November 1, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Due to the impact of the pandemic, all accreditation site visits scheduled to occur in-person during 2020 were postponed. The APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA), with the support of the APA office of program consultation and accreditation (OPCA), has implemented a plan for all programs to be reviewed in a timely manner. At its July 15-19, 2020 meeting, the CoA voted for continued use of virtual site visits through the end of 2020 for a subset of applicant programs. Due to the success of those virtual site visits, and the ongoing impact of the pandemic, the CoA extended virtual site visits through June 30, 2021, and has extended these virtual visits through December 31, 2021, May 31, 2022, and June 30, 2022.

In-person site visits began again for applicant programs scheduled for the fall 2022 cycle. Virtual site visits were extended for accredited programs undergoing periodic review for continued accreditation during the fall 2022 cycle (September – December 2022). For the winter 2023 cycle (January-May 2023) the Commission will expand the number of in-person site visits to help mitigate the backlog of site visits caused by the pandemic. While some visits will continue to be conducted virtually, expanding the number of in-person visits will dramatically increase the number of visits that can be completed during the winter cycle.

A virtual visit follows the same general format as an in-person visit, consisting of two days of interactive audio/video interviews, facility verification, and record review. As always, site visits are an opportunity for programs to showcase their strengths, the site visit team to verify and confirm information provided in the self-study report, and the CoA to gain information on the program that cannot be gleaned from a written record. Each virtual site visit will be followed with a brief in-person verification site visit to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements to perform regular on-site inspections. In June 2022 the first verification site visits were completed. Starting in fall 2022 we will continue to conduct in-person verification reviews with the help of members of the existing Site Visitor Corps.

Programs are being scheduled in the order that they were authorized to have a visit, with applicant programs receiving some priority. The OPCA has been in communication with programs and site visitors to coordinate and organize the virtual and in-person site visits, as well as verification visits (to those programs that have already received a virtual site visit).

As noted previously, all accredited programs with site visits that continue to be delayed remain accredited and in good standing throughout this delay.

Site visitors participating in virtual site visits are required to participate in an online, asynchronous training session on scheduling and conducting a virtual visit. Site visitors participating in verification visits will be provided detailed guidance on the content and scheduling of these half-day visits. The OPCA will also offer live video-conferencing sessions to answer questions about the verification site visit process. If you are a site visitor, you can anticipate emails from OPCA with additional information.

We greatly appreciate your flexibility and patience as we work to complete site visits to all programs that have been impacted by pandemic related delays. Please contact apasitevisit@apa.org with any immediate questions regarding site visits.

Kind Regards,

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