



COLORADO YOUTH CORPS ASSOCIATION

Accreditation Overview

Please provide additional comments about the programs your corps operates that might fall outside the definition of a youth corps as outlined in the accreditation standards.

Explanation:

Symbols

☼ - Standards marked with a ☼ symbol are referenced, in full or in part, in CYCA contracts as well as in the accreditation standards.

❖ - Programs seeking accreditation within the “Contract Corps” category (not full accreditation) are exempt from standards marked with a ❖ symbol.

SECTION A

Complete Section A by checking off whether your program “meets the standard/no changes from the previous year”, “meets the standard/changes from the previous year”, or “does not meet the standard”. If you marked “meets the standard/changes from the previous year”, “does not meet the standard” or if there were recommendations from the prior year, you must provide a detailed narrative and supporting documentation and comment on your corps’ progress toward addressing the recommendations.

A. Basic Standards

1. Term of Service - Corps operates as a full-time program. Full-time denotes that corpsmembers work a minimum of 32 hours per week. Crews of 14 and 15 year olds work a minimum of a 28-hour work week. ☼

meets standard/no changes from previous year

meets standard/change from previous year, please explain

does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Daily and weekly crew schedules
- Recruitment materials
- Corpsmember handbook

2. Term/Length of Program - Seasonal programs operate at least an 8-week season. Year-round programs operate at least a six-month season.

meets standard/no changes from previous year

meets standard/change from previous year, please explain

does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Samples daily, weekly, and yearly schedules

3. Crew Based – Corpsmembers work in crews with trained adult supervision. Recommended size for land conservation crews is a minimum of 8 people. Depending on the project type or at the request of sponsors, corps operate crews of different configurations to provide the best experience for corpsmembers and project quality for sponsors. ☀
- meets standard/no changes from previous year
 meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
 does not meet standard, please explain
- Explanation/Narrative:
Document Examples:
- Crew assignments
4. Age of Corpsmembers – Programming is targeted toward corpsmembers ages 14-30 with veteran programs recruiting up to age 35. Crews responding to statewide contractual work are age 16-25. ☀
- meets standard/no changes from previous year
 meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
 does not meet standard, please explain
- Explanation/Narrative:
Document Examples:
- Recruitment materials
 - Demographic data
5. Paid Work - Corpsmembers are paid, at a minimum, the legal minimum wage and provided worker’s compensation insurance and other applicable state and federal taxes and insurance. AmeriCorps Members enrolled at corps are exempted from the minimum wage standard. ☀
- meets standard/no changes from previous year
 meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
 does not meet standard, please explain
- Explanation/Narrative:
Document Examples:
- Recruitment materials
 - Sample of corpsmember payroll summary
 - Corpsmember handbook
6. Size of Program - Seasonal programs operate a minimum of two crews. Year round programs operate at least one crew.
- meets standard/no changes from previous year
 meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
 does not meet standard, please explain
- Explanation/Narrative:
Document Examples:
- Current or past season annual crew schedule
 - Data on number of crew weeks for current or past season
7. Type of Service Projects – Corps has the capacity and experience to work on conservation-related service projects.
- meets standard/no changes from previous year

- meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
- does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Current or past season project roster with sponsors listed
- Project accomplishment data

8. Benefits the Public Sector – The corps’ program work is performed for the benefit of the public.

- meets standard/no changes from previous year
- meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
- does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Current or past season project roster with sponsors listed
- Past season project accomplishments

9. Colorado-based - Program is headquartered in Colorado, employs primarily Colorado youth and does a majority of its work in Colorado.

- meets standard/no changes from previous year
- meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
- does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Copy of Articles of Incorporation
- Current or past season project roster with geographic locations
- Corpsmember roster with residence listed

10. Identity - The word “corps” is in the name of the organization/agency/program.

- meets standard/no changes from previous year
- meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
- does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Letterhead

11. Regional Responsiveness - Programs are expected to have the capacity to respond to contractual work opportunities in a service area that is defined as no less than countywide in the county the program resides.

- meets standard/no changes from previous year
- meets standard/change from previous year, please explain
- does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

Document Examples:

- Current or past season project roster with geographic locations

12. Insurance - Program carries minimum insurance coverage required by statewide fee-for-service contracts negotiated by CYCA. Corps must provide current insurance certificate (Workers Compensation, Liability, and Automobile) with self-assessment.

Programs managed as part of a self-insured local government are exempt from providing documentation for this standard. ☀

meets standard/no changes from previous year

meets standard/change from previous year, please explain

does not meet standard, please explain

Explanation/Narrative:

- Current Insurance Certificates

Sections B - D - Complete Sections B-D by checking off whether your program “meets the standard”, or “does not meet the standard”. Provide a detailed narrative and supporting documentation for these standards. If there were recommendations from the prior year, you must include comments on your corps’ progress toward addressing the recommendations.

B. Service Projects and Program Structure

1. Mission - Corps presents a clear mission and its program and activities are consistent with the mission.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Target Community - There is a relationship between the corps’ mission, activities and the corpsmembers and communities it serves.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

3. Activities – Corps’ mission shapes its structure and offerings.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

4. Visibility – The program’s members and staff are highly visible and easily identifiable through the use of uniforms, insignias, and other markings.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

5. Risk Management -

a. Hiring:

i. Programs review potential staff's and volunteers' criminal, medical history (related to position), and driving records upon conditional hiring. Corpsmembers' backgrounds are checked per contract requirements (AmeriCorps, for example.)

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

- ii. Program's governing body has appropriate policies and a process for assuring a drug-free workplace, equal employment opportunity, adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other relevant laws.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

- iii. All staff (as appropriate) have up-to-date First Aid/CPR or WFA/WFR training.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

- iv. All staff and corpsmembers sign Liability Release and Medical Release (Inherent Risk) waivers upon hire. Municipal corps are exempt from this standard.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

- v. All staff (as appropriate) and corpsmembers provide prior consent to gather and review medical history in case of medical attention is needed.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

b. Training and Practices:

- i. Programs have established and maintain practices and procedures in all areas of Risk Management relevant to their programming. Training of these practices is conducted with staff and corpsmembers as appropriate.

c. Internal Response Procedures:

- i. Programs have established response, communication, and documentation guidelines pertaining to field emergencies, missing persons, natural disasters, and severe weather for crews and corps headquarters.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

d. External Response Plan:

- i. Programs have a written External Response Plan. All staff, Board Members, and key stakeholders are familiar with and have access to

the program's plan as well as the CYCA statewide plan. Program's External Response Plan is coordinated with the CYCA plan and shared with CYCA.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

e. Offices and Facilities:

i. Programs host a Fire and/or Health Department review of their facility to assure proper hazardous material and food storage.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

6. Project Quality – Corps completes projects in a quality fashion, receiving high marks from project sponsors. ☀

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

7. Project Management – Corps manages service projects, from pre-planning to project wrap-up, with a high degree of communication and field support.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

C. Corpsmembers and Corpsmember Development

1. Trained Workforce – Corpsmembers and staff have sufficient training necessary for the quality accomplishment of the youth corps' mission. Programs agree to participate in, or conduct, trainings designed to meet the need of statewide contract providers. ☀

a. Instructor Involvement:

i. Corps engage either internal or external trainers who have practical experience, expertise in the topic, and have a demonstrated ability to teach diverse youth.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

ii. All instructors teach using established lesson plans or curricula.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

b. Training Program

- i. Corps have a designated Training Coordinator to ensure high quality training that meets the needs of the corps and accreditation standards.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:
- ii. Sufficient time is dedicated to the training topics to assure crewleaders are well prepared for their seasons.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:
- iii. Corps train crewleaders in the topics listed in the “Content” section prior to leading a crew.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:
- c. Training Content
 - i. Corps Culture
 - 1. Scope - Staff and corpsmembers know the scope of corps operations in the state and nation, including knowledge of the Colorado Youth Corps Association and The Corps Network, and how they can find out about additional corps employment opportunities.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:
 - 2. Youth corps model
 - a. Staff and corpsmembers understand that high quality corps are dependent on 1) excellent corpsmember development programming, 2) outstanding project results and 3) high quality management and leadership.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:
 - b. Staff and corpsmembers understand that their corps is accredited annually by the Colorado Youth Corps Association and undergoes a rigorous peer review process.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 - Narrative:
 - Documentation:

- c. Staff and corpsmembers understand how their Corps is funded, what type of organization they are working for (non-profit/public partnership/etc.) and how this affects their program.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

- d. Staff and corpsmembers understand the mission of conservation corps is to provide opportunities for individual growth and development while providing quality projects.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

3. Esprit d'corps - Crewleaders and other staff successfully integrate corps culture components into their season including introductory activities, group contracting, daily safety circle and stretching, reflection activities (debriefing, journaling, and goal setting, for example), capitalizing on teachable moments, initiatives and icebreakers and celebrations.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

ii. Leadership/Crew Management/Team Building

1. Youth Development - Crewleaders and other staff understand the characteristics of the particular age group with whom they will be working.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Working with Diverse Groups - Crewleaders and other staff understand diversity they will encounter on their crews (gender, ethnic, religious, political, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, geographic, disabilities, etc.). They are given tools on how to work with a diverse crew, understand how to build inclusive practices, the importance of treating everyone fairly, and manage diversity-related conflicts.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

3. Conflict Resolution - Crewleaders and other staff understand organizational policy regarding conflict resolution, can diffuse conflict and approach disagreements, and foster an openness to dialogue, to diverse opinions, and to solution-focused problem solving.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

4. Inclusion of Corpsmembers with Disabilities

a. Crewleaders and other staff understand organizational policy, and their legal responsibility, including making necessary accommodations, when a corpsmember discloses a disability.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

b. Crewleaders and other staff are trained to act respectfully and appropriately when integrating a corpsmember with a disability into a crew.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

iii. Environmental Education – Crewleaders and/or crew mentors are trained to facilitate environmental education lessons that include a variety of resources including sponsor discussions, project-based learning, and a variety of other activities as appropriate.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

iv. Technical/Project Skills - Corps train crewleaders and corpsmembers to complete conservation projects they will most likely encounter during their season. Crewleaders are trained to lead their crews on the basics of these projects with some direction from sponsors.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

v. Professionalism

1. Sponsor Relationships - Crewleaders learn to communicate clearly with project sponsors so project expectations are met. They know what questions to ask, when to ask for clarification,

what decisions they can make without guidance, and when to elevate an issue to corps headquarters.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Walk the Talk: 24/7 Role Modeling

a. Crewleaders and corpsmembers understand that they are in the public eye when on trails, in campgrounds, in the vehicles, in stores, and everywhere they go during their session.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

b. Crewleaders understand and take seriously their responsibilities as role models and act accordingly at all times. Corpsmembers are taught to represent the corps well at all times.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

vi. Outdoor Living and Environmental Practices

1. Hygiene and Food Handling

a. Staff and corpsmembers understand the basic principles of food safety and know how to cook and store meat, eggs, etc. properly.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

b. Staff and corpsmembers understand the policies and procedures regarding individual hygiene and know how to set up camp to encourage and enforce hand washing.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Leave No Trace™ - Staff and corpsmembers know the seven principles of Leave No Trace™ and teach, practice, and enforce these principles daily. Corpsmembers practice LNT principles at all times.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Integration of Education – Programs integrate education such as environmental, academic, life-skills, service-learning, career development, civic responsibility, reflection and leadership as a regular and integral part of programming. ☀

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

3. Corpsmember Demographics – Programs serve a corpsmember population that reflects the mission of the corps and provides opportunities to participate for those young people who stand to benefit the most from the program’s services.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

4. Corpsmember Responsibility and Leadership – Corps engages corpsmembers in their personal development and sets high expectations for them. Corps provides opportunities for corpsmember leadership development.

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

5. Education – Corps assesses individual corpsmember needs, provides opportunities for corpsmembers to continue their education, earn certificates and regularly measures progress. ❖

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

6. Life Skills - Corps assesses individual corpsmember needs and provides opportunities for corpsmembers to learn needed life skills. ❖

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

7. Supportive Services and Opportunities - Corps provides corpsmembers with appropriate supportive services and opportunities to meet their needs and build on their interests and strengths. ❖

meets standard

does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

8. Reflection - Corps provides opportunities for corpsmember reflection.

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

9. Post Corps Services and Support - Corps provides or secures services as necessary to facilitate corpsmember transition to school and/or employment and encourages continued affiliation. ❖

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

D. Program Management and Administration

1. Governance - Programs are themselves a non-profit agency, a part of a larger non-profit agency, or a function of a local government. Program has an active and engaged governance body.

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

2. Staffing - Program operates with a staffing design which meets its needs and reviews the staffing design as part of its organizational development planning process. Corps has a reasonable retention rate and develops thoughtful succession plans for transitions in key staff positions. ❖

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

3. Budgets - The corps' budget falls within reasonable average costs and corps agrees to allow CYCA to negotiate statewide fee-for-service contracts after consultation with the corps.

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

4. Fiscal Accountability - Program maintains appropriate financial records and exercises sound fiscal management practices. Corps housed within a larger organization maintain separate financial records. ❖

- meets standard
 does not meet standard

Narrative:

Documentation:

5. Human Resources - Corps updates policies and procedures on a regular basis and follows strong human resource management practices.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

6. State and National Network - Corps actively participates in the state network of corps including CYCA-sponsored training sessions and events.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

7. Leadership - Corps maintains a strong, engaged, continuous and competent leadership.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

8. Professional Development - Youth corps displays a commitment to professional development for upper-level staff that is demonstrated in the annual budget and schedule. Upper-level staff are given increasing amounts of responsibility and are encouraged to participate in local, state and national development opportunities both within the youth corps field and in other sectors.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

9. Funding – Corps attracts and effectively manages stable and diverse funding.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

10. Marketing –Corps markets the program to stakeholders and the community at-large using a variety of methods such as print and electronic materials, the media, public presentations, and elected official site visits. ❖
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard
 Narrative:
 Documentation:

11. Technology - Program has access to and efficiently uses technology for management and outreach purposes. Corps utilizes technology to track corpsmembers, crews, and projects.
 - meets standard
 - does not meet standard

Narrative:
Documentation:

12. Evaluation - Corps conducts internal evaluation of its programs including the evaluation of staff, program effectiveness, and corpsmembers and sponsor satisfaction and participates in required evaluation initiatives. ☀ ❖ Contract Corps are exempt from participating in statewide evaluation initiatives.

- meets standard
- does not meet standard

Narrative:
Documentation:

13. Commitment to Continuous Improvement - The corps program is committed to striving toward best practices as described in the CYCA Accreditation process. The corps' commitment is demonstrated through ongoing organizational planning and program implementation.

- meets standard
- does not meet standard

Narrative:
Documentation:

Please sign below indicating that you have reviewed the corps' self-assessment and accompanying supportive documents and to the best of your knowledge the information provided is true and accurate.

Signature – Corps Executive Director (or equivalent)

Date

Print Name & Title

Signature – Corps Board President (or equivalent)

Date

Print Name & Title