



ASSISTANCE DOGS INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is the first step to learning about ADI Accreditation?

The first step is to visit the ADI website www.assistancedogsinternational.org and review all the information on the site. This will include the information about ADI, ADI Standards, and ADI Accreditation. Specific information about accreditation is available in the Membership and Members Only sections. The Members Only section requires a USER ID and PASSWORD to access the information. Please contact Suzi Hall, ADI Coordinator, if you do not have a USER ID and PASSWORD info@assistancedogsinternational.org

The Accreditation documents on the website include:

[Accreditation Application \(pdf\)](#)
[Accreditation Procedures \(pdf\)](#)
[Accreditation - Instruction for Accreditation Pre-Packet \(pdf\)](#)
[Accreditation Manual \(pdf\)](#)

These documents and others on the site will provide details of the entire accreditation process.

PLEASE NOTE: If your organization is a member of the ADI Regional Chapter, Assistance Dogs Europe (ADEu), please visit the ADEu website for accreditation information and documents www.assistancedogseurope.org

Does ADI offer guidance and support for organizations seeking accreditation?

Yes. ADI staff, Accreditation Steering Committee Members, Accreditation Review Committee Members, and staff and volunteers of ADI member organizations are available to assist organizations seeking accreditation. If you need assistance please contact Lynn Hoekstra, Accreditation Coordinator at lhoekstra.forADI@comcast.net and she will contact you to provide support.

What are some key steps that can be undertaken to help prepare for accreditation?

The first step is to review the Accreditation Procedures document. It will also be very important to do a *baseline self-survey* of your organization. Follow the accreditation manual standard by standard to determine if your organization is in compliance. This will help “map out” a plan to address the areas not in compliance and you can begin to work on the requirements of those standards.

Another key step is the preparation of your accreditation Pre-packet materials. Please read the Pre-packet document posted on the website and use this as a guide to preparing your documents. This step is detailed and time consuming, but is a very effective and efficient method to assist the assessor in evaluating your organization. It also gives the assessor more time for the portions of the survey that can only be done during the on site process.

PLEASE NOTE: non-English speaking organizations follow a different process for submitting translated documents. Please contact Lynn Hoekstra, Accreditation Coordinator, lhoekstra.forADI@comcast.net for further information.

What is a Mock Accreditation Survey?

ADI highly recommends that all organizations that are working toward accreditation have a Board Member or knowledgeable volunteer conduct a Mock Accreditation Survey when the organization has completed its preparation process. This is an excellent method to determine if the organization is truly ready and provides additional education and training opportunities for staff, volunteers, puppy raisers, graduates and others who may participate in the actual ADI survey. If there are deficiencies when the Mock Survey is done, the organization has the opportunity to rectify them before the ADI survey occurs.

What will the schedule be like?

The assessor will work with the organization's Executive Director (or equivalent) to set up a schedule for the survey. This varies depending the size of the organization, location, type of services provided, training and placement processes, etc. The assessor will provide you with a survey agenda at least two weeks prior to the on site portion of the survey. Generally surveys take two to three days to complete.

Do you talk with Board Members? Will it be individually or as a group?

Yes, the assessor will interview Board Members. This may be done either individually or as a group, depending on the schedule and items the assessor needs to discuss with the Board Member(s). You will be made aware of the assessor's plan in advance.

When you review the Accreditation Manual, make note of all standards that require interviews and observation of training. This will help you determine the people within the organization (staff, volunteers, puppy raisers, students, graduates, etc.) that will be part of that process. Be sure to review the section of the manual on Observing Training, which has details about that portion of the survey.

If the organization works with a school program or prison system are there special requirements for the survey?

The organization will need to provide a copy of their Cooperative Partnership agreement(s) for review by the assessor. For organizations that have prison programs, there are specific standards in Section IV of the accreditation manual. The assessor will determine if they will interview individuals within school or prison systems in person or by telephone, depending on the particular circumstances. This will be discussed in advance of the survey.

What are Materials Safety Data Sheets?

A material safety data sheet (MSDS) is a form containing data regarding the properties of a particular substance. An important component of workplace safety, it is intended to provide workers and emergency personnel with procedures for handling or working with substances in a safe manner. Information about requirements for specific products can usually be accessed on the product's website. Information is also available online if you do an internet search for "Materials Safety Data Sheets." ADI standards require MSDS sheets to be posted in the organization's facility.

Who decides if the organization passes accreditation?

Once the assessor has completed all parts of the survey, the Accreditation Survey Report and assessor's recommendation are submitted to the ADI Accreditation Review Committee (ARC). The ARC reviews the information at their next monthly meeting. If there are no questions that require additional discussion, the ARC may approve or deny the survey. If there are questions, the survey will be reviewed by the full ADI Accreditation

Steering Committee at their next quarterly meeting and they will approve or deny the survey.

Organizations that do not pass may apply for accreditation again after a minimum of six months. This gives the organization time to work on the items that were not in compliance. The organization will have to submit an updated application, full fee, and Pre-packet when they seek accreditation again.

Organizations that do not pass also have the option to appeal in writing to the ADI Board of Directors. The decision of the Board by a majority vote is final.

When will the organization be notified of the outcome of the survey?

Typically, the assessor will initially notify the organization about the outcome of the survey. The “official” notification from ADI will be sent via an email and congratulations letter. This is usually done within two weeks of the decision. Organizations can contact ADI if they want an update on the status of the survey approval process.

Once an organization’s survey is approved, when will the ADI website be updated?

Website updates are determined by the schedule of the ADI webmaster, but in most instances the update will appear within two weeks.

When can an organization publicize that they are accredited?

Organizations may publicize their accreditation after they receive the official notification letter from ADI.