) and (c) of the criteria for recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education, the CoA will not grant initial accreditation or renew the accreditation status of a program during any period in which the institution offering the master's or doctoral program is the subject of (1) a pending or final action by a State agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate that institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education; (2) a decision by a recognized institutional accrediting agency to deny accreditation or preaccreditation to it; (3) a pending or final action by a recognized institutional accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation or preaccreditation; or (4) probation or any equivalent status imposed by a recognized institutional accrediting agency, unless the CoA provides to the Secretary of Education, within 30 days of its action, a thorough and reasonable explanation consistent with the SoA why the actions of the other body do not preclude its grant of accreditation. If a recognized institutional accrediting agency takes adverse action with respect to the institution offering the program or places the institution on public probationary or equivalent status, the CoA will promptly review its accreditation of the program to determine if it should take adverse action against the program (see below).

Consistent with Standard I (Institutional and Program Context) and Standard V (Communication Practices) Domain A (Eligibility) and Domain H (Relationship with Accrediting Body) of the SoA, the CoA expects each master's and doctoral program to provide accurate information on its sponsoring institution's accreditation status and to keep the CoA informed of any changes in the program's environment, plans, resources, or operations which could affect program quality. Therefore, the CoA expects all master's and doctoral programs to inform it of any adverse or potentially adverse actions by the programs' institutional accreditors. The CoA also expects all master's and doctoral programs to inform it of any actions by a state agency that adversely affect the parent institution's accreditation, authority to provide postsecondary education, or authority to award master's or doctoral degrees respectively.

In addition, the CoA will endeavor to collect information on institutional accreditation/state grant of authority, as follows:

**Actions by Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies.** Eligibility for CoA accreditation of a master's or doctoral psychology program is based in part on that program being sponsored by an institution accredited by a nationally recognized regional-institutional accrediting body (for programs in the United States). Therefore, the CoA has a vested interest in being informed of adverse or potentially adverse actions by regional accrediting bodies. In order that the CoA may be kept apprised of such actions, it will send a letter on an annual basis to all agencies that accredit institutions in which accredited psychology programs are housed. The letter will invite the agencies to keep the CoA informed of any decisions that affect, or potentially affect, any of the CoA-accredited programs. This letter will accompany the listing of accredited programs, which is forwarded annually to the accrediting agencies outlined in the CoA's "Procedures for Notification of CoA Actions in Accordance with the Secretary of Education's Standards for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies."

**Actions by State Agencies.** The authority of any accredited master's or doctoral psychology program to provide training and to award a ~~doctoral~~ degree is granted by the state through the institution in which that program is housed. The CoA will monitor developments with regard to changes in institutional authority to provide postsecondary education as granted by state agencies.

When the CoA receives any information, whether from an accredited program or another source, regarding the above adverse actions concerning a sponsoring institution's accreditation or its legal authority to provide

postsecondary education or to award master's or doctoral degrees, it will review any affected programs' consistency with Standards I and V Domains A and H. Based upon its findings, the CoA will determine appropriate action as set forth in Sections 8 M, D, I, and P of the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, consistent with the Secretary of Education's regulations.

CoA will, upon request, share with a recognized institutional accrediting agency or State approval agency information about the accreditation status and any adverse action it has taken against such a program.

**D.8-5. Implementation Procedure for Notification by the Commission on Accreditation of Final Decisions of Denial/Revocation of Accreditation, Denial of a Site Visit, or Probation to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Appropriate State Licensing Agency, and Appropriate Institutional Accrediting Agency**

(Commission on Accreditation, October 2000; revised October 2004, February 2021, **revised for public comment, February 2022**)

Section 602.26(b-c) of the regulations for the U.S. Secretary of Education's Recognition of Accrediting Agencies (34 CFR Part 602, effective July 1, 2020) states the following:

*“[The agency] provides written notice of a final decision of a probation or equivalent status or an initiated adverse action to the Secretary, the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, and the appropriate accrediting agencies at the same time it notifies the institution or program of the [accreditation] decision and requires the institution or program to disclose such an action within seven business days of receipt to all current and prospective students;*

*“[The agency] provides written notice of the following types of decisions to the Secretary, the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, and the appropriate accrediting agencies at the same time it notifies the institution or program of the [accreditation] decision, but no later than 30 days after it reaches the decision: (1) A final decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, revoke, or terminate the accreditation or preaccreditation of an institution or program (2) A final decision to take any other adverse action, as defined by the agency, not listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.”*

This implementation procedure outlines the steps that will be taken by the CoA, consistent with the Secretary's requirements and with Section 8 (Confidentiality and Public Disclosure of Information) of the CoA's *Accreditation Operating Procedures*. For the purposes of this procedure, “appropriate State licensing or authorizing authority” refers to the psychology licensing board of the state in which the program (**master's**, doctoral, internship, or postdoctoral residency) is located, and “appropriate accrediting agency” refers to the agency responsible for the accreditation of the institution in which the program is housed (**master's and** doctoral programs only).

The following CoA decisions are governed by this policy: accredited, on probation; denial of accreditation to an applicant program; revocation of accreditation; and denial of a site visit to an applicant program. Because these decisions are appealable, they do not become final until either (1) 30 days after the program is notified of the CoA's decision and the program elects not to appeal, or (2) if the program elects to appeal the decision, after receipt of the appeal panel report if the appeal panel upholds the CoA's decision. (The appeal panel may also return the matter to the CoA for reconsideration.)

1. When the CoA elects to deny or revoke accreditation, deny a site visit to an applicant program, or place a program on “accredited, on probation” status, the affected program will receive two letters. The first letter will communicate the CoA's decision and will be mailed no more than 30 days after the CoA meeting per the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*. The second letter will inform the program that the decision of the CoA has become final and will be mailed either: (1) 30 days after the original notification, if the program elects not to appeal the decision, or (2) as a cover letter to the report of the appeal panel, if the program appeals the decision and the decision is upheld by the appeal panel. (Per the *Accreditation Operating Procedures*, the appeal panel has 30 days to file its report.)
2. The Secretary of Education (or **their his/her** designated Department official), the executive director of the appropriate State licensing agency, and (for **masters and** doctoral programs) the executive director of the appropriate institutional accrediting agency will be listed as recipients of copies of the letter

which communicates that the decision has become final. These individuals, however, will not receive copies of any attachments, such as appeal hearing reports.