Policy Title: ACAOM On-Site Observer Policy

Approved By: ACAOM Executive Director

Document History: Implementation Date: 03 February 2017

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Related Policies: ACAOM Site Visitor Policy; ACAOM Conflict of Interest Policy, ACAOM Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

References: 34 CFR Part 602; 20 U.S. Code § 1099(b)

Responsible Official: ACAOM Director of Regulatory Affairs

Policy Summary:
Observers who represent Federal or State departments, agencies or organizations that have a legitimate accreditation or regulatory responsibility, may upon formal request and pre-approval accompany an ACAOM on-site visit team. Observers must make an official request directly to ACAOM’s Executive Director or Director of Accreditation Services. ACAOM will coordinate the observation request with the on-site visit team Chair. Each observer, if and when approved, is subject to and must not be in violation of ACAOM’s Conflict of Interest Policy. Costs incurred by observers will be paid by the observer’s organization.

Observers on an ACAOM on-site visit must abide by the following procedures:

1. With the exception of governmental representatives, all observers must execute and abide by ACAOM’s Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement.
2. The function of observers is generally limited to observing first-hand on-site visit procedures of ACAOM.
3. Observers are not consultants to either the on-site visit team or ACAOM and should be careful not to be drawn into the team as an active member.
4. Observers may attend all phases of the on-site visit, including the entrance and exit conference, subject to approvals by ACAOM and the chair of the ACAOM on-site visit team.
5. If, at the completion of the on-site visit, the team asks the observer for comments on the team’s performance, it is appropriate for him/her to inform the team of the major points that will be reported to that observer’s agency or organization.
6. Each observer’s agency or organization should provide, in advance, their official set of criteria to be used to evaluate the on-site visit team’s performance.
7. In assessing the competence of an on-site visit team, the observer should note, not only the members’ qualifications, but also their understanding of the purposes and procedures of accreditation.

Revision History

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<tr>
<td>2/3/2017</td>
<td>New policy</td>
<td>ACAOM Executive Director</td>
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<td>7/16/19</td>
<td>Exempted governmental representatives from executing confidentiality agreement</td>
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