



2019 ASSISTANCE DOGS INTERNATIONAL

ACCREDITATION SURVEY PROCEDURES

THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION:

The Assistance Dog International (ADI) accreditation process is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence through the achievement of industry wide compliance with agreed standards and practices.

ADI accreditation is a voluntary peer-review process for ADI candidate and member programs to determine if all policies, procedures and practices are in compliance with the agreed industry standards outlined in the ADI Accreditation Manual.

To demonstrate compliance, participating programs undergo an accreditation survey by trained ADI assessors. Programs that successfully pass the accreditation process receive an ADI accreditation certificate as a symbol of excellence, and are allowed to state that they are an ADI Accredited Member.

Programs participating in the ADI accreditation survey process must meet the following requirements:

- 1) They must be a non-profit program that is an approved Candidate in ADI in good standing, or an Accredited Member in good standing that is seeking re-accreditation
- 2) *Candidate programs must have been a Candidate for a minimum of two years before they can apply for the accreditation process.* All Candidate requirements must have been met and the ADI Operations Administrator's office must approve the Candidate's request to apply for accreditation.
- 3) Programs must be willing to commit to the education and training processes required for staff, volunteers, clients and supporters.
- 4) The accreditation application form and required fee must be submitted to the ADI Accreditation Coordinator in due course.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The accreditation documents are available upon request to: info@assistancedogsinternational.org

The ADI accreditation documents include:

- Accreditation Process Chart
- Accreditation Survey Procedures
- Accreditation Manual Part 1
- Accreditation Manual Part 2 - Compliance Demonstration Guidance Notes
- Instructions for Pre-assessment Paperwork
- Paperwork Summary Chart
- Common Questions and Answers
- Accreditation Annual Statement of Compliance . *Sample*

Programs must carefully review all of these documents prior to starting the accreditation process.

Programs wanting to start the ADI accreditation process should notify both the ADI Operations Administrator at: info@assistancedogsinternational.org and the ADI Accreditation Coordinator at: Laura@assistancedogsinternational.org

ADI will contact the program upon receipt of the notification.

FEE SCHEDULE AND LENGTH OF SURVEY:

Application fee: \$1,750.00

The accreditation application form will be sent to the program at the appropriate time by the ADI Accreditation Coordinator.

The fee is non-refundable and payable at the time you submit the Accreditation Application form. The fee is inclusive of the assessor's airfare or other transportation expenses.

The fee does not cover the Assessor's lodging expense, which is paid by the applying program directly to the hotel. If necessary and with permission from ADI, this can be arranged by the assessor and reimbursed to ADI by the program. Other miscellaneous expenses such as meals will be covered by ADI and/or the assessor's program. Every attempt is made to keep survey costs to a minimum.

The duration of the survey is typically two to four days depending on the size of the program and the complexity of its operations.

HOW ARE ASSESSORS SELECTED?

All ADI Accreditation Assessors are selected by the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC). Eligible assessors have successfully completed the assessor qualification process and have undergone training by experienced accreditation assessors. *Assessors sign confidentiality agreements and all accreditation survey information is kept confidential.*

Assessors are reimbursed by ADI for their transportation and other approved expenses. No other compensation or benefits are provided.

Programs can refuse the initial Assessor assigned to their survey *provided they can show cause* for the request to the Accreditation Review Committee.

Examples of reasons to refuse an Assessor could be a potential conflict of interest, previous employment relationship, previous contractor relationship, etc. The program must provide a detailed written explanation to the Accreditation Review Committee. The committee will make a final decision.

The selection of the assessor(s) typically occurs after the Pre-assessment paperwork documents have been received and screened by the ADI Accreditation Coordinator.

THE DATE AND LOCATION OF THE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE SURVEY:

Once the pre-assessment paperwork has been pre-screened by the Accreditation Coordinator to ensure it is complete, the ARC are informed, an assessor selected and the materials are sent to the assessor. The assessor has 60 days to review the pre-assessment paperwork. Once the assessor approves the paperwork, the on-site survey visit dates are scheduled with the program.

The Executive Director or equivalent of the program and the assessor will mutually agree upon the dates for the on-site survey visit.

A program with multiple locations or several distant and widely dispersed locations (over 100 miles apart) is expected to be surveyed at one location. Upon expiration of their accreditation term, the program is expected to offer a different location for the next survey and likewise in each subsequent accreditation term until all major training centers of the program are surveyed. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis.

All staff and/or volunteers who directly manage or oversee areas of work covered by the accreditation process need to be present and available during the on-site survey visit. *Please also see the Accreditation Manual Part 2 Compliance Demonstration Guidance Notes, Section 3, page 6 for details about the Observation of Training portion of the on-site survey process.*

The coordination of survey logistics is complex. Flexibility is required by all parties to facilitate the accreditation process in a smooth, cost efficient and timely manner.

SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION SURVEY PROCESS STEPS:

Program must review all accreditation documents and informational materials provided by ADI to determine if they are ready to begin the accreditation process.

1. Program notifies ADI Operations Administrator and ADI Accreditation Coordinator of their intent to seek ADI Accreditation. ADI will contact program upon receipt of request.
2. Program conducts a **baseline self-survey**, using the ADI Accreditation Manual, to determine their level of compliance with each standard and requirements. The program will devise a plan to address the areas where improvement is needed in order to reach compliance. Consultation with the Accreditation Coordinator will take place at this point to discuss questions about the accreditation process.
3. Program requests and submits Accreditation Application form with non-refundable fee.
4. Program works on completing Pre-assessment paperwork packet. Please see **Instructions for Pre-assessment Paperwork** document before beginning to assemble the materials into one or more binders.

Program works on all other survey preparations, including educating staff, clients, board members and other volunteers about the ADI accreditation process and the upcoming on-site survey visit.

5. When above preparations are complete, program has a Board member or other knowledgeable volunteer conduct an internal mock accreditation survey to determine final readiness for the accreditation survey.
6. If the mock accreditation survey is successful, the program submits their pre-assessment paperwork binder as instructed by the Accreditation Coordinator.
7. Pre-assessment paperwork is screened by Accreditation Coordinator. Once this is approved, the Accreditation Review Committee assigns an assessor, and the paperwork binder is sent to the assessor.

Assessor reviews the Pre-assessment paperwork within 60 days. When the paperwork is approved by the assessor, the assessor and program schedule mutually agreeable dates for on-site survey visit.

8. Travel arrangements are made by the assessor. Lodging accommodations are handled by the program directly with a hotel unless otherwise arranged with ADI and the assessor.
9. Assessor sends the on-site survey schedule agenda to the program two weeks prior to the on-site survey visit.

10. Assessor arrives at the program on the first day to meet the Executive Director and begins the accreditation on-site survey process.
11. A program staff person must be assigned to the assessor to assist in locating records, making introductions and assisting as needed with the survey process.
12. The assessor will require *a private area or office to:*
 - Review Records
 - Interview key program staff, volunteers, clients and board members
 - During the course of the survey, the aforementioned individuals should be available on-site or by telephone to meet with the assessor.
 - Interviews will also occur during the **Observation of Training** portion of the on-site survey visit.
13. Upon completion of the above, the assessor meets with the Executive Director of the program to discuss any areas that are *not in compliance with the standards*.

Standards not in compliance which can be easily corrected on-site can be handled at that time. If more time is needed to correct an area of non-compliance, the assessor will determine the process required to become compliant. The assessor **may** allow the program up to sixty (60) days to submit documentation that demonstrates the program is in full compliance with the standards.

14. At the conclusion of the survey visit, the assessor conducts an exit review of the survey findings with the Executive Director and any board members, staff or volunteers deemed appropriate by the program.
15. The assessor submits the survey report and recommendation to the ARC within thirty (30) days of receiving all compliance documentation. All assessor notes, documents and recommendations are sent to the ARC for review at the next scheduled meeting. If there are no areas that require further discussion, the ARC may approve or deny the survey.
16. If there are areas requiring additional discussion, the ADI Standards Committee *may* review the survey and can approve or deny the survey. This will take place at the committee's next quarterly meeting.
17. If a program does not pass the accreditation process, they may apply for another accreditation survey *after a minimum of one year* from receiving the notification. The purpose of the one year time period is to give the program adequate time to work on achieving full compliance with the standards. Accredited Members that do not pass the survey may revert to Candidate status during this time. Candidate programs will maintain candidate status.
18. If the program *does not pass* the accreditation survey and there is disagreement about the decision, the program may appeal in writing to the ADI Board of

Directors. The Board will review the appeal and the decision of the Board by a majority vote will be final. Information about the appeal process steps will be provided by the Accreditation Coordinator upon request.

ADI ACCREDITATION PROCESS POLICIES:

1. The accreditation fee is non-refundable.
2. A program seeking accreditation will maintain a high standard of integrity and professional behavior. Any behavior or conduct which in the judgment of the ADI Accreditation Coordinator, the Assessor(s), and/or the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC) is unprofessional or inappropriate will result in immediate termination of the accreditation process.
3. All applicable standards must be met to the satisfaction of the ADI Accreditation Coordinator, the Assessor(s) and ARC to achieve full five-year ADI Accreditation.
4. If the Pre-assessment paperwork packet is incomplete or insufficient, as determined by the ADI Accreditation Coordinator and/or the Assessor(s), then ADI may terminate the accreditation process.
5. If the Pre-assessment paperwork packet requires minimal changes, the ADI Accreditation Coordinator **may** permit an extension to correct the issues, not to exceed six months. If an issue cannot be or is not corrected in time period allotted, then the accreditation process is terminated.
6. ADI is under no obligation to conduct an accreditation assessment of a program. If the ADI Accreditation Coordinator and/or the Assessor(s) determine, in their sole discretion, that a program is not prepared to be assessed, then ADI may terminate the accreditation process.
7. If the program cannot produce a complete and sufficient Pre-assessment paperwork packet by the applicable deadline or if ADI terminates the accreditation process for any reason, the program may apply for the accreditation process in the following year.
8. If the program cannot produce a complete and sufficient Pre-assessment paperwork packet by the applicable deadline or if ADI terminates the accreditation process for any reason *and the program has reached their candidate status deadline to complete their accreditation process*, then the program must withdraw from ADI for one year and apply to be a candidate in the following year. The program must then follow the current candidate nomination application procedures to become a candidate program.
9. Assessors *may* recommend to the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC) a probationary accreditation process extension of up to one year if there are several minor

deficiencies found during the survey, or if several new policies/procedures have been created during the survey process. This extension of time will allow the program sufficient time to correct any deficiencies and demonstrate full implement of new policies/procedures.

10. If the program receives a probationary accreditation process extension and items found not in compliance during the initial survey require a second visit by the assessor to confirm compliance, there will be an additional fee. This will be discussed with the program at the appropriate time.

TERM OF ADI ACCREDITATION: The ADI Accreditation term is five (5) years.

RECOGNITION:

Programs that achieve ADI Accreditation receive a certificate suitable for framing. The certificate indicates the date of accreditation or reaccreditation and length of term.

Following the notification of accreditation approval from the ARC, the ADI Accreditation Coordinator sends a letter of congratulations from the ADI President. The accreditation certificate may be awarded at the next ADI conference or will be sent under separate cover. ADI will also provide an ADI accredited member logo for use by the program.

Programs awarded ADI accreditation may display the logo and state they are an ADI Accredited Member *after they receive official notification from ADI.*

RE-ACCREDITATION POLICY:

ADI members undergoing re-accreditation must be able to demonstrate compliance with all ADI Standards and requirements at the time of the re-accreditation survey and *also be able to demonstrate that the program has maintained continued compliance during the five years since the previous survey was conducted.*

Depending on the particular circumstances, lapses in accreditation compliance may be cause for a program to not pass the re-accreditation process. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis via the current accreditation approval process.

All re-accreditation procedures are the same as those outlined in this document.

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:

Accredited members are required to comply with the terms stated in the Annual Statement of Compliance **each year**. The document is included in the annual membership renewal packets and must be signed by the Executive Director or equivalent and returned to ADI. A

sample of this document is available upon request.

REVOCATION OF ACCREDITATION:

Accreditation may be revoked at any time if the program does not operate in a manner consistent with the ADI Standards and requirements. This action may only be taken with due process and by majority vote of the ADI Board of Directors.

UPDATES TO ADI STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS:

The ADI Standards, procedures and other materials are living documents and will be updated regularly. Updates will usually occur in January and/or June of each year.

If an urgent update is required, it will be made to the documents and programs will be notified accordingly.

Programs preparing for accreditation or re-accreditation are responsible for contacting the Accreditation Coordinator to request copies of the current accreditation documents.

THE DUTIES OF THE ACCREDITATION REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC):

1. Select and train new assessors
2. Assign assessors to programs that apply for accreditation/re-accreditation
3. Review assessor survey reports
4. Approve surveys
5. Deny surveys not requiring further discussion by the ADI Standards Committee
6. Process survey approvals
7. Advise ADI Board of Directors about survey denials that are appealed to the board

QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Questions regarding these procedures and requests for assistance in preparing for accreditation should be sent to:

Laura@assistancedogsinternational.org

NOTES: