



AEE Accreditation Site Visits: Information for Programs seeking Initial or Continuing Accreditation

Scheduling: once your self-assessment has been submitted to AEE and approved by a liaison from the accreditation council, select dates for the site visit and coordinate logistics with the AEE Director of Accreditation. Dates should be selected no sooner than 4-6 weeks after submission of your self-assessment. Dates for the site visit must be scheduled during a time when you have *programming in the field* so that the review team can observe field operations and talk to staff. You must select dates when you have at least one of your technical activities available for observation (i.e., climbing, biking, water activity, backpacking, etc.). Dates can be scheduled during the week and over the weekend if necessary. The program is responsible for putting together a tentative schedule 2-3 weeks prior to the review. On-site interviews are typically conducted with a program director or coordinator, program management, field staff or faculty, and administrators (HR, marketing, admissions, Head of School, etc.). Some interviews (such as with a member of the Board of Directors, etc.) can be scheduled via phone.

Review Team Composition: AEE makes every effort to staff reviews with individuals who have the requisite experience with the context of your program, whether that's a university program, a therapeutic program, an independent school, etc. Most reviews are staffed with either two or three reviewers. AEE makes every effort to staff reviews with gender balance. The review team will have read your self-assessment prior to arriving. Reviewers do not receive compensation for their time on reviews, but their expenses are reimbursed by the program seeking accreditation.

Length of Site Visit: most site visits are 2.5 days in length, with a “pre-day” evening dinner meeting with the review team or lead reviewer to go-over the schedule, get to know each other, etc. Depending on the size and scope of the program some reviews may have an extra day. A typical schedule often looks like this:

Monday: evening dinner meeting from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Tuesday: 8:00am- 5:00pm - full review day: interview staff and administrators, observe

activities, etc.

Wednesday: 8:00am – 5:00 pm – full review day: interview staff, inspect files, vehicles, equipment, observe activities, etc.

Thursday: 8:00am -12:00pm - final prep by review team and exit interview with program staff. The exit interview typically last 1 – 1.5 hours. The review team will share their initial findings during the exit interview and talk about the “next steps” in the accreditation process.

Lodging, Food and Transportation: the review team will need accommodation for the length of the review. Lodging can be on-site (if available and appropriate), or at a budget hotel nearby. Most reviews require a minimum of three nights lodging. Reviewers of the same gender can be asked to share a room to reduce the cost. Mixed gender or teams of three will require two rooms. The program is responsible for arranging lodging. Reviewers can eat some meals on-site (if available), and/or at restaurants nearby. Most reviews require a rental car for the review team to get to and from the airport and to travel to programming sites.

Work Space: the review team will require a dedicated on-site private work space to set-up their laptops, review paperwork, and meet throughout the day. A conference room or unused office space will typically suffice.

Expenses: the program seeking accreditation is responsible for reimbursement of all reviewer expenses including transportation (airfare or mileage), rental car, food, and lodging. Total expenses are anywhere from \$600 on the low end (rare) to as much as \$1,800 - \$2,400 (more common) on the high end. AEE makes every attempt to reduce the cost by finding “local” reviewers who can drive to your site. However, this is not always possible in which case reviewers need to fly to the nearest airport and rent a car. Reviewers pay for most of their expenses up-front, and then submit expense reimbursement forms to AEE with all receipts after the review. Reviewers are reimbursed by AEE. AEE then submits an itemized invoice of reviewer expenses to the program after the review with 30-day net terms.

Important Note About Expenses: the AEE Director of Accreditation will pre-approve all reviewer expenses prior to the review, BUT not until all logistical arrangements have been made and the review dates are firm!

Questions? Please contact Dan Miller, Professional Development and Standards Director at Dan@aee.org or (720) 573-4223.