CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (CEA)

STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION

The Correctional Education Association Standards Commission (CEASC) serves as a separate component of the CEA providing related accreditation services for CEA. There are three distinct sets of standards, Juvenile/Detention Centers, Jails and Adult prisons. The services include the development and promulgation of new standards, revision of existing standards, coordination of the accreditation process for all correctional education components of the criminal justice system, technical assistance to correctional agencies, and training for consultants who are involved in the accreditation process as auditors.

In November 1997 the CEA Executive Board approved the Standards for Adult and Juvenile Correctional Education Programs and the accreditation policy developed by the Standards Committee. In February, 1999 the ACA’s (American Correctional Association) independent body, the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, agreed to accept CEA’s accreditation of education programs in lieu of the education portion of the ACA accreditation.
One of the Correctional Education Association’s strengths has been to assist in providing program improvement opportunities. One aspect of this has been the development of national standards and the implementation of an accreditation process. The standards serve as benchmarks upon which to build better schools and evaluate the quality of those schools. Through accreditation, an agency is able to maintain a balance between providing quality education services and operating within the confines of a security focused system. Standards set by CEA reflect practical up-to-date policies and procedures, and function as a management tool for the more than 1,500 correctional agencies in the United States. An increasing number of state departments of correction, youth services, county jails and private sector programs are active participants in the accreditation process. Programs run by higher education institutions are also participants. For a list of participating states and facilities contact ceanational.org.
AGENCY TESTIMONIALS

The following are article excerpts and unsolicited comments from representatives of correctional programs who have made the decision to participate in the accreditation process.

We will need to put our own things in here.

SEEKING ACCREDITATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seeking Accreditation</th>
<th>Glossary of Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Criteria</td>
<td>Hands On Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications and Manuals</td>
<td>Online Resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

The requirements of the accreditation process are the same for all types of agencies – state, county, federal and private. Education providers will first contact the CEA Executive Director to discuss any questions and procedures. The Executive Director will furnish the applicant with informational materials that explain the standards accreditation process. All programs and facilities sign a contract, pay an accreditation fee, receive accreditation training, conduct a self-evaluation and have a standards compliance audit by trained CEA consultants prior to an accreditation decision by the CEA Standards Commission.

APPLICANT STATUS
In order to enter into Applicant Status, agency staff should contact CEA to obtain the necessary materials to implement the process. Certain narrative information regarding the agency is necessary to confirm eligibility and determine the applicable manual of standards and appropriate fees. An accreditation contract is then executed and sent to the agency. The signed contract must be returned to the Correctional Education Association to initiate the process.

PRE-AUDIT ASSESSMENT
Some agencies have serious concerns and questions regarding preparation for the accreditation audit and often request that a CEA auditor conduct a pre-audit assessment to assist them in determining their levels of compliance prior to scheduling the actual audit. This option is highly recommended for facilities and agencies that are new to the accreditation process, and for facilities that feel a need for special technical assistance prior to the audit. This visit is included as part of the overall process.

CORRESPONDENT STATUS
Once the contract is executed, the agency enters into Correspondent Status. During this time, the agency conducts a self-assessment of its operations and completes a Self-Evaluation Report that specifies the agency’s level of standards compliance. Agencies must submit the Self-Evaluation Report to CEA for review. In order to request an audit, an agency must comply with 100 percent of the standards designated as mandatory and at least 90 percent of the non-mandatory standards.

CANDIDATE STATUS
The agency enters into Candidate Status with CEA’s acceptance of the Self-Evaluation Report. During this period, the agency works toward meeting the required levels of compliance. Once these requirements are met, the agency schedules the standards compliance audit by contacting the CEA executive director. Candidate Status lasts up to 12 months and continues until the agency is awarded accreditation.

STANDARDS COMPLIANCE AUDIT
The next step in the accreditation process is the standards compliance audit. The purpose of the audit is to measure the agency’s operation against the standards, based on written documentation, observations and interviews. A visiting committee composed of two or more auditors conducts the audit. CEA designates a visiting committee chairperson who is responsible for supervising
the committee’s activities and preparing the audit committee report to be submitted to the Accreditation Commission.

ACCREDITATION HEARING
Accreditation hearings are conducted by a panel of three to five commissioners and are held at least twice a year. At the hearing, the audit committee report is reviewed and any appeals, and/or waiver requests are discussed. After completing its review, the panel votes to award or deny accreditation. Accreditation is awarded for a period of three years during which time annual certification statements, confirming continued standards compliance, are submitted to CEA. To ensure continued Accredited Status, accredited agencies apply for reaccreditation approximately nine months prior to the expiration of their current accreditation award.

The Correctional Education Association and the Standards Commission are private, nonprofit organizations that administer the accreditation program for all components of adult and juvenile corrections. The purpose of these organizations is to promote improvement in the management of the voluntary accreditation program and the ongoing development and revision of relevant, useful standards.

A significant number of correctional facilities and programs are involved in accreditation across the country. Programs and facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the private sector are also included.

For these agencies, the accreditation program offers the opportunity to evaluate their operations against national standards, to remedy deficiencies and to upgrade the quality of correctional education programs and services. The recognized benefits from such a process include improved management, a defense against lawsuits through documentation and the demonstration of a “good faith” effort to improve services, increased accountability and enhanced public credibility. The process also establishes measurable criteria for upgrading programs, personnel practices, and the physical plant on a continuous basis.
### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for accreditation, an agency must be part of a governmental entity or conform to the applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding corporate existence. The agency must:

- a. Hold under confinement pretrial or pre-sentenced adults or juveniles who are being held pending a hearing for unlawful activity;
- b. Hold under confinement sentenced adult offenders convicted of criminal activity or juveniles adjudicated to confinements;
- c. Supervise in the community, sentenced adult or adjudicated juvenile offenders, including youths placed in residential settings; and/or
- d. Have a single administrative officer responsible for agency operations.

Status offenders should not be confined in juvenile facilities or secure correctional facilities. There will be situations where juvenile detention facilities and training schools that hold status offenders will be accepted into the process, although training schools containing status offenders may be required to remove them from the facility before or as a condition of accreditation. In either case, status offenders must be separated by sight and sound from delinquent offenders; facility staff should demonstrate attempts to develop opportunities for status offenders in the least restrictive environment possible to include alternatives outside a secure setting; and special programs must be developed for status offenders.
Glossary of Terms

**Accreditation Manager**
An agency employee designated by the agency administrator to supervise the planning and implementation of education accreditation activities in the agency. He/she has comprehensive knowledge of the agency and its education programs and will have sufficient authority within the agency to design and administer a successful education accreditation strategy.

**Accreditation Panel**
The sub-unit of the Commission on Accreditation for Correctional Education empowered to review applications and make final decisions on agency education program accreditation.

**Accredited Status**
The three-year period during which the agency maintains and improves upon its standards compliance levels that were achieved at the time of the accreditation award.

**Adult correctional institution**
A confinement facility, usually under state or federal auspices, that has custodial authority over adults sentenced to confinement for more than one year.

**Adult detention facility or Jail**
A local confinement facility with temporary custodial authority. Adults can be confined pending adjudication for 48 hours or more and usually for sentences of up to two years.

**Agency**
The unit of a governing authority that has direct responsibility for the operations of a correctional program, including the implementation of policy as set by the governing authority. For a community residential center, this would be the administrative headquarters of the facilities is considered to be an agency. In a public agency, this could be a probation department, welfare department or similar agency. For a juvenile correctional organization, this would be the central office responsible for governing the juvenile correctional system for the jurisdiction.

**Annual Certification Statement**
The document an accredited education program submits to CEA to verify continued compliance with the standards, report on its progress of implementing plans of action, and advise
the Association of any significant events that may have occurred. It is due on the anniversary of the accreditation award.

**Appeal**
- The agency’s attempt to change the visiting accreditation committee’s decision on a standard. The result of a successful appeal is a change in the status of the standard, either compliance or applicability, and a recalculation of the compliance tally.

**Applicant Agency**
- An agency involved in the exchange of materials, information and correspondence with CEA while preparing to participate in the accreditation process.

**Audit**
- The process by which an agency’s compliance with standards is verified by a visiting accreditation committee during an on-site visit.

**Auditor**
- The term frequently used to refer to CEA consultants who conduct the pre-accreditation assessments, technical assistance visits, standards compliance audits and monitoring visits.

**Candidate Status**
- The period after an agency has completed its self-evaluation report. Candidate Status continues until standards compliance is verified during the audit and the accreditation decision is made.

**Code of ethics**
- A set of rules describing acceptable standards of conduct for all employees.

**Commission on Accreditation for Correctional Education (CACE)**
- The term used collectively to refer to the elected and appointed members empowered to render accreditation decisions for the Correctional Education Association.

**Community resources**
- Human services agencies, service clubs, citizen interest groups, self-help groups and individual citizen volunteers that offer services, facilities or other functions that can meet the needs of the facility or have the potential to assist residents. These various resources, which may be public or private and national or local, may assist with material and financial support, guidance, counseling and supportive services.

**Compliance Action Plan**
- A detailed statement of actions that an agency takes to achieve compliance with a standard found in noncompliance at the time of the audit. The compliance action plan designates staff responsibilities and timetables for completing each task.

**Contract**
The written, signed agreement between the CEA and the agency specifying responsibilities, activities and financial obligations.

**Contractor**
A person or organization that agrees to furnish materials or to perform services for the facility or jurisdiction at a specified price. Contractors operating in correctional facilities are subject to all applicable rules and regulations of the facility.

**Contractual arrangement**
An agreement with a private party to provide services to juvenile or adult offenders for compensation. (See Independent operator.)

**Core Standards**
Those standards that apply across a correctional education system, whether one institution or more. These will be the responsibility of the education agency’s central administrative office to develop and disseminate to all the education programs in the system.

**Correctional facility**
A facility used for the incarceration of individuals accused of or convicted of criminal activity. A correctional facility is managed by a single chief executive officer with broad authority for the operation of the facility. This authorization typically includes the final authority for decisions concerning (1) the employment or termination of staff members and (2) the facility operation and programming with in guidelines established by the parent agency or governing body. A correctional facility also must have (1) a separate perimeter that precludes the regular commingling of the inmates with inmates from other facilities, (2) a separate facility budget managed by a chief executive officer within guidelines established by the parent agency or governing authority and (3) staff who are permanently assigned to the facility.

**Correspondent Status**
The initial period after an education program applies for accreditation. At this time, the agency evaluates its compliance with the standards and prepares a self-evaluation report.

**Counseling**
A process where an education counselor assesses the background, capabilities and achievement level of a student to advise them on their placement in academic, vocational or post secondary programs.

**Credentials**
Documentation that demonstrates that staff are qualified and currently licensed certified and/or registered as applicable to provide education services within their scope of expertise.

**Delinquent youth**
Also referred to as a juvenile delinquent or a criminal-type offender, a juvenile who has been charged with or adjudicated for conduct that would, under the law of the jurisdiction in which the offense was committed, be a crime if committed by an adult. (See also Status offender and Juvenile.)
**Education program**
A program of formal academic or vocational training designed to improve life coping skills and employment opportunities.

**Exit interview**
At the conclusion of the audit, the audit team will meet again with representatives of the agency to present their findings.

**Facility**
A place, institution, building (or part thereof), set of buildings or area (whether or not enclosing a building or set of buildings) that is used for the lawful custody and/or treatment of individuals. It may be owned and/or operated by public or private agencies and includes the staff and services as well as the buildings and grounds.

**Good-time**
A system established by law whereby a convicted offender is credited a set amount of time, which is subtracted from his or her sentence, for specified periods of time served in an acceptable manner.

**Handicapped**
Having a mental or physical impediment or disadvantage that substantially limits an individual’s ability to participate in programs or services.

**Holidays**
All days legally designated as non-work days by statute or by the chief governing authority of a jurisdiction.

**Independent operator/contractor**
A person or persons who contract with a correctional agency or other governmental agency to operate and manage a correctional program or facility.

**Juvenile**
A person under the age of 21, or as defined in the local jurisdiction as under the age of majority.

**Juvenile community residential program**
A program housed in a structure without security fences and security hardware or other major restraining construction typically associated with correctional facilities such as a converted apartment building or private home. They are not constructed as or intended to be detention facilities, except for day care programs, they provide 24-hour care, programs and supervision to juveniles in residence. Their focus is on providing the juvenile with positive adult models and
program activities that assist in resolving problems specific to this age group in an environment conducive to positive behavior in the community.

**Juvenile day treatment program**
A program that provides services to juveniles who live at home and report to the program on a daily basis. Juveniles in these programs require more attention than that provided by probation and aftercare services. Often the program operates its own education program through the local school district. The population usually is drawn from court commitments but may include juveniles enrolled as a preventive or diversionary measure. The program may operate as part of a residential program, and it may provide space for occasional overnight stays by program participants where circumstances warrant additional assistance.

**Juvenile detention**
Temporary care of juvenile offenders and juveniles alleged to be delinquent who require secure custody in a physically restricting facility.

**Juvenile group home**
A non-secure residential program emphasizing family-style living in a home-like atmosphere. Program goals are similar to those for large community residential programs. Although group homes usually house juveniles who are court-committed programs. Although group homes usually house juveniles who are court-committed, they also house abused or neglected juveniles who are placed by social agencies. Small group homes serve from four to eight juveniles; large group homes serve eight to twelve juveniles. Participating juveniles range in age from 10 to 17, with the concentration from 13 to 16.

**Juvenile intake**
The process of determining whether the interests of the public or the juvenile require the filing of a petition with the juvenile court. Generally, an intake officer receives reviews and processes complaints, recommends detention or release and provides services for juveniles and their families, including diversion and referral to other community agencies.

**Juvenile ranch**
A non-secure residential program providing services to juveniles in a rural setting. Typically, the residents participate in a structured program of education, recreation and facility maintenance, including responsibility for the physical plant, its equipment and livestock. Often there are 20 to 60 juveniles in the ranch setting, ranging in age from 13 to 18.

**Major equipment**
All equipment that is securely and permanently fastened to the building or any equipment with a current book value of $1,000 or more.

**Mandatory/Required Standards**
Those standards that must be met to be eligible for accreditation The program must comply with all applicable mandatory standards.
Mentally retarded
   Describes an individual who functions at a sub-average general intellectual level and is deficient in adaptive behavior.

Monitoring Visit
   A consultant visits the agency during the three-year award period to verify continued standards compliance at the request of the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections panel. At this time, the consultant may examine issues that were of concern to either the visiting committee or the panel such as quality of life and standards compliance levels.

Non-required Standards
   Those standards that are not mandatory. Up to 10% may not be in compliance and the education agency will still pass the standards audit.

Not applicable
   A term used in the accreditation process to describe a standard that does not apply to the correctional unit being audited. While the initial determination of applicability is made by the agency staff and/or the audit team, the final decision rest with the standards commission.

Parent
   The individual with whom a juvenile regularly lives and who is the natural, adoptive or surrogate parent.

Parent government organization/Parent agency
   The administrative department or division to whom the agency seeking accreditation reports; the policy-setting body.

Policy
   A course or line of action adopted and pursued by an agency that guides and determines present and future decisions and actions. Policies indicate the general course or direction of an organization within which the activities of the personnel must operate. They are statement of guiding principles that should be followed in directing activities toward the attainment of objectives. Their attainment may lead to compliance with standards and compliance with the overall goals of the agency or system.

Pre-audit assessment
   For agencies considering participation in accreditation, one or more consultants provide on-site assistance to evaluate an agencies strengths and deficiencies, and assess its readiness for accreditation.
**Primary Documentation**
A document from which the authority to act is derived. It may be a law, an executive directive, and/or a departmental policy and procedure directive or all three.

**Procedure**
The detailed and sequential actions that must be executed to ensure that a policy is fully implemented. It is the method of performing an operation or a manner of proceeding on a course of action. It differs from a policy in that it directs action in a particular situation to perform a specific task within the guidelines of policy.

**Professional association**
A collective body of individuals engaged in a particular profession or vocation. The American Correctional Association, the American Medical Association, and the National Association of Clinical Psychologists are examples of professional associations, of which there are hundreds in the United States.

**Program**
The plan or system through which a correctional agency works to meet its goals; often this program requires a distinct physical setting such as a correctional institution, community residential facility, group home or foster home.

**Protocols**
Written instructions that guide implementation of expected practices, such as policies and procedures, training curriculum, offender handbooks, diagrams and internal forms and logs.

**Records (juvenile and adult offenders)**
Information concerning the individual’s delinquent or criminal, personal, and medical history and behavior and activities while in custody, including but not limited to commitment papers, court orders, detainers, personal property receipts, visitors’ lists, photographs, fingerprints, type of custody, disciplinary infractions and actions taken, grievance reports, work assignments, program participation and miscellaneous correspondence.

**Referral**
The process by which a juvenile or adult offender is introduced to an agency or service that can provide the assistance needed.

**Safety equipment**
Each school and vocational program should have fire fighting equipment such as chemical extinguishers, hoses, nozzles, water supplies, alarm systems, fans, first aid kits, stretchers and emergency alarms.

**Secondary Documentation**
Documentation which provides evidence that the policy and procedure has been implemented. For example, where there is a policy mandating that staff meetings be held on a regular basis, secondary documentation may be the minutes of the staff meetings.
Segregation
The confinement of an inmate to an individual cell that is separated from the general population. There are three forms of segregation; administrative segregation disciplinary detention and protective custody.

Self-evaluation report
The document prepared by the agency in Correspondent status that includes basic descriptive information about the agency, the results of the agency’s assessment of its compliance with the standards, including reasons for non compliance and non-applicability, and a tally reflecting percentages of compliance with the standards.

Sheriff
The elected or appointed chief executive officer of a county law enforcement agency. Sheriffs can serve several functions, including responsibility for law enforcement in unincorporated areas, operation of the county jail, and assignment as officers of the court.

Special management inmates
Individuals whose behavior presents a serious threat to the safety and security of the facility, staff, general inmate population or themselves. Special handling and/or housing are required to regulate their behavior.

Special needs
A mental and/or physical condition that requires different accommodations or arrangements than a general population offender normally would receive. Offenders with special needs may include, but are not limited to, the emotionally disturbed, developmentally disabled, mentally ill, physically handicapped, chronically ill, the disabled or infirm and the drug or alcohol addicted.

Standard
A statement that defines a required or essential condition to be achieved or maintained.

Standards Compliance Checklist
A form used in the standards compliance files to indicate the agencies and visiting committee’s determination on each standard (compliance, noncompliance and non-applicability). It also includes a listing of supporting documentation.

Tertiary Documentation
A third level of documentation in a logical sequence from the parent directive to a procedure implementing the directive to evidence that the policy was implemented. If minutes are secondary documentation a calendar showing the meeting schedule would be tertiary.

Training School
Training school/Juvenile development center/Juvenile village/Juvenile correction center/Juvenile treatment centers/Juvenile service center/School or home for boys and girls. The typical training center may provide supervision, programs and residential services for more than 100 residents; however, programs of this size are not encouraged. These facilities are designed
and operated to be secure institutions. Juvenile development centers, juvenile treatment centers. Secure training schools and other facilities in the category may serve relatively smaller populations ranging from 40 to 100 juveniles. The age range served is generally from 13 to 18, although in many jurisdictions, residents may be as young as 10 or as old as 20. Older residents are usually juveniles who have been returned to the facility as parole violators.

**Visiting Committee**
Two or more CEA auditors who complete an on-site audit to verify an agency’s standards compliance.

**Visiting Committee Report**
An individual who donates his or her time and effort to enhance the activities and programs of the agency. They are selected on the basis of their skills or personal qualities to provide services in recreation, counseling, education, religion and so forth.

**Waiver**
A commission panel decision that releases the correctional unit from the responsibility of preparing a plan of action to bring the unit into compliance with a standard.
Accreditation & Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEEKING ACCREDITATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications and Manuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hands On Training**

While preparing for an audit, an agency may find itself requiring clarification of policy and procedure. CEA can provide on-site technical assistance and guidance to agencies. This is usually at the request of the agency and involves a fee. A field consultant visit typically entails a review of selected standards and documents prepared by the agency. Although there is an additional charge for technical assistance, the use of a consultant may prove to be cost effective when long term benefits are considered.

CEA also conducts auditor training each year at its conferences in July, as well as providing accreditation training for agencies beginning the audit process for the first time. In some cases, CEA staff can supply training on-site. Additional information about agency training is available from CEA Regional Chapter president.

**Becoming an Auditor**

CEA auditors are professionals who are selected and trained by the Accreditation Commission. The average auditor has worked in corrections for more than 18 years and has experience operating and evaluating the type of programs being audited. Auditors are also used for field consultation, re-audits and monitoring visits to accredited or certified programs. Auditors are frequently referred to as “consultants.”

In order to be considered for a position as an CEA auditor, you must have five years of experience in corrections, three of which must be at the supervisory level, be a current CEA member, and be recommended by the director/CEO of your division or agency. Please send you resume and recommendation, along with a cover letter to; Chairman of the Standards Commission, 8182 Lark Brown Road #202 Elkridge, MD 21075.
Benefits of Obtaining Accreditation

**Improved staff training and development.**
CEA accreditation requires written policy and procedures to establish a training and staff development program for all categories of personnel. The professional growth of employees is systematically developed through training plans that annually identify current job-related training needs and new theories, techniques and technologies.

**Assessment of program strengths and weaknesses.**
A CEA audit involves assessments that cover administration and management of inmate education programs.

**Defense against lawsuits.**
Accredited agencies have a stronger defense against litigation through documentation and the demonstration of a “good faith” effort to improve program services.

**Establishment of measurable criteria for upgrading operations.**
Through the standards and accreditation process agencies continuously review agency policy and procedure and have the ability to make necessary improvements when deficiencies are recognized.

**Improved staff morale and professionalism.**
Accreditation is awarded to the “best of the best” in the corrections field. Staff has a better understanding of policies and procedures and this contributes to improved working conditions for staff.

**Safer environment for staff and offenders.**
Administrative and line staff, as well as offenders, benefits from increased accountability, attention to physical plant issues and security procedures. Whether a facility or program, the accreditation process ensures a clear assessment of strengths and weaknesses.
Standards Commission

The Standards Commission continually revises the standards based on changing practices, current case law and agency experiences. Those standards approved by the commission reflect the views of correctional practitioners.

The commission is comprised of nine members:
A. two teacher/practitioners nominated and elected by the general CEA membership.
B. Two appointed members chosen by the Commission from the pool of current qualified auditors.
C. One representative from the corrections field who does not work in education who serves at large.
D. The CEA President-elect or Past-past president.
E. The council of Directors of Correctional Education Representative.
F. The CEA Executive Director.

G. A recording secretary who is a non-voting member of the Commission.

The committee meets at least twice annually in conjunction with CEA’s March and July conferences to consider proposals for standards revisions, new standards and draft manuals. Proposals may be submitted for consideration through this link, Proposed Standards Revisions, or by contacting the Standards Commission at 8182 Lark Brown Road #202 Elkridge, MD 21075. 800-783-1232 Deadlines for submitting proposals are approximately 30 days prior to each conference.

Information regarding the Adult, Youth/Juvenile; County facility standards can be obtained from the same address.

Recent Standards Commission Minutes:
- Standards Commission Meeting- September 30, 2005

Past Standards Commission Meeting Minutes:
- Standards Commission Meeting- July 8, 2005
- Standards Committee Meeting- March 11, 2005
- Standards Committee Meeting – October 9, 2004
- Standards Committee Meeting – July 2004
- Standards Committee Meeting – March 2004
- Standards Committee Meeting – September 2003
## Standards Revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;&gt;Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;&gt;Proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;&gt;Revision Form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Proposed

The purpose of this page is to allow all interested persons, groups or organizations an opportunity to present online comments and suggestions concerning additions, deletions or revisions to existing or new standards. **Proposed revisions will be posted in February and June preceding each conference.** The deadline for comments on the Proposed Standards Revisions will be March 1 and July 1. Comments may be e-mailed to CEAnational.org or fax the Standards Revision form to Heather Comstock at. To see the results of previous revisions, click on the page entitled Past Standards Revisions.

### Revision Form

The **Standards Revision Form** must be used to submit proposed Standards revisions. The proposals you submit will be considered at the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

### STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION

Each year the CEA follows up the Commission Hearings with a newsletter sent to each accredited agency and members of CEA. It contains messages from various CEA officials, and provides auditing news and updates from the Standards Commission regarding revision the Commission made on proposed changes to the standards. To serve our members more efficiently, we will soon begin publishing our newsletter online for the convenience of both our members and the general public. So, when you want to know what’s happening at CEA, don’t wait for a letter, just click her for the latest news online.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Overview of Accreditation

• What is accreditation?
• What kinds of education programs are eligible for accreditation?
• What are the main benefits of CEA standards and accreditation?
• Why do correctional agencies seek accreditation?
• What is the timeline for accreditation?

The CEA Accreditation Commission

• What is the CEA Accreditation Commission?
• Who are the members of the CEA Accreditation Commission?

CEA Standards

• What are CEA standards?
• Who sets CEA standards?
• Who are the members of the CEA Standards Commission?
• Who uses CEA standards?
• Are there different standards for the different types of facilities?
• How are the standards revised?
• How many standards must correctional education programs comply with in order to receive accreditation?

The Accreditation Process

• How do I initiate a contract?
• What happens after a facility signs the contract?
• What materials do I receive after the accreditation contract is executed?
• What publications will assist me in this process?
• What if I need help during this process?
• When do I schedule my audit?
• What activities occur following the scheduling of the audit date?
• What is the Self-Evaluation Report?
• Who are the auditors?
• What happens after the audit?
• What are the factors that commission considers in the decision to award or deny accreditation?
• What happens after a facility becomes accredited?
• What is the annual certification statement?
• What is reaccreditation?
• What are the contract procedures for reaccreditation?

For More Information

• What if I have further questions?

Overview of Accreditation

Q What is accreditation?

A. Accreditation is a system of verification that correctional education programs comply with national standards promulgated by the Correctional Education Association. Accreditation is achieved through a series of reviews, evaluations, audits and hearings.

Q What kinds of facilities are eligible for accreditation?

A. In order to be eligible for accreditation, a correctional agency must hold at least one of the following:
   • Pretrial or presentenced adult or juveniles;
   • Convicted adults or juveniles adjudicated delinquent; and/or
   • Adult or juvenile offenders sentenced to community supervision.

Q What are the main benefits of CEA accreditation?

A. A recent survey of accredited facilities indicates that the advantages and benefits of accreditation are numerous and include:
   (1) the assessment of a programs strengths and weaknesses, (2) the identification of obtainable goals, (3) the implementation of state-of-the-art policies and procedures, (4) the establishment of specific guidelines for daily operations, (5) aid in the defense of frivolous lawsuits, (6) an increase of community support and (7) a higher level of staff professionalism and morale.

Q Why do correctional education programs seek accreditation?

A. The three most frequently cited reasons are: 1) to ensure that the operation is in compliance with national standards, 2) to demonstrate to interested parties that the organization is operating at acceptable professional levels and 3) to comply with court orders.
Q How long does the accreditation process take?

A. The accreditation process usually takes up to 18 months. While individual accreditation awards last three years, the accreditation process is designed to be continuous.

The CEA Accreditation Commission

Q What is the CEA Accreditation Commission?

A. The Commission on Accreditation for Corrections is a private, nonprofit body that is comprised of corrections professionals from across the county. Its composition ensures that the Commission is completely independent and impartial. The main responsibility of this board is to conduct the accreditation hearings to verify that those agencies applying for accreditation comply with the applicable standards.

Q Who are the members of the CEA Accreditation Commission?

A. The Commission is governed by a 9-member Board of Commissioners who are elected/appointed as outlined under the standards commission.

CEA STANDARDS

Q What are CEA Standards?

A. CEA standards are the national benchmark for the effective operation of correctional education programs throughout the United States. They address education services, programs and operations essential to good program management, including administrative and fiscal controls, staff training and development. Standards reflect practical, up-to-date policies and procedures that promote effective programs.

Q Who sets CEA standards?

A. A Standards Commission, required by CEA bylaws, continually revises the standards based on changing practices, current case law and agency experiences. Those standards approved by the commission reflect the views of correctional education professionals.

Q Who are the members of the CEA Standards Committee?

A. The Standards Commission consists of 9 members. Two elected practitioners, two commission appointed members, one member from the corrections field who is not involved
with education, the CEA president elect or past president, a Council of Directors of Correctional Education representative, the CEA Executive Director and a non-voting recording secretary.

Q Who uses CEA standards?

A. Standards are pertinent to all correctional education programming.

Q Are there different standards for different types of facilities?

A. Yes. The Association currently publishes 3 different manuals of standards, each of which applies to a specific kinds of correctional facilities. The standards cover programs for adults and juveniles housed in federal, state, county and private correctional facilities.

Q How are the standards revised?

A. The Standards Commission reviews proposals for revisions, deletions and additions to the standards twice a year in conjunction with the CEA conferences. Proposals are solicited and received from the field.

Q With how many standards must correctional facilities comply in order to receive accreditation?

A. Standards are classified into three categories; mandatory, non-mandatory and core. To be awarded accreditation, applicants must comply with 100% of the applicable mandatory standards and at least 90% of applicable non-mandatory standards.

The Accreditation Process

Q How do I initiate a contract?

A. Agency staff should contact the CEA to obtain the necessary materials to implement the accreditation process. Once this contact is made, the agency and Association staff work together to determine the applicable manual of standards and the appropriate fees. A contract is then executed. Accreditation staff may be reached at 1-800-783-1232 fax 433-459-3088.

Q What happens after a facility signs the contract?

A. CEA sends the facility the appropriate manual of standards and other materials. A regional manager is appointed to advise the facility during the accreditation process. The facility should begin its part of the process by appointing an accreditation manager.
Q What materials do I receive after the accreditation contract is executed?

A. You will receive a copy of the appropriate standards manual and supplement, the Agency Manual of Accreditation Policy and Procedure, the standards compliance checklist for use in developing the files and a compliance tally.

Q What publications will assist me in this process?

A CEA has available a variety of publications and services to assist agencies in becoming familiar with the standards and their application through accreditation.

The Agency Manual of Accreditation Policy and Procedure is the comprehensive guide to becoming accredited. It offers step-by-step procedures for implementing the phrase of accreditation from application through awarding of accreditation, maintenance and reaccreditation.

The Standards Supplement provides all additions, deletions and revisions to the standards.

Guidelines for the Development of Policy and Procedure provides step-by-step instructions for translating standards into effective and practical procedures. It included sample forms and policies for universal use. The guidelines are invaluable aids for programs working toward accreditation and for those upgrading everyday operations. These guidelines are available for juvenile community residential services, adult correctional institutions/adult local detention facilities.

Q What if I need help during this process?

A. Contact your regional manager for standards interpretations, procedural issues or self-evaluation, and file preparation questions. If you feel on-site assistance is required, your regional manager will discuss options with you.

Q When do I schedule my audit?

A. You need to contact your regional manager six to eight weeks in advance of your proposed audit date.

Q What activities occur following the scheduling of the audit date?

A. CEA staff will select a visiting committee to conduct the audit. Travel arrangements will be made by the individual auditors; however, it is your responsibility to provide transportation for the team between the airport and the hotel and the facility if necessary.
Q What is the Self-Evaluation Report?

A. The CEA requires that a Self-Evaluation Report be completed by each applicant for accreditation or reaccreditation. Agencies must submit a written statement to the CEA concerning their status of compliance. Information contained in this report includes the percentage of compliance with mandatory and nonmandatory standards; a list of not applicable standards and reasons for such; and a list of noncompliance standards and their deficiencies. The Self-Evaluation Report is due to CEA prior to the scheduling of the audit.

Q Who are the auditors?

A. CEA auditors are corrections professionals who are selected and trained by CEA. The average auditor has worked in the field of corrections for over 18 years and has experience operating and evaluating the type of facility being audited.

Q What happens after the audit?

A. After completing the audit, the audit team will report its findings to CEA Accreditation Commission. If the applicant has achieved necessary compliance levels, the commission will schedule an accreditation hearing. If the facility lacks necessary compliance and all other criteria have been met, it must rectify the situation before accreditation can be evaluated.

Q What are the factors that the CEAAC considers in the decision to award or deny accreditation?

A. Accreditation decisions are based upon the totality of the conditions of an program/facility. This includes levels of standards compliance, the quality of program facilities.

Q What happens after a program becomes accredited?

A. The program is presented an accreditation certificate and is publicly recognized for its outstanding efforts at the annual July conference. This achievement is a considerable honor among correctional programs. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process. Accredited agencies are required to submit annual certification reports to certify that they continue to comply with CEA standards.

Q What is the annual certification statement?

A. During the three-year accreditation period, the agency submits an annual certification statement that is due on the anniversary of the accreditation date. It contains the following...
information: current standards compliance levels, update of plans of action, significant events to include a change in the agency administration and/or major staffing changes; mission change or program revisions. CEA staff reviews the annual certification statement received from the agency.

Q What is reaccredidation?
A. For the most part, reaccredidation is a continuation of initial accreditation. It occurs every three years. Since standards are being revised constantly, it may involve compliance with some new or updated standards. The process does include a standards compliance audit and another accreditation hearing.

Q What are the contract procedures for reaccredidation?
A. A contract will be generated automatically by CEA and sent to you approximately nine months prior to the expiration of your current award.

For More Information

Q What if I have further questions?
A. Please feel free to contact our office at the following address:

Correctional Education Association
8182 Lark Brown Road
Elkridge, MD 21075
Phone: 800-783-1232
Email CEAnational.org