



January 2017

Dear Recreation Agency:

Our Associations have always strived to be leaders in the field of parks and recreation. With that goal in mind, we endorse the Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency standards program and challenge every agency in the State of Illinois to obtain a copy of the standards manual and to do a self evaluation. Each agency should set goals to accomplish the standards that are set forth in this manual and to take those steps necessary to become a Distinguished Park and Recreation Accredited Agency.

Our profession has made tremendous strides over the past several decades to meet the challenging needs of our communities. The Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee (DPRAC) has established, and continues to fine tune, a set of comparable standards by which agencies can be evaluated on meeting measurable management standards. Many agencies have found the process of seeking Distinguished Accreditation recognition to be very educational. It can also be very enlightening in regard to what is, or is not, happening within the agency.

We feel that your participation in the process will be rewarding for your agency, your staff and commissioners, and your community.

Sincerely,

Illinois Association of Park Districts

Illinois Park and Recreation Association

**JOINT DISTINGUISHED PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY
STANDARDS MANUAL – DA VERSION
JANUARY 2017**

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PREFACE

BACKGROUND ON THE DISTINGUISHED PARK & RECREATION ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND DISTINGUISHED PARK & RECREATION ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

This Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Standards Manual is a product of many hours of research and painstaking review of information by the original Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Task Force. That process is continued by the current Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee (DPRAC).

The DPRAC has spent countless hours creating and fine tuning a set of measurable standards which may be used as a self-evaluation tool by individual agencies. The recreation agency's score on these standards is an indication of whether or not the agency has achieved a recognized level of professional delivery of recreation services. Prior to the original Task Force's work, very little research on professional standards was available. That Task Force was forced to rely upon the experience of committee members, IPRA sections, fellow professionals, IAPD, commissioners, and staff. The Task Force members were very grateful for all the assistance given. The Task Force did, however, utilize a 1972 National Recreation and Park Association publication entitled "Evaluation and Self-Study of Public Recreation and Park Agencies" by Betty van der Smissen and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies – Accreditation Standards. DPRAC wants to acknowledge the assistance provided by these publications.

DPRAC also would like to acknowledge the efforts of the past original Task Force members. Their contributions in setting direction and focus helped achieve this current document.

The original Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Standards Manual was developed in 1993. That manual was revised effective in January 1999 and since 2002 it is updated yearly. The revised manual utilizes the majority of the original standards plus new standards resulting from recent technological advances, changing legal requirements and the growing body of knowledge, research and awareness of developing areas of concern (environmental etc). During 2001 a Special Recreation Agency version of the Standards Manual was tested. Starting in 2002 this SRA-DA version of the standards manual became available for general use. In 2009, the Distinguished Agency Program was changed to an Accreditation program. To bring the program up to the level of accreditation, the standards were updated and strengthened, and the process was re-defined.

PURPOSE

To improve the quality of life for Illinois residents and to recognize those agencies that provide exceptional Park and Recreation services to their community through a voluntary, comprehensive, professional accreditation process.

BENEFITS

AGENCY

- Recognition that the recreation agency provides exceptional Park and Recreation services to their community
- Self evaluation through the application and review process
- Increased operational efficiency & effectiveness
- Opportunity for updating and clarification of policies and procedures
- Provides professional standards for both internal & external comparisons
- Enhances credibility within the community which increases the probability of passing a referendum

COMMUNITY

- Improve quality of life for community through delivery of exceptional park and recreation services
- Meet professional standards for facilities and services
- Acknowledged as employing qualified professionals
- Recognized as a leader in the State of Illinois in the field of parks and recreation
- Perceived as having quality programs and services

STAFF

- Recognizes that recreation agency provides exceptional Park and Recreation services to their community
- Raises credibility to even higher level for achieving Distinguished Accreditation
- Receives public commendation for doing a good job
- Educates all staff involved
- Provides opportunity for self-evaluation of performance compared to established standards
- Promotes and encourages teamwork and team building
- Reinforces that nothing significant is ever accomplished without significant effort
- Increases pride and morale

- Provides opportunity for updating and clarification of policies and procedures
- Requires and stresses staff training

BOARD

- Acknowledges elected officials as effective and efficient guardians of the public interest in parks and recreation, and of the public resources provided for recreation opportunities
- Gains confidence in ability of board, staff and agency to provide outstanding park and recreation services
- Forces board to address policy issues in an established timetable

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS FOR DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITION

A recreation agency interested in applying for Accreditation should be aware of the following steps necessary for completion of the recognition process. (Note: Applications are accepted through April 1st each year on a first-come, first-served basis.)

This application/recognition process may be time consuming, if completed within one year. However, if the process is spread over a two year period, it should be manageable for almost every agency.

1. **Eligibility Requirement:** Applicant must be a current member of the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) throughout the duration of the Accreditation process to be considered eligible.
2. Recreation agency downloads: the Distinguished Accreditation Park and Recreation Agency Standards documents from the IAPD web site (www.ilparks.org/programs.htm).
3. Recreation agency reviews standards. The recreation agency independently determines if it can comply with a sufficient number of criteria necessary for Accreditation by completing the self-evaluation (standards score sheet). Contact IPRA Chair of Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee (DPRAC) for additional help, if necessary. If their self-evaluation shows that the agency has almost complied with many of the standards, a formal letter requesting entry into the Accreditation process, which is signed by the Director (CEO) and the Board President, an application and a copy of the electronics self assessment form to the IPRA Chair of DPRAC. The letter, which must be received by April 1st, shall also include the \$500 entry fee (payable to IAPD). Applications will be reviewed by the DPRAC co-chairs. If the DPRAC determines the recreation agency is eligible to continue the process, a mentor will be assigned. The agency will have approximately 19 months from the time their application is approved, to complete the accreditation process.
4. As they gather information, the recreation agency will meet with their mentor for interpretation of individual criteria. When the agency feels they are ready for evaluation, they must get a signed recommendation from their mentor for evaluation. The agency then submits a letter signed by the CEO and the Board President, by August 15th, requesting Distinguished Accreditation evaluation and giving several available dates. After meeting to set up the Evaluation Teams, DPRAC will send a letter to the agency giving the actual date of their evaluation, the Evaluation Team Leader and other members of the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team will consist of five members, with at least two people being IAPD members, and three people being IRPA members, including at least one CEO. In unforeseen situations where an assigned evaluation team member is unable to attend the evaluation and no substitute can be found, the Co-Chairs may direct the evaluation to continue with no less than three members consisting of one (1) IAPD and two (2) IPRA members. The Team Leader will contact the recreation agency to coordinate the evaluation.

5. The process of pursuing Distinguished Accreditation will involve two costs. The first cost is the application fee of \$500. The second cost will be determined by the “out of pocket” expenses of the Evaluation Team. The application fee includes one plaque upon successful completion of the program, with delivery at the State Conference. Additional plaques may be purchased. Out of pocket expenses may include, but may not be limited to, meals for the five person evaluation team members, transportation, duplicating, mailing costs, etc. and possibly, though unusual, overnight lodging. All attempts will be made to keep costs to a minimum. The recreation agency contact person and the Evaluation Team Leader should coordinate the out of pocket expenses.
6. On the day of the evaluation the agency presents documented information and a tour of pertinent facilities and parks for Evaluation Team review. All information shall be in hardcopy or electronic folders with the number of the standard on the folder. Each item in the folder shall also be numbered with the standard, to avoid confusion as the papers pass among the members of the Evaluation if hard copy and for easy identification if electronically presented. The recreation agency must have pertinent staff present to answer questions. At the end of the Evaluation, the Evaluation Team will meet to discuss the information, and may request additional documentation. At this time, the preliminary results of the Evaluation Team will be discussed with the agency.
7. The Agency will then have 30 days from the date of the evaluation to correct any deficiencies. These deficiencies would include any mandatory items, items in sections not meeting a minimum score, or items that would increase the agency’s total score to a passing level. If the evaluation takes place less than 30 days before the Accreditation Review Board meeting (the Monday prior to Thanksgiving), all deficiencies must be corrected prior to that meeting. Proof of these corrections will be forwarded to the Evaluation Team Leader who shall distribute them to the Evaluation Team.
8. The Evaluation Team will present a report at a meeting of the Accreditation Review Board. The Accreditation Review Board consists of members of the DPRAC minus the Agency Evaluation Team and mentor and any other members having an affiliation with the subject agency. This meeting will take place the Monday before Thanksgiving of each year. The Accreditation Review Board will review materials and score sheets submitted by the Evaluation Team. Representatives from the agency are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting. After reviewing the Evaluation Team’s report, the Accreditation Review Board will entertain a motion and second, take discussion and then have a vote in favor or against Agency Accreditation.
9. If the agency is denied accreditation by the Accreditation Review Board, the agency may try again the following year. If the agency’s evaluation was in the original calendar year of its application, a new application fee is not required. If the agency’s evaluation was in the second calendar year of the application, a new application and application fee is required for the following year. In either case, a new evaluation team will be assigned per the normal evaluation schedule.

10. Recognition will be given at the State Conference to those agencies achieving Distinguished Accreditation status.

11. Contact Information for 2017 DPRAC Co-Chairs:

IAPD Co-Chair

David Johnson
Schaumburg Park District
235 E. Beech Dr.
Schaumburg, IL 60193
847-985-2115
djohnson@parkfun.com

IPRA Co-Chair

Dan Jones
Cary Park District
255 Briargate Rd.
Cary, IL 60013
847-639-6100
djones@carypark.com

DISTINGUISHED PARK & RECREATION ACCREDITED AGENCY

APPLICATION TO ENTER THE DISTINGUISHED ACCREDITATION PROCESS

DATE _____

Agency Name _____

Agency Address _____

County _____

Phone Number _____

Contact Person _____

Population _____

E.A.V. _____

Full-Time Employees _____

Part-Time Employees _____

Send application along with letter signed by Board President and CEO, a copy of your self-evaluation, a list of documents to be used as evidence and a check for \$500 (payable to IAPD) to DPRAC – IPRA Co-Chair.

The IPRA 2017 Co-Chair is:

Dan Jones
Cary Park District
255 Briargate Rd.
Cary, IL 60013
847-639-6100
djones@carypark.com

You will be contacted by the mentor assigned to your agency for continuation of the process.

DISTINGUISHED ACCREDITATION RECOGNITION INFORMATION

ROLE OF THE MENTOR

WHAT DO MENTORS BRING TO THE PROCESS?

- Experience. All of our Mentors have gone through several agency evaluations. They understand the process and can convey that information to the agency. Because they themselves have gone through the evaluation at their own agency, the Mentor can understand many of the concerns expressed by the agency.
- Mentors invest themselves in the agency. They are whole-heartedly involved in the process. They put themselves in the role of the Director or individual collecting and coordinating the information. They ask whether or not they would be satisfied with the quality of the response to the standard or criteria if it were *their* agency going through the process.
- They communicate effectively with the agency. They keep the lines of communication open. The Mentor is uniquely able to interpret the criteria and standards to the agency. Mentors are brutally honest – and constructively critical. No one is helped if the Mentor allows an agency to slide in meeting the standards.
- They understand the limitations of their role. As good a Mentor as they may be, the agency they are mentoring must do the work to become a Distinguished Accredited Agency.

WHAT DOES A MENTOR DO?

A Mentor is assigned to an agency after the agency has completed an electronic self assessment form and has formally requested entry into the Distinguished Accreditation process. One of the first things a Mentor will do is determine how motivated the agency is to become a Distinguished Park and Recreation Accredited Agency. This will greatly impact how much time the Mentor will be spending with that agency in the year (or years) ahead.

- Becoming a Distinguished Accredited Agency requires a commitment of time and energy. If the interest in the Distinguished Accreditation process is solely Board driven, and the Director and/or staff are not motivated, the process of becoming accredited is going to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. The Mentor will make periodic calls or visits to the Director or agency contact to see if the agency's level of commitment to the program has changed.
- In some cases, the agency may be *motivated* to go through the process, but is limited in their ability to apply the necessary staff resources over a period of a single year. The agency may be temporarily overwhelmed by the amount of work necessary to become an accredited agency, be in the midst of a large project or involved with some major staff turnover. If that's the case, the Mentor will be

sensitive to the particular issues delaying the process. The agency does have until November 15th of the following year after the application to go through the evaluation.

Presume that the agency is motivated, a staff commitment has been made, and the agency hopes to complete the process in the year ahead. Mentors plan on a number of meetings (at least three) with the applicant agency. These review meetings will become progressively more challenging for the applicant agency.

1. The first meeting might take place in early spring, at which time an in-depth review of their self assessment form and the standards will take place. The Mentor will clear up any misconceptions the agency has about any of the terms in the standards such as what constitutes “Evidence of Compliance”. At the meeting, the Mentor will first look for compliance with the mandatory and legal list of criteria. Agencies unable to comply with *all* of these criteria cannot become Accredited Agencies. The Mentor will check on some of the long lead-time standards such as Goals and Objectives and the existence of a Master Plan.

The Mentor will communicate any concerns and suggestions s/he has at this time to the Director or agency contact. It may become clear at this initial meeting that more work will be required by the agency to become accredited than first anticipated.

If sufficient progress is being made, a second meeting will be scheduled with the understanding that the Mentor will begin a “mock scoring” of their material at that meeting.

2. A second meeting will most likely take place sometime in early summer. At this meeting a full review of the material (including scoring) will be conducted by the Mentor. This scoring will allow all the parties concerned to get a good handle on the viability of the application for the current year. Weak points can be identified and a plan of action determined by the applicant agency. Once again, it may become clear at this time that the agency will not be ready to proceed with the process in the current year. If so, the third meeting will not be necessary that year.
3. A third and final meeting will take place no later than August. At this final review meeting, the Mentor will “pick up” any changes from the previous run-through and complete the mock score. The Mentor will determine whether or not s/he can recommend the agency for the evaluation. If the Mentor determines that the agency is ready to be evaluated, then s/he will send a letter of recommendation to DPRAC. The agency must send a formal letter from the CEO and Board President requesting that the evaluation take place. The deadline for receiving the letter from the applicant agency is August 15.

EVALUATION DAY

By this time the Mentor's work should be completed. The recreation agency feels confident and is ready for their evaluation

DEFINITIONS

Eligibility – Park districts as defined in the “Illinois Park District Code” Chapter 105, Illinois Revised Statutes; or village/city recreation departments as defined in the Illinois Municipal Code – 65 ILCS 5/11-95-B & 11-95-14; or special recreation agencies as defined in the “Illinois Park District Code” – 70 ILCS 1205/8-10A and 8-10B.

Board of Commissioners – Defined as the governing board, advisory board and/or managing authority elected to manage the overall affairs of the recreation agency and/or are appointed to fulfill that function by elected officials of a general purpose government.

Compliance Document – Each standard has stated the document the recreation agency must provide to meet the criterion. Other verification may be accepted provided the recreation agency can explain how it adequately meets the standard.

Recreation Agency – Defined as the agency responsible for the administration of recreation programs, facilities and services. A recreation agency must be a State of Illinois park district, recreation department, or special recreation agency. (See Eligibility)

Director (CEO) Authorized Copy – Defined as a written statement approved by the Board of Commissioners and signed by the Board President authorizing the Director or CEO to meet this particular criterion. In effect we feel that, for example, goals/objectives must include Board input and approval. The Board, by this statement, is willing to have the Director prepare the recreation agency's goals/objectives. To meet this standard or criterion, the recreation agency must produce a directive, letter, etc. which authorizes the Director to prepare and implement those goals/objectives.

Policy Documentation – Throughout the manual, we ask for evidence of compliance for meeting a standard by providing a board-approved policy or, in lieu of policy, an ordinance. We are looking for a board-approved document which indicates the philosophy or direction of the recreation agency. The policy is to be easily accessible and available in all manuals with evidence of board approval. The DPRAC feels to get the true direction of the recreation agency, the elected or appointed Board must be aware and provide that direction. As such, we expect the Board to approve that policy or provide evidence the Board has given direction and authority to the staff to prepare the policy.

Evidence of Document Approval or Review – The recreation agency should have noted on a cover page or as an integral part of the document a listing of any approved dates, and by whom the document was approved, i.e.: board, staff, etc. along with any revision dates, also by whom the document was revised, i.e.: board, staff, etc. In addition, if the document

calls for documentation to be signed, the appropriate signature should be found adjacent to the approved or revision date.

Board Action – Throughout the manual, there are numerous references to board action, approved by board action, etc. By this, it is understood that the Board is the local officials elected to perform park and recreation functions as per State Statutes.

Administration – Administration of the Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Standards is a joint IAPD and IPRA committee. DPRAC members are appointed by IAPD or IPRA. All IPRA committee members must be Certified Park and Recreation Professionals (CPRP) with at least five years experience. Each evaluation team shall consist of at least three, and preferably up to five members. At least one member of each team must be an IAPD member, one member must be an IPRA member, and one member must be a CEO. One of the team members would serve as Evaluation Team Leader. No one who is a staff or board member of a Special Recreation Agency, or of their member districts/agencies, is eligible to be on their Evaluation Team. Each Evaluation Team is appointed by the DPRAC Co-chairs.

Length of Recognition – Distinguished Accreditation for a recreation agency lasts six years effective at the Illinois State Conference following completion of a successful Evaluation. At the end of the effective accreditation period, a recreation agency would have to pass a complete evaluation to remain an accredited agency. If an agency allows their accreditation to lapse, they are not permitted to refer to their agency as an accredited agency.

COMPLIANCE

The Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Standards Manual contains standards for different levels of compliance, i.e.: (M) for Mandatory, (O) for Optional, and (B) for Bonus. Please note which division your agency is in (based on EAV, see Divisions, page xv) and at which level the standard pertains to your recreation agency.

Legal Section

These standards are required by State Statutes, and as such, all criteria must be met to receive Distinguished Accredited Agency recognition.

M Mandatory Criterion

These criteria are required of all recreation agencies to meet the standard. These criteria are determined to be of such value, non-compliance, means the recreation agency will not receive Distinguished Accreditation. Recreation agency must receive at least a “2” on compliance with verification to become accredited. Non-compliance for this criterion means agency would not be recognized.

O Optional Criterion

Criteria in this category are optional (not mandatory), they do indicate delivery of recreation services based on generally accepted management practices and may be needed to reach the point levels required to become accredited.

B Bonus Criterion

Criteria in this category exceed the established standard of a well managed and administered recreation agency. Compliance with these criteria will result in additional point(s) as stated.

For example: 1.10.1 has M M M O. The first “M” will stand for Division I, \$1,000,000,000 E.A.V. and up and is mandatory for that division. The second “M” is Division II, the 3rd “M” is Division III, and the 4th “O” is Division IV. For a Division IV agency with \$100,000,000 E.A.V and under and this standard is optional. As such, an agency of that E.A.V. size does not have to meet this standard.

N/A Non-Applicable to Certain Recreation Agencies

These standards are determined to be non-relevant or do not pertain to certain recreation agencies.

GRADING

The explanation of grading is attached to give you (the recreation agency) an understanding of how the evaluation team will score your compliance.

No Does not meet or verify this standard.

- Yes**
1. “MINIMAL” - Compliance to a minimal extent. Criterion is slightly met. Partial compliance with criterion and corresponding verification has been demonstrated. Agency has evidence to meet a portion of criterion, but has not complied with or is unable to verify substantial compliance.
 2. “ALMOST” - Almost full compliance. Basic or majority of criterion has been met with proper verification. Some areas may not be complied with.
 3. “YES” - Total compliance. Criterion has been 100% met with appropriate documentation, available for review by evaluation team.

SCORING

The Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Committee (DPRAC) determined that each section, i.e.: General Management, Finance & Business, etc., should have an equal value of 100 points. The only exception to this would be the Legal Section, which would have no point value since a recreation agency must abide by all legal requirements. Total possible points, not including bonus points, are 500. DPRAC has weighted the value of the individual standards found within each section, the intent being that some standards should have greater value than others. Consequently, alongside each standard, you will see a number which indicates the strength or weighted value for that standard (1 to 10, with 10 as a maximum).

The standards score sheet available on the IAPD website has the calculations for the weighted factors. An agency's overall score will be computed automatically when each standard is scored.

SAMPLE GRADING SHEET

Agency: _____

Evaluation Date: _____

I GENERAL MANAGEMENT SECTION:

	Agency Compliance Level	Max Points	Factor	Weighted Value	Raw Score
1.1 Philosophy	3	3	1	2	2
1.2 Goals	18	18	1	3	3
1.3 Organ. Struct.	12	15	4/5	4	3.2
1.4 Comp. Policy Man.	10	12	5/6	5	4.166
1.5 Admin. Procedures	3	3	1	5	5
1.6 Bd. Mbr. Orient.	6	6	1	2	2
1.7 Coop. Planning	3	6	1/2	3	1.5
1.8 Coop. Agreements	3	3	1	3	3
1.9 Public Relations	12	12	1	5	5
1.10 Bylaws	3	3	1	2	2
1.11 Regular Meetings	12	12	1	3	3
1.12 Memberships	6	6	1	2	2
1.13 Vol. Program	5	9	5/9	1	.55
1.14 Comp. Evaluation	3	3	1	3	<u>3</u>

2.325x43=100

Total Raw Score 39.416

x 2.325

91.642

***Bonus Point (1.62) + 1.000**

TOTAL ADJUSTED SCORE – SECTION 1 92.642

**Bonus points scored within each section are added to the total. All individual bonus points are worth one (1) point.*

WINDOW OF CONTINUATION

After reviewing the standards manual and completing the standards score sheet, if the recreation agency has received sufficient points as listed:

	Passing Score	Minimum Section Points Allowed
Division I	470 pts.	84 pts.
Division II	440 pts.	78 pts.
Division III	375 pts.	65 pts.
Division IV	300 pts.	50 pts.

It should fall within the minimum points necessary to become a Distinguished Accredited Agency. The recreation agency, if it has objectively filled out the standards score sheet, may, at its discretion, continue the application process. If the point total is less than indicated, we recommend the recreation agency address deficiencies and make necessary improvements prior to pursuing accreditation.

CHALLENGING THE EVALUATION TEAM

A Recreation Agency, upon notification of their Evaluation Team has five days to appeal the assigned members of the team and the Agency has the right to challenge, in writing, the appropriateness of any member of the Evaluation Team. Prior to the evaluation, if sufficient evidence can be documented that an Evaluation Team member is biased either for or against an agency making application, a replacement shall be provided by DPRAC. This challenge to an Evaluation Team member must be submitted directly to the IPRA Co-chair of DPRAC for process and disposition. The challenge must be based on documented, objective facts. If necessary, an appropriate hearing with supportive evidence and documentation will be convened. The decision of the appeal board, consisting of three DPRAC members shall be final.

REEVALUATION

In order for an agency to maintain its accredited status, the agency will be reevaluated at the end of the six (6) year period of accreditation. If the initial evaluation took place in October 2012, the effective date was the State Conference in January 2013 and the accreditation is applicable until December 31, 2018. In order to maintain accredited, the agency would have to complete another full evaluation in 2018, which would become effective at the 2019 State Conference. Current agencies with Distinguished Agency status must go through an entire evaluation in order to become accredited as their status as a Distinguished Agency expires.

ACCREDITATION SCHEDULE
(6-Year Term) / (by Date)

Initial Accreditation Evaluation Completed (Year)	Recognition Obtained (IAPD/IPRA Conference)	Accreditation Expires (Date)	Accreditation Renewal Evaluation (Year)
2011	1/26/2012 (2012-2017)	12/31/2017	2017
2012	1/24/2013 (2013-2018)	12/31/2018	2018
2013	1/23/2014 (2014-2019)	12/31/2019	2019
2014	1/22/2015 (2015-2020)	12/31/2020	2020
2015	1/28/2016 (2016-2021)	12/31/2021	2021
2016	1/20/2017 (2017-2022)	12/31/2022	2022
2017	1/19/2018 (2018-2023)	12/31/2023	2023

ACCREDITATION REVIEW BOARD

Upon completion of the recreation agency's evaluation by the Evaluation Team, the Team Leader shall submit a preliminary report, including all raw scores and the summary score sheet to the co-chair of DPRAC and to the Accreditation Review Board stating the agency's:

- Highest Level of Compliance
- Areas Which Need Improvement

- Areas Which are Lacking
- Areas of Exceptional Strength
- Total Points

The preliminary report shall list each standard, which has not been fully met and an explanation of why the recreation agency did not meet the standard. The Accreditation Review Board will review this report and any supporting materials at its annual meeting. This meeting will take place on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving of each year. The Accreditation Review Board will consist of all the DPRAC members with the exception of the evaluation team, the agency mentor and any other members having an affiliation with the agency. A minimum of 10 Accreditation Review Board members shall constitute a quorum. After reviewing the report, the Accreditation Review Board co-chairs will entertain a motion and a second in favor of or denying accreditation. After discussion, a roll call vote will take place.

If the agency is denied accreditation by the Accreditation Review Board, the agency may try again the following year. If the agency's evaluation was in the original calendar year of its application, a new application fee is not required. If the agency's evaluation was in its second calendar year of the application, a new application and application fee is required for the following year. In either case, a new evaluation team will be assigned per the normal evaluation schedule.

DIVISIONS

The recreation agencies will be divided into the following divisions:

- Division I - E.A.V. Over \$1,000,000,000
- Division II - E.A.V. \$401,000,000 - \$1,000,000,000
- Division III - E.A.V. \$101,000,000 - \$400,000,000
- Division IV - E.A.V. \$100,000,000 & Under

DISTINGUISHED ACCREDITATION RECOGNITION

The recreation agency upon meeting the necessary criteria for accreditation will receive a letter notifying them of the agency's accomplishment. The agency will also receive information for purchasing additional Distinguished Park and Recreation Accredited Agency plaques for an additional fee. The plaque(s) will be presented at the annual IAPD/IPRA State Conference. Presentation of the award plaque at a Board meeting should be coordinated with the DPRAC Co-chairs.

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS CHECK LIST

NOTE: Deadline for Evaluation Request is April 1st Each Year

Steps Toward Self-Evaluation

1. Recreation agency prints copy of Standards from IAPD web site (<http://www.ilparks.org>, IAPD Programs, then Distinguished Accredited Program)
2. Agency makes additional copies, as needed.
3. Agency reviews program operations for compliance with Standards.
4. Agency completes Standards Score Sheet

Steps Toward Distinguished Agency Recognition

1. Agency sends application for, application fee, letter signed by Board President and CEO requesting entry in the Accreditation process, and completed Electronics Self Assessment Form to IPRA Co-chair of DPRAC by April 1st.
2. An IPRA member of DPRAC is assigned as a mentor to the recreation agency seeking to become a Distinguished Park and Recreation Accredited agency.
3. Recreation agency works with their mentor on any questions or clarifications as they prepare for evaluation.
4. When recreation agency believes they are ready for evaluation, they must get the recommendation of their mentor to proceed with an evaluation.
5. The recreation agency then submits a letter, signed by Board President and CEO, requesting agency evaluation and giving several available dates for the evaluation. The letter is due by August 15th for an evaluation during the current year.
6. The mentor will send to DPRAC verification of the agency's completion of the Mandatory items and his/her recommendation that the agency is or is not ready for evaluation.
7. If the recommendation is to proceed, DPRAC will send a letter to the agency giving the date of their evaluation, the Evaluation Team Leader and other members of the Evaluation Team.
8. The recreation agency may appeal selection of members of the Evaluation Team to DPRAC Co-Chairs (see Challenging the Evaluation Team).
9. Evaluation Team Leader contacts the recreation agency to discuss the evaluation process, and estimated costs, to request all Legal Section documentation be sent to team members, to set up a timetable and to answer any other agency questions.
10. Evaluation takes place.
11. Evaluation Team Leader meets with agency to discuss team's findings. Agency has 30 days from the date of the evaluation or until the date of the Accreditation Review Board Meeting (whichever comes first), to correct any deficiencies. These deficiencies would include any mandatory items, items in sections not meeting a minimum score, or items that would increase the agency's total score

- to a passing level. Proof of these corrections will be forwarded to the Evaluation Team Leader who shall distribute them to the Evaluation Team.
12. Evaluation Team Leader submits preliminary evaluation report to Accreditation Review Board for review.
 13. Accreditation Review Board meets on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving to review Evaluation Team report and vote on agency accreditation.
 14. Accreditation Review Board takes final vote on accreditation and agency is informed. Representatives from the agency are encouraged to attend the Review Board meeting.
 15. Evaluation Team Leader submits final evaluation report to recreation agency, DPRAC Co-Chairs and DPRAC Records Keeper.
 16. Recreation agency recognized as a Distinguished Parks and Recreation Accredited Agency at State Conference, where the plaque will be presented.