

GREEN APPLE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Policies and Procedures Manual

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Policies and Procedures Manual

GREEN APPLE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures contained in this manual shall govern Green Apple member organizations. From time to time, this manual may be revised to better serve membership.

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Purpose of this Manual

The [Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services](#) Policies and Procedures Manual governs all aspects of membership, accreditation, compliance, governance, appeals, and procedural requirements.

Accreditation Standards for each program type are published separately in the [Green Apple Program Type Accreditation Standards Manuals](#) (e.g., Early Education, Private School, Behavioral Health, Opioid Treatment Programs, etc.). The accreditation standards manuals are available through the [My GAACS Account](#).

About [Green Apple Accreditation](#)

[Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services \(GAACS\)](#) provides quality assurance, accreditation, and certification services for schools, behavioral health, and community programs to enhance the quality of services and outcomes for children, youth, and adults. Green Apple recognizes excellence in program governance, compliance, safety, and best practices across multiple industries.

Mission: To improve the quality of educational, behavioral, and health-related services for children and families by establishing high standards of accountability, training, and ethical integrity, serving both faith-based and nonsectarian organizations.

Vision: To be the trusted accrediting body known for transforming care, education, behavioral health, and leadership through standards of excellence.

Goals:

1. Improve behavioral health and substance use disorder services, including opioid treatment programs.
2. Increase the quality of childcare and early education programs.
3. Strengthen private school governance and student success outcomes.
4. Advance advocacy that supports families, children, and member organizations through education, standards-based guidance, and informed engagement.
5. Support family advocacy and parental choice.
6. Provide training and professional development to member organizations.

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PART I — General Policies and Procedures

(Applies to all members and accredited programs)

Division 1 – Corporate & Administrative Policies

Membership | Eligibility | Fees | Refunds | Conflict of Interest | Nondiscrimination | Confidentiality | Substantive Change

Covers membership eligibility, benefits, dues, refund and fee policies, conflict of interest, nondiscrimination, confidentiality, and substantive change reporting.

Membership and Eligibility

Membership Eligibility

- A. Individual Member-any industry professional who owns or works for a member organization.
- B. Organization Membership-is open to any educational, behavioral, or public healthcare organization.
- C. Associate Membership-is open to policymaker, industry specific organization, professional, or parent advocacy group.
- D. Affiliate Membership-is open to any corporation that is concerned with providing services and resources to member organizations.

Member Benefits

- 1) Discounts on products
- 2) Professional Development
- 3) Coaching/Consulting
- 4) E-Newsletter
- 5) Annual Conference
- 6) Member's Only Web Access
- 7) Athletic League
- 8) Quality Review

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Membership Categories

Interested organizations-a public or private organization exploring the accreditation process.

Member in good standing-a member that is not delinquent on membership dues, in violation of accreditation standards, health and safety standards, policies and procedures, lapsed, suspended, revoked, or under investigation for violations.

Candidate member-a public or private organization that is a member in good standing and has applied for accreditation specific to its industry.

Accredited member-a public or private organization that has successfully demonstrated compliance with industry specific accreditation standards as evidenced by an onsite visiting team and awarded a certificate of accreditation.

Each member category must:

- a. Not openly oppose **GAACS** beliefs and statement of faith.
- b. Adhere to a nondiscrimination policy.
- c. Pay an annual membership fee due December 31st for the upcoming year; and
- d. Is a pre-requisite to initial and continued accreditation or religious exemption, including renewal and reinstatement.

Annual Membership Dues Renewal Timeline:

- **Dec 31** → Due date 11:59 PM EST. (window opens October 15 – Dec 31)
- **Jan 1–5** → Grace period (late fee applies)
- **Jan 6** → Lapsed / suspended → reinstatement fee applies

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Refund Policy, Fees, and Term Limits

Refund policy

All fees paid to **GAACS** are **nonrefundable and nontransferable**, regardless of application outcome, accreditation decision, withdrawal, lapse, suspension, revocation, or termination of services.

Cancellation Policy

The payment transaction may not be canceled once it is processed.

Credit Memos

GAACS may, at its **sole discretion**, issue a **credit memo** for future **GAACS** services.

A credit memo:

- Is **not a refund** and has **no cash value**.
- Is **nontransferable** and may not be sold, assigned, or exchanged.
- Is a **ONE TIME** courtesy when rendered.
- May only be applied to future **GAACS** services as determined by **GAACS**.
- Does **not** create an obligation for **GAACS** to issue credits in the future; and
- Does **not** alter the nonrefundable nature of any fee.

Fees

Fees are subject to change.

Fees for Late, Lapsed, and Reinstated Status

Late fee policy

Current programs that fail to renew an accreditation application, pay annual membership dues, submit a Program Annual Report (PAR), or renew a license-exempt approval by the stated expiration date will be considered late.

A late fee equal to **15% of the applicable fee** (membership, PAR, exemption, or accreditation fee) will be assessed.

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Grace Period

GAACS allows a grace period of up to **five (5) calendar days** following the stated due date during which fees remain due as of the original due date, and applicable late fees apply during the grace period.

Reinstatement Fee Policy

A reinstatement fee may be assessed when a program's accreditation or membership status has lapsed, been suspended, or revoked due to noncompliance.

Reinstatement fees apply to programs demonstrating one or more of the following:

1. A documented history of late payments or repeat noncompliance;
2. Multiple concurrent areas of noncompliance, including but not limited to failure to renew membership dues, submit required annual reports, or maintain accreditation requirements;
3. Violations of health and safety standards, accreditation standards, or Green Apple policies and procedures; or
4. A single occurrence of nonpayment of membership dues beyond the grace period.

The reinstatement fee shall be **equal to the applicable accreditation fee** and reflects the administrative burden, compliance review, and risk assessment required to restore good standing.

Assessment of a reinstatement fee does not guarantee reinstatement and may require additional corrective actions, documentation, or review.

Late fees apply during the grace period while accreditation remains active; reinstatement fee applies only after membership or accreditation has lapsed, been suspended, or revoked.

Notice of Term limits

Term limits are established for the beginning (start) through expiration (end) of all **GAACS** Services including: 1) Membership term, 2) Religious Exempt Approval term, 3) Certification term, and 4) Accreditation term. Each term requires a new/renewal application, applicable nonrefundable fee, and submission of supporting documents. **GAACS** programs must adhere to the term limits for continual compliance with the specific program of service.

Self-Study Guide Term Limits

The Self Study Guide process is extended for a specific period. To determine the specific timeframe of an application or Self Study Guide please review the application instructions, self-

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study guide instructions, accreditation standards manual, exempt health and safety manual, GAACS policies and procedures, or contact GAACS office.

Generally, a Self-Study must be completed and submitted within **ten (10) months** of issuance; failure to do so will require submission of a new application and payment of applicable fees to restart the accreditation process.

Conflict of Interest

Green Apple Peer Review Team members are selected based on their experience, educational background, and willingness to serve on a validation committee. Each PRT must complete a background screening, interview, submit, an application, and undergo annual training to participate on a validation committee. To eliminate the possibility or appearance of conflict of interest, PRTs are not permitted to evaluate their own program or a program within their organization/church/school network.

A PRT must inform the GAACS office of a conflict in interest which could interfere with or give the appearance of interfering with the objectivity of the peer review team. PRTs must recuse themselves from conducting visits that may put them in a conflict-of-interest situation.

1. At no time will a PRT be assigned to a program whose director or owner, also a PRT for GAACS has visited for the purpose of validation of the program/school. No two PRTs will inspect each other's program/school.
2. Onsite validation/inspection visits are to be conducted during regular business hours and on the normal days the business is open. At no point shall a PRT cause the program/school to remain after business hours.
3. PRTs are to be self-sufficient when they visit a program. It is quite alright to accept a glass of water or juice. It is not permitted to allow or ask the staff, the director or the owner to purchase gifts regardless of the size or dollar amount. It is not permitted to accept or request money/food/anything from the program beyond the travel expenses and Peer Review Team (PRT) member stipend, as approved by the GAACS office prior to the onsite validation visit.

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Nondiscrimination Policy, Equal Access, Faith-Based & Nonsectarian Recognition

Nondiscrimination Policy

GAACS does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in the administration of its accreditation programs, membership services, policies, procedures, or operations.

GAACS is committed to fair, impartial, and consistent accreditation practices and evaluates all applicants and members—including **faith-based and nonsectarian organizations**—solely on demonstrated compliance with applicable accreditation standards, policies, and procedures.

Equal Access Statement

GAACS provides equal access to its accreditation services and does not tolerate discrimination or harassment by staff, contractors, peer review team members, or representatives acting on behalf of the organization.

Faith-Based & Nonsectarian Recognition

As a national accrediting body serving a diverse range of programs, **GAACS** recognizes and respects the mission, governing structure, and sincerely held beliefs of faith-based organizations, as well as the operational frameworks of nonsectarian organizations, while maintaining nondiscriminatory accreditation processes consistent with applicable law.

Substantive Change

A program which is planning to undergo a substantive change (e.g. adding a grade level, location change, program or service change, ownership change, merger, name change, loss of principal/director, etc.) must submit a Substantive Change Report and notify **Green Apple** in writing thirty (30) days prior to the substantive change.

A program that undergoes a sudden, emergency, or unexpected substantive change must self-report the change to **Green Apple** in writing within seventy-two (72) hours of the change.

The substantive change may require a follow-up onsite visit and further documentation, if necessary, to verify continual compliance with accreditation standards.

In the case of, a transfer of ownership there will automatically prompt an onsite visit to verify continual compliance with accreditation standards. The current accreditation certificate (if in good standing) will be converted to a provisional accreditation certificate under the new owner until the verification process to determine continual compliance accreditation standards is completed.

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Complaint Procedure

Complaint against a Program:

From time to time, **Green Apple** receives a complaint about a member, approved, or accredited program. Usually these are concerned with allegations of unfair disciplinary procedures regarding a student dismissed or suspended, or a dispute over the financial obligations. **Green Apple** has adopted a Complaint Procedure which is as stated below:

How to File a Complaint:

To file a complaint against an accredited or member organization write a letter or send an email containing the following information:

1. First and Last Name of Person making the Complaint
2. Complainant address
3. Phone number
4. Email address
5. Name of member organization
6. Location of the member organization
7. Dates of incident
8. A full description of the problem and any other documentation that will support your claim such as high school diploma, transcript, completed class assignments, etc.
9. If your complaint is regarding a college not accepting your high school diploma from an accredited school, then please include the name of the college that you are applying to and a copy of the denial letter or correspondence.

Complaint Issues **GAACS** does not investigate:

1. Anonymous
2. Billing disputes
3. Matters in litigation
4. Complaints previously investigated and dismissed

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Possible Outcomes of Complaint

If it is determined that a complaint alleges violation of accreditation standards, health and safety standards, or policies and procedures then an investigation will take place.

The program will have an opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing. A complaint/investigation inspection will be conducted. Depending on the fact findings a determination may be made to dismiss the complaint, change the program's exemption/accreditation status to probation, suspension, or revocation; or refer the complaint to local, state, or federal authorities. A copy of the final action will be provided the complainant.

Confidentiality

Green Apple considers Health and Safety inspection reports public record. Green Apple reserves the right to publish copies of the Health and Safety inspection reports on its website and/or share with state agencies upon written request.

Fact findings from investigation/complaint inspection reports are considered public record. Accreditation determinations are publicly noticed when: granted, suspended, or revoked.

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PART I — General Policies and Procedures

(Applies to all members and accredited programs)

Division 2 – Accreditation Framework

Accreditation Categories | Step-by-Step Process | Accreditation Decision | Levels of Review | Annual Reports | Re-Accreditation

Outlines the accreditation categories (Traditional, Corporate, System), the accreditation step-by-step process, accreditation decision outcomes, levels of review (initial, renewal, complaint, expedited), continual accreditation requirements, and annual report submissions.

Note: Each program type adheres to these same procedural principles while applying its own accreditation standards contained in its specific Program Type Accreditation Standards Manual.

Accreditation Categories

Traditional Program Accreditation –

Single Site or Multi-Site Locations that do NOT operate as a Franchise should apply for Traditional or Program Accreditation.

Corporate System Accreditation –

Corporations that operate like a Franchise may apply for Corporate System Accreditation. Corporate System Accreditation helps streamline the Self Study Process. Additional benefits include Cost Savings for franchises and corporations that operate like franchises.

Accreditation Step by Step Process

PRE-REQUISITE TO APPLYING FOR ACCREDITATION

In addition to being a **Green Apple** member in good standing, the program must be meet ONE of the following requirements to begin the accreditation process:

- a. The program must be license approved by the state licensing authority and operational, or
- b. The program must be license exempt approved by **Green Apple** Accreditation and operational.

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A new program may apply for accreditation once it has passed the final licensing inspection to open and the license has been approved. However, the program site must be operational and attended by children or clients before accreditation may be granted.

Section 1. Traditional Program Accreditation –

Green Apple Accreditation follows a structured, multi-phase process designed to ensure quality, accountability, and ongoing compliance. Accreditation is an ongoing status, not a one-time event.

Step 1 – Apply

Create an account in the **MyGAACS Member Portal**, complete the application forms, review your individualized cost estimate (optional), acknowledge the Financial Agreement, and submit nonrefundable payment.

Step 2 – Introductory/Reaccreditation Accreditation Orientation Call

Participate in an Introductory Accreditation Call to review timelines, self-study expectations, and the accreditation process.

Step 3 – Self-Study

Complete the self-study and upload required documentation within the established timeframe (up to 10 months).

Step 4 – Pre-Site Review

Green Apple conducts a pre-site review (virtual or onsite) to confirm readiness for the formal accreditation visit.

Step 5 – Accreditation Site Visit

An on-site accreditation review is conducted by the assigned Peer Review Team.

Step 6 – Determination

A final accreditation decision is issued following review of the site visit report.

Final Determination Outcomes:

Approval-

GAACS will forward the applicable certificate of accreditation, Notice of Accreditation Letter, and related certifications to Candidate Member. The Candidate Member may advertise as a **GAACS** Accredited Program upon receipt of written notification of accredited status.

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Deferral-

A provider's accreditation decision may be deferred for several reasons including: a.) allow clarification of its program to demonstrate compliance, or b.) allow time for the program to complete a corrective action to meet accreditation standards. A remedial inspection may be required to demonstrate compliance.

Denied-

If **GAACS** decision is not favorable or a recommendation is made to deny accreditation, then the Candidate Member has 30 days to appeal the decision. Failure to appeal an adverse decision within 30 days shall constitute forfeiture of the right to appeal. If the Candidate Member timely appeals, then a hearing will be scheduled within 45 days from receipt of the formal appeal.

Step 7 – Continuous Accreditation

Accreditation is maintained through annual dues, program annual reporting, mid-term site visits, and ongoing compliance requirements. See Membership, Program Annual Report, and Visits.

Program Annual Report - The Accredited Program must submit an annual report and applicable nonrefundable fee no later than June 30th every year with exception to the year of initial accreditation/re-accreditation. PAR Window (March 15 – June 30). See Program Annual Report.

Step 8 – Re-Accreditation

Accreditation must be renewed by applying **no later than 10 months prior to the expiration date** to maintain accredited status.

Section 2. Corporate System Accreditation –

APPLICATION PHASE

As with traditional or program accreditation, corporate system accreditation requires a Step-by-Step Process.

The first step is for the corporate system to submit the Corporate Application, a Letter, and pay the nonrefundable fees.

SELF STUDY PHASE

Upon application acceptance, the Corporate System participates in Accreditation Orientation, submits Self Study Evidence through the **My GAACS** Account, and requests corporate visit.

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SITE VISIT PHASE

GAACS shall conduct on-site initial review of the Corporate Office. The corporate system site locations will be scheduled for on-site visits after the Self Study is submitted.

FINAL DETERMINATION

GAACS reviews the Visiting Committee's recommendations, response(s) from the candidate member organization (if any), and Self Study Evidence and makes the final decision to grant, defer, or deny accreditation.

See **Traditional Program Accreditation** for Details on Approval, Deferral, and Denial.

CONTNUAL ACCREDITATION-To maintain accreditation, the Accredited Program must submit an annual report and applicable nonrefundable fee no later than June 30th every year with exception to the year of initial accreditation/re-accreditation.

RE-ACCREDITATION

Re-accreditation-Within ten months before expiration date of the current accreditation, **GAACS** accredited programs must re-apply for accreditation in accordance with the most recent Accreditation Process.

Level of Program Participation

Levels of Accreditation

There are two levels of accreditation.

a. **Provisional Accreditation**

Provisional Accreditation may be awarded to providers for up to one year. Provisional Accreditation may be extended for up to 12 months, on a case-by-case basis.

b. **Full Accreditation**

Full Accreditation may be awarded to providers for the maximum term permitted for the program type. After School/Enrichment Program Accreditation is valid five years. Child Care/ Early Education Center Accreditation is valid five years. Private School accreditation is valid five years. Behavioral Health Accreditation may be valid three or four years, depending on the program.

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Levels of Review (Inspections)

There are five levels of program review or inspections.

a. Initial Review

The first time a program is reviewed or inspected to validate that it is, in compliance with health and safety standards, accreditation standards, and policies and procedures.

b. Follow-up Review

The follow-up to the initial or renewal review/inspection to validate that a program is, in compliance with health and safety standards, accreditation standards, and/or policies and procedures. The program may or may not have been previously cited for violation(s) or noncompliance with standards in the past. The follow-up review may be conducted to validate continual compliance or noncompliance with standards.

c. Renewal Review

The program is reviewed or inspected during the year of accreditation renewal to validate continual compliance with health and safety standards, accreditation standards, and policies and procedures.

d. Complaint Review

The program is reviewed or inspected in response to a complaint. In some cases, it may not be necessary to conduct an onsite inspection to conduct the investigation or take-action depending on the nature of the violation(s).

e. Expedited Review

A member in good standing may request an expedited review of the program in writing. The program must be ready to demonstrate compliance with the policies, procedures, and accreditation standards when the on-site visit is conducted. There is an additional fee, to expedite the process.

PART II – School Accreditation Policies and Procedures

(For early education centers, private schools, and enrichment programs)

Division 3 – Early Education & Child Care Accreditation

Overview of Eligibility | Process | Religious Exempt | EEC Accreditation Standards Manual

3.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes policies and procedures specific to the accreditation of early education, preschool, and childcare programs under the [Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services \(GAACS\)](#).

The purpose of accreditation is to ensure that early learning environments meet or exceed recognized best practices for child safety, developmentally appropriate instruction, family engagement, and program accountability, while reflecting Green Apple’s mission and core values.

Note: All program-specific performance expectations are contained in the *Early Education & Child Care Accreditation Standards Manual*, which is incorporated by reference.

3.2 Eligibility

Early education and childcare programs seeking accreditation must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Be a member in good standing with [GAACS](#).
 2. Hold applicable state licensure **or** operate under a recognized religious or license-exempt status approved by [GAACS](#).
 3. Be operational and serving children prior to the granting of accreditation.
 4. Maintain appropriate liability insurance and compliance with applicable fire, health, and building codes.
 5. Demonstrate a commitment to child safety, staff training, and continuous quality improvement.
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3.3 Application and Accreditation Process

Programs seeking Early Education & Child Care accreditation are subject to the **GAACS Application Process and Accreditation Lifecycle** as set forth in **Part I (General Policies and Procedures)** of this Manual.

This includes account creation, submission of required applications and fees, participation in required orientations, completion of a self-study, review and evaluation activities, issuance of an accreditation determination, and compliance with continual accreditation requirements.

Detailed step-by-step instructions, timelines, and submission guidance are provided through **GAACS** member guidance materials and the online member portal.

3.4 Division-Specific Review Considerations

In addition to the general application and review process, Early Education & Child Care accreditation evaluations emphasize compliance with standards related to:

- Health, safety, and supervision practices
- Classroom environments and outdoor learning spaces
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction
- Staff qualifications, ratios, and training
- Family communication and engagement
- Faith-based nurture and care practices (where applicable)

Reviews may include on-site validation or virtual self-study review activities conducted by trained Peer Review Team (PRT) members.

3.5 Health and Safety Validation

As part of the accreditation evaluation, **GAACS** may conduct health and safety validation activities to verify that programs operate in accordance with applicable accreditation standards and regulatory expectations.

Validation activities may include classroom and facility observations, review of records, and interviews with administrators, staff, and families. An exit conference may be conducted to communicate preliminary findings.

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3.6 Accreditation Determination

Accreditation determinations are issued in accordance with **GAACS** decision-making procedures outlined in **Part I** of this Manual.

Possible outcomes may include:

- Full Accreditation
- Provisional or Conditional Accreditation
- Deferral or Denial

Written notice of the final determination will be provided. Accredited programs may receive certificates, seals, or verification materials as applicable.

3.7 Continual Accreditation Requirements

Accredited Early Education & Child Care programs must comply with **GAACS** continual accreditation requirements, including:

- Submission of required annual reports
- Ongoing compliance with accreditation and health and safety standards
- Timely notification of substantive changes (e.g., ownership, leadership, location, enrollment capacity)
- Participation in monitoring, follow-up, or unannounced reviews as required

Failure to meet continual accreditation requirements may result in adverse action.

3.8 Reaccreditation

Reaccreditation is governed by **GAACS** reaccreditation policies outlined in **Part I** of this Manual and requires evidence of sustained compliance and continuous improvement consistent with prior recommendations.

3.9 Loss of Accreditation

Accreditation status may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed for failure to comply with **GAACS** policies, standards, reporting obligations, safety requirements, or financial responsibilities.

Written notice will be issued. Programs retain appeal rights in accordance with **Part IV, Division 8: Appeals and Due Process**.

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3.10 Reference to Standards Manual

All program-specific requirements relating to:

- Staff Qualifications and Ratios
- Curriculum and Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Family and Community Partnerships
- Assessment and Continuous Improvement

are fully described in the *Early Education & Child Care Accreditation Standards Manual*, which is incorporated by reference into this Policies and Procedures Manual.

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PART II – School Accreditation Policies and Procedures

(For early education centers, private schools, and enrichment programs)

Division 3 – Religious or License Exemption Policies and Procedures

3.1 Purpose and Scope

This division defines the policies and procedures for programs seeking **Religious or License Exemption** through **Green Apple Accreditation of Children’s Services (GAACS)**.

The purpose of this exemption process is to ensure that church-operated schools, early education centers, and ministries may operate in accordance with their faith while maintaining compliance with essential **health, safety, and welfare requirements** established by **Green Apple** and the state.

Note: The Religious/License Exemption process does not replace or negate state law. Programs must verify eligibility with their local or state licensing authority before applying.

3.2 Eligibility

A program is eligible to apply for Religious or License Exemption when it meets the following criteria:

1. Operates as a **ministry or integral part of a church or faith-based organization** recognized under federal or state law.
2. Serves children, youth, or families in an educational or child-care setting that reflects the organization’s religious tenets.
3. Maintains compliance with all applicable **fire, building, and sanitation codes**.
4. Agrees to abide by all **Green Apple** health and safety standards.
5. Holds **liability insurance** listing **Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services** as an additional insured party.
6. Provides a written **Statement of Faith** consistent with the organization’s founding documents.

State by State Eligibility-

Each state may have a somewhat different process or eligibility to obtain license exemption. CHECK YOUR STATE OR LOCAL LICENSING AUTHORITY TO VERIFY THAT YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE.

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General eligibility-

The program must be an integral part of a church or parochial school.

Once exemption is approved by **Green Apple** –

Depending on the state where your program is located you may be required to submit an additional Annual Report to the state or local licensing agency to verify compliance.

Provisional status -

Provisional exemption may be granted in lieu of denial for up to thirty (30) days on a case-by-case basis. The provisional exemption may be extended **ONE TIME**, for up to an additional thirty (30) days, if the extension is requested prior to June 30th of the year.

3.3 Application Process

Green Apple's Religious Exemption from Licensure Process-

Step-by-Step Process	Religious Exemption from Licensure Process
Step One: Complete the Membership and Religious Exempt Application	Complete the Membership Application and pay the non-refundable fee. Complete the Religious Exemption Application and submit all required documentation (Statement of Faith, ownership/affiliation documents, liability insurance certificate, and staff roster).
Step Two: Complete Religious Exempt Self Study	Complete Religious Exempt Self Study Obtain liability insurance showing Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services as an additional insured. Download and complete the Health & Safety Standards Checklist from the Green Apple portal. Upload supporting evidence of compliance (fire inspection, background screenings, emergency plans, and sanitation reports).
Step Four: Health and Safety Inspection	Green Apple will conduct a Health & Safety Check prior to granting exemption approval.
Step Five: Issuance of Exemption Certificate	Upon satisfactory review, Green Apple issues a Certificate of Religious Exemption valid for July 1 – June 30. The certificate includes the name, address, and effective dates of approval.

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3.4 Renewal Process

- Religious Exemption must be **renewed annually**.
- Renewal applications are due **June 30th annually**.
- A renewal inspection will be scheduled to confirm continued compliance.

3.5 Provisional Exemption

- When a program substantially meets eligibility but requires minor corrections, **Provisional Exemption** may be granted for up to **six months**.
- An extension of up to **30 additional days** may be requested before expiration.

3.6 Loss or Revocation of Exemption

Religious Exemption may be **revoked or suspended** for any of the following:

1. Failure to comply with **Green Apple** health and safety standards.
2. Failure to maintain liability insurance or membership in good standing.
3. Documented threats to the health, safety, or welfare of children.
4. Verified child abuse or neglect investigations resulting in adverse findings.
5. Submission of false or misleading documentation.

Revocation notice is issued in writing and includes reasons for the decision.

Programs may appeal under **Part IV, Division 8 – Appeals and Due Process**.

3.7 Reinstatement

A program may apply for reinstatement within **30 days** of revocation by submitting an appeal under Part IV, Division 8 – Appeals and Due Process.

3.8 Public Notice and Reporting

When an exemption is granted, suspended, or revoked, Green Apple will:

- Maintain a record in its **Accredited and Exempt Programs Directory**; and
- Notify relevant state or local agencies as required by law.

3.9 Reference Documents

- *Health and Safety Standards Manual – Religious Exemption Programs*
- *Green Apple Policies and Procedures Manual – Part IV Compliance*
- *Membership Application and Religious Exempt Application Form – Religious Exemption*

Note: The terms religious exemption and license exemption are used interchangeably.

PART II – School Accreditation Policies and Procedures

Division 4 – Private Schools & Enrichment Programs

Application | Accreditation Cycle | Reference to Private School Accreditation Standards Manual

4.1 Purpose and Scope

This division establishes the policies and procedures governing accreditation of **private and parochial schools** under [Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services \(GAACS\)](#). It defines eligibility, application, review, and determination procedures for schools providing instruction at the prekindergarten (k4), elementary, middle, or high school levels.

The purpose of accreditation is to promote continuous improvement, accountability, and educational excellence consistent with [Green Apple's](#) accreditation standards.

Note: All academic and operational performance expectations are contained in the [Green Apple Private School Accreditation Standards Manual](#).

4.2 Eligibility

To apply for accreditation, a private school must:

1. Be a **member in good standing** with [GAACS](#).
2. Hold **state licensure, registration, or exemption** where applicable.
3. Have been operational for **at least one academic year** with active enrollment and faculty in place.
4. Demonstrate compliance with **local, state, and federal education laws**, including student safety and reporting requirements.
5. Maintain financial stability and adequate insurance coverage.

4.3 Application and Accreditation Process

Private schools seeking accreditation are subject to the [GAACS Application Process and Accreditation Lifecycle](#) as set forth in **Part I (General Policies and Procedures)** of this Manual.

This includes, but is not limited to, account creation, application submission, payment of required fees, participation in required orientations, completion of a self-study, review and evaluation activities, issuance of an accreditation determination, and compliance with continual accreditation requirements.

Any process guidance, timelines, or step-by-step instructions are provided through [GAACS](#) member guidance materials and the online member portal.

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4.4 Division-Specific Review Considerations

In addition to the general application and review process, private school accreditation evaluations focus on compliance with standards related to:

- Governance and school leadership
- Curriculum and instructional delivery
- Faculty qualifications and professional oversight
- Student engagement and achievement
- Health, safety, discipline, and student records
- Faith integration and character development (where applicable)

Reviews may include on-site, or virtual validation activities conducted by trained Peer Review Team (PRT) members with experience in education administration.

4.5 Accreditation Determination

Accreditation determinations for private schools are issued in accordance with GAACS decision-making procedures outlined in **Part I** of this Manual.

Possible outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Full Accreditation
- Provisional or Conditional Accreditation
- Deferral or Denial

Written notice of the final determination will be provided to the school, along with any certificates, seals, or conditions applicable to the accreditation status.

4.6 Continual Accreditation Requirements

To maintain accredited status, private schools must comply with GAACS continual accreditation requirements, including:

- Submission of required annual reports
- Ongoing compliance with applicable accreditation and health and safety standards
- Timely notification of substantive changes (e.g., leadership, ownership, location, grade-level expansion)
- Participation in monitoring, follow-up, or unannounced reviews as required

Failure to meet continual accreditation requirements may result in adverse action.

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4.7 Reaccreditation

Reaccreditation is governed by **GAACS** reaccreditation policies outlined in **Part I** of this Manual and requires demonstration of sustained compliance and continuous improvement in alignment with prior recommendations.

4.8 Loss of Accreditation

Accreditation status may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed for failure to comply with **GAACS** standards, policies, reporting obligations, or legal requirements.

Written notice will be provided. Programs retain appeal rights as set forth in **Part IV, Division 8: Appeals and Due Process**.

4.9 Reference to Standards Manual

All specific criteria related to:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Assessment and Student Achievement
- Faculty and Staff Qualifications
- Governance and Leadership
- Safety, Facilities, and Health
- Spiritual Formation and Character Development

are fully described in the *Green Apple Private School Accreditation Standards Manual*, which is incorporated by reference into this Policies and Procedures Manual.

PART III – Behavioral Health and Opioid Program Accreditation

Division 5 – Behavioral Health Program Accreditation

Eligibility | Accreditation Categories | Program-Specific Requirements | Reference to Standards Manuals

5.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes policies and procedures specific to the accreditation of Behavioral Health Programs under the **Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services (GAACS)**.

It applies to organizations providing mental health, substance use disorder, opioid treatment, and applied behavior analysis (ABA) services for children, youth, and adults.

The purpose of Behavioral Health Accreditation is to promote:

- Safe, ethical, and evidence-based clinical practice
- Person-centered and trauma-informed care
- Quality assurance and continuous improvement
- Accountability and compliance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements

Note: Program-specific clinical and operational standards are contained in the applicable **GAACS** Behavioral Health Standards Manuals and are incorporated by reference.

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5.2 Accreditation Categories

Behavioral Health accreditation includes the following service categories, each governed by its respective standards manual:

Category	Description
Substance Abuse Programs	Outpatient, intensive outpatient (IOP), prevention, and residential programs addressing alcohol and drug dependency
Mental Health Programs	Counseling, therapy, day treatment, and psychiatric services
Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs)	Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) programs operating under 42 CFR Part 8
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)	Behavioral therapy and intervention programs for individuals with autism or developmental disabilities

5.3 Eligibility

To be eligible for Behavioral Health accreditation, a program must:

1. Be a member in good standing with **GAACS**.
2. Hold appropriate state licensure or certification, where required.
3. Employ qualified clinical, medical, and support personnel consistent with the scope of services.
4. Maintain compliance with applicable federal and state regulations, including HIPAA and 42 CFR Part 2.
5. Must be operational with active clients before accreditation may be granted.
6. Demonstrate a commitment to client safety, ethical practice, and continuous quality improvement.

5.4 Application and Accreditation Process

Behavioral Health programs are subject to the **GAACS Application Process and Accreditation Lifecycle** set forth in **Part I (General Policies and Procedures)** of this Manual.

This includes account creation, submission of required applications and fees, participation in required orientations, completion of a self-study, review and evaluation activities (including site or records-based review), issuance of an accreditation determination, and compliance with continual accreditation requirements.

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Detailed procedural guidance is provided through **GAACS** member guidance materials and the online member portal.

5.5 Division-Specific Review Considerations

In addition to the general accreditation process, Behavioral Health reviews focus on compliance with standards related to:

- Governance and organizational oversight
- Clinical service delivery and documentation
- Client rights, confidentiality, and informed consent
- Health, safety, and medication management (where applicable)
- Quality assurance, outcomes, and risk management
- Ethical practice and regulatory compliance

Reviews may include on-site, or virtual validation activities conducted by trained Peer Review Team (PRT) members with appropriate clinical expertise.

5.6 Accreditation Determination

Accreditation determinations are issued in accordance with **GAACS** decision-making procedures outlined in **Part I** of this Manual.

Possible outcomes may include:

- Full Accreditation
- Provisional or Conditional Accreditation
- Deferral or Denial

Written notice of the final determination will be issued to the program.

5.7 Continual Accreditation Requirements

Accredited Behavioral Health programs must comply with **GAACS** continual accreditation requirements, including:

- Submission of required annual reports
- Ongoing compliance with accreditation standards and applicable laws
- Timely reporting of substantive changes (ownership, leadership, location, scope of services)
- Participation in monitoring, follow-up, or unannounced reviews as required

Failure to meet continual accreditation requirements may result in adverse action.

5.8 Reaccreditation

Reaccreditation is governed by **GAACS** reaccreditation policies outlined in **Part I** of this Manual and requires demonstration of sustained compliance and documented quality improvement.

5.9 Program-Specific Accreditation Considerations

A. Substance Abuse Programs

- Compliance with federal and state substance use disorder treatment regulations
- Individualized treatment planning, discharge summaries, and relapse prevention services
- Controlled substance policies where applicable

B. Mental Health Programs

- Use of licensed or credentialed mental health professionals
- Policies addressing intake, informed consent, and treatment documentation
- Integration of trauma-informed and evidence-based practices

C. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Programs

- Employment or contracting of qualified BCBAs and RBTs
 - Behavior intervention plans, data tracking, supervision, and parent training
 - Compliance with applicable insurance, Medicaid, and ethical standards
-

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5.10 Loss of Accreditation

Behavioral Health accreditation may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed for failure to comply with GAACS standards, policies, legal requirements, ethical obligations, or client safety protections.

Written notice will be provided. Programs retain appeal rights under **Part IV, Division 8: Appeals and Due Process**.

5.11 Reference to Standards Manuals

Behavioral Health program requirements are detailed in the following manuals, each incorporated by reference:

- Behavioral Health Accreditation Standards Manual
 - Substance Abuse Accreditation Standards Manual
 - Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Accreditation Standards Manual
-

PART III – Behavioral Health and Opioid Program Accreditation

Division 6 – Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) Accreditation

6.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes GAACS authority and procedures for accrediting Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) in compliance with 42 CFR Part 8, SAMHSA certification requirements, and applicable DEA regulations.

It applies to programs providing medication-assisted treatment (MAT) using methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone in combination with behavioral therapies.

6.2 Accreditation Process

OTP accreditation follows the GAACS Application Process and Accreditation Lifecycle set forth in Part I of this Manual, with additional regulatory review requirements.

Programs must maintain current:

- State licensure
- DEA registration
- SAMHSA certification

GAACS coordinates OTP review activities within its Behavioral Health Division to ensure integrated and compliant evaluation.

6.3 Reference to OTP Standards Manual

All clinical, operational, and regulatory requirements specific to OTPs are contained in the Opioid Treatment Program Accreditation Standards Manual, which is published separately and incorporated by reference.

PART IV – Public Health and Wellness Programs

(Community education, prevention, and non-clinical initiatives)

Division 7 – Public Health & Wellness Accreditation

Eligibility | Program Types | Division-Specific Review | Reference to Public Health & Wellness Standards Manual

7.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes policies and procedures specific to the accreditation of Public Health and Wellness Programs under the [Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services \(GAACS\)](#).

Public Health and Wellness accreditation promotes high standards of health protection, sanitation, safety, and consumer well-being for community-based programs serving children, families, and the public, consistent with [Green Apple's](#) mission of safeguarding children and families.

Note: All program-specific operational and performance standards are contained in the *Public Health and Wellness Accreditation Standards Manual*, which is incorporated by reference.

7.2 Program Types

Public Health and Wellness accreditation applies to a range of non-clinical and preventive programs, including but not limited to:

Category	Examples
Community Clinics & Health Centers	Pediatric, family, dental, and wellness clinics offering preventive or supportive services
Nutrition & Food Service Programs	School cafeterias, restaurants, cafés, community kitchens, and food service providers
Wellness & Preventive Health Initiatives	Fitness centers, yoga studios, health education programs, and outreach campaigns
Environmental Health Programs	Programs addressing sanitation, facility health, water, air quality, or environmental safety

7.3 Eligibility

To be eligible for Public Health and Wellness accreditation, a program must:

1. Be a member in good standing with GAACS.
 2. Hold current licensure, permits, or approvals issued by the appropriate local or state authority, where applicable.
 3. Maintain liability insurance appropriate to the services provided.
 4. Demonstrate compliance with applicable health, sanitation, and environmental regulations.
 5. Operate facilities that are clean, safe, and appropriate for the population served.
 6. Have been operational with active staff, clients, and providing services.
-

7.4 Application and Accreditation Process

Public Health and Wellness programs are subject to the GAACS Application Process and Accreditation Lifecycle set forth in Part I (General Policies and Procedures) of this Manual.

This includes account creation, submission of required applications and fees, participation in required orientations, completion of a self-study, review and evaluation activities (including inspection or site validation as applicable), issuance of an accreditation determination, and compliance with continual accreditation requirements.

Detailed procedural instructions are provided through GAACS member guidance materials and the online member portal.

7.5 Division-Specific Review and Inspection Considerations

In addition to the general accreditation process, Public Health and Wellness evaluations emphasize compliance with standards related to:

- Health, sanitation, and environmental safety
- Food handling, preparation, and storage (where applicable)
- Infection control and cleaning protocols
- Employee health, hygiene, and training practices
- Facility maintenance, ventilation, and water systems
- Consumer health education and wellness promotion

Reviews may include on-site inspections or validation visits conducted by GAACS inspectors or trained Public Health Peer Review Team (PRT) members.

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An exit conference may be conducted to communicate preliminary findings and recommendations.

7.6 Accreditation Determination

Accreditation determinations are issued in accordance with GAACS decision-making procedures outlined in **Part I** of this Manual.

Possible outcomes may include:

- Full Accreditation
- Provisional or Conditional Accreditation
- Deferral or Denial

Written notice of the final determination will be issued. Certificates or verification materials may be provided where applicable.

7.7 Continual Accreditation Requirements

Accredited Public Health and Wellness programs must comply with GAACS continual accreditation requirements, including:

- Submission of required annual reports and updated licenses or permits
- Ongoing compliance with public health, safety, and sanitation standards
- Timely notification of substantive changes (e.g., ownership, management, facility layout)
- Participation in announced or unannounced monitoring or inspection activities

Failure to meet continual accreditation requirements may result in adverse action.

7.8 Reaccreditation

Reaccreditation is governed by GAACS reaccreditation policies outlined in **Part I** of this Manual and requires demonstration of sustained compliance and continuous quality improvement.

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7.9 Loss of Accreditation

Accreditation status may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed for failure to comply with GAACS policies, standards, health and safety requirements, legal obligations, or ethical practices. Written notice will be issued. Programs retain appeal rights under **Part V, Division 9: Appeals and Due Process**.

7.10 Reference to Standards Manual

All Public Health and Wellness program requirements are fully detailed in the *Public Health and Wellness Accreditation Standards Manual*, including but not limited to:

- Food Safety and Sanitation
- Clinic Safety and Infection Control
- Employee Health and Training
- Facility Cleanliness and Environmental Compliance
- Consumer Health Education and Outreach
- Community Wellness Partnerships

This Manual is incorporated by reference into the GAACS Policies and Procedures Manual.

PART V – Governance, Appeals, and Compliance

Division 8 – Governance Structure

8.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes the governance framework, authority, and oversight responsibilities of the **Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services (GAACS)**. These provisions apply to all accreditation, approval, membership, and oversight activities conducted by **GAACS** across all program divisions.

8.2 Authority of the Accreditation Commission

The **GAACS** Accreditation Commission serves as the governing authority responsible for:

1. Establishing and approving accreditation policies, procedures, and standards.
2. Granting, denying, suspending, revoking, or reinstating accreditation and approvals.
3. Reviewing recommendations from Peer Review Teams (PRTs), inspectors, and staff.
4. Ensuring due process, consistency, and fairness in accreditation decisions; and
5. Protecting the integrity, credibility, and public trust of the **GAACS** accreditation system.

All decisions are made in good faith, based on objective evidence, and consistent with **GAACS** policies.

8.3 Board Composition and Responsibilities

The Accreditation Commission and Board may include individuals with expertise in education, behavioral health, public health, administration, compliance, and related fields.

Board and Commission responsibilities include:

- Strategic oversight and fiduciary responsibility
 - Policy adoption and revision
 - Review of enforcement and appeal matters
 - Delegation of authority to committees, staff, or contractors as appropriate
-

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8.4 Delegation of Authority

The Accreditation Commission may delegate specific operational responsibilities to:

- **GAACS** officers or staff
- Peer Review Teams (PRTs)
- Inspectors or validators
- Committees or consultants

Delegation does not relieve the Commission of final authority or accountability.

8.5 Validator and Inspector Qualifications

GAACS validators and inspectors must:

- Possess relevant professional education, licensure, or experience.
- Complete required **GAACS** training and orientation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of applicable standards and regulations; and
- Maintain objectivity, professionalism, and confidentiality.

GAACS reserves the right to assign validators or inspectors based on program type, risk level, and expertise required.

8.6 Ethics, Conflicts of Interest, and Training

All Board members, staff, validators, and contractors must:

- Adhere to **GAACS** ethical standards.
- Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- Refrain from participation in matters where impartiality may be compromised; and
- Complete required training on ethics, due process, and accreditation protocols.

Violations of ethical standards may result in removal or disciplinary action.

PART V – Governance, Appeals, and Compliance

Division 9 – Appeals and Due Process

9.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes the due process protections and appeal procedures available to programs or organizations that receive an adverse determination by the [Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services \(GAACS\)](#).

These procedures apply to all applicants, candidate members, accredited programs, exempt programs, and member organizations across all [GAACS](#) divisions.

9.2 Right to Appeal

A program or organization that receives an adverse action—including denial, suspension, revocation, non-renewal, or other enforcement determination—has the right to appeal in accordance with this Division.

Appeals are limited to review of whether [GAACS](#):

- Correctly applied its standards, policies, and procedures; and
- Based its determination on objective evidence available at the time of review.

9.3 Appeal Submission Requirements

To initiate an appeal, the program must:

1. Submit a **written Notice of Appeal** within **thirty (30) calendar days** of the date of the adverse determination.
2. Clearly state the basis for the appeal, including:
 - Alleged procedural errors.
 - Misapplication of standards or policies; or
 - Evidence that was overlooked or misinterpreted at the time of review.
3. Submit the required **non-refundable appeal fee**, as specified in the [GAACS](#) Fee Schedule.

Failure to submit a complete and timely appeal constitutes forfeiture of the right to appeal.

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9.4 Appeal Review and Hearing Options

Upon receipt of a valid appeal, **GAACS** will acknowledge the appeal and determine the appropriate method of review, which may include:

- **Written Record Review** based on submitted documentation; or
- **Hearing Review**, conducted in person or virtually before the Accreditation Commission or a designated Appeals Panel.

Programs may request a hearing; however, **GAACS** retains discretion regarding the format, scope, and necessity of a hearing.

9.5 Appeal Timeline

- **GAACS** will schedule the appeal review or hearing within **forty-five (45) calendar days** of receipt of a complete appeal.
- A written decision will be issued following review and will include the rationale for the determination.

9.6 Scope of Appeal Review

Appeal review is limited in scope and does **not** constitute a re-inspection or re-evaluation of the program.

New evidence will only be considered if it:

- Is materially relevant; and
- Was not reasonably available at the time of the original determination.

9.7 Appeal Outcomes

Following appeal review, **GAACS** may:

- Uphold the original determination.
- Modify the determination.
- Impose conditions or corrective actions; or
- Reinstate accreditation, approval, or status where appropriate.

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9.8 Effect of Appeal on Enforcement Action

The filing of an appeal does **not automatically stay** an enforcement action.

GAACS may, at its discretion, grant a temporary stay pending appeal review when public health, safety, or welfare is not at risk.

9.9 Notification

Written notice of the appeal decision will be provided to the program or organization. Where applicable, GAACS may notify relevant governmental or oversight agencies of the outcome.

9.10 Finality of Decision

The appeal decision issued by GAACS constitutes the **final administrative action**. No further internal review is available following issuance of the appeal determination.

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PART V – Governance, Appeals, and Compliance

Division 10 – Compliance and Oversight

10.1 Purpose and Scope

This Division establishes the policies and procedures governing compliance monitoring, investigations, enforcement actions, and oversight conducted by the **Green Apple Accreditation Commission of Social Services (GAACS)**.

These provisions apply to all accredited, exempt, candidate, and member programs across all **GAACS** divisions and govern continued compliance with accreditation standards, approvals, policies, and applicable local, state, and federal laws.

10.2 Compliance Authority

GAACS retains the authority to:

1. Conduct announced or unannounced site visits, inspections, and reviews.
2. Review documentation, records, and operational practices.
3. Require Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).
4. Impose probation, suspension, revocation, non-renewal, or reinstatement conditions.
5. Assess applicable administrative fees.
6. Notify appropriate governmental or oversight agencies; and
7. Publish accreditation or compliance status for public transparency.

All enforcement actions are conducted in good faith and in accordance with due process requirements set forth in **Division 9 – Appeals and Due Process**.

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10.3 Types of Compliance Reviews and Site Visits

GAACS may conduct the following types of reviews to assess compliance:

Visit Type	Purpose
Initial Validation Visit	Conducted prior to granting accreditation or license-exempt approval
Annual Health & Safety Review	Required for religious or exempt programs
Follow-Up Visit	Verifies correction of cited deficiencies
Complaint Investigation Visit	Conducted in response to credible complaints or regulatory concerns
Unannounced Visit	Conducted at GAACS discretion when health, safety, or welfare may be at risk

Reviews may be conducted on-site or virtually and may include inspections, interviews, and document reviews.

10.4 Complaints and Investigations

10.4.1 Filing a Complaint

- Complaints must be submitted in writing via the GAACS website, email, or mail.
- Complaints should identify the organization, alleged violation(s), and supporting information when available.
- Anonymous complaints may be reviewed when allegations involve safety or welfare concerns.

10.4.2 Investigation Process

- GAACS reviews complaints within five (5) business days.
- If warranted, an investigation or site visit is initiated.
- Investigators may review records, interview staff or stakeholders, and inspect facilities.

10.4.3 Findings and Resolution

- GAACS issues written findings and may require a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).
- Programs must submit a CAP within ten (10) days unless otherwise specified.
- GAACS may conduct follow-up verification to confirm compliance.

10.4.4 Outcomes

Investigations may result in:

- No action
- Corrective action
- Probation
- Suspension
- Revocation
- Non-renewal

10.5 Probation

Programs may be placed on **Probationary Status** for up to ninety (90) days when deficiencies are correctable within a reasonable timeframe.

- Programs remain accredited while on probation.
- Written notice outlines deficiencies, corrective actions, and deadlines.
- Programs on probation are subject to increased monitoring and unannounced visits.
- Failure to meet probation requirements results in suspension or revocation.

10.6 Suspension

Suspension is a temporary removal of active accreditation, exemption, or membership status and may occur when:

- Serious violations of standards are identified.
- There is an imminent risk to health, safety, or welfare; or
- Required corrective actions are not timely completed.

During suspension, programs may not advertise or represent themselves as **GAACS**-accredited or approved.

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10.7 Revocation and Non-Renewal

Revocation may occur when a program:

1. Fails to correct violations within required timeframes.
2. Engages in unethical, fraudulent, or unlawful conduct.
3. Submits false or misleading documentation.
4. Loses required licensure or certification; or
5. Poses a threat to health, safety, or welfare.

Non-Renewal occurs when a program elects not to renew or fails to meet renewal requirements, including payment of required fees or submission of required reports.

Written notice will specify the action taken, effective date, and applicable appeal rights.

10.8 Immediate or Emergency Enforcement Action

GAACS may impose immediate suspension or denial of services when circumstances present a substantial or imminent risk, including but not limited to:

- Credible abuse or neglect allegations.
- Serious health or safety violations.
- Loss of licensure, exemption, or required approvals.
- Fraudulent or deceptive practices; or
- Failure to maintain required membership or approvals.

Immediate action constitutes automatic suspension pending further review and possible revocation.

10.9 Reinstatement

Reinstatement is not automatic and may be considered following suspension, lapse, or revocation.

Reinstatement may require:

- Submission of a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).
- Evidence of full compliance with applicable standards and policies.
- Payment of applicable reinstatement fees; and
- Verification through review or site visit.

Reinstatement may be granted on a provisional basis at **GAACS** discretion.

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10.10 Mandatory Self-Reporting

All accredited and exempt programs must self-report specified incidents, events, or changes within required timeframes, including but not limited to:

- Incidents of abuse, neglect, or serious injury.
- Legal actions, arrests, or loss of licensure involving the organization or key personnel.
- Substantive changes in ownership, leadership, location, or operations.
- Emergencies or disasters impacting services; and
- Media reports or regulatory findings affecting safety or integrity.

Failure to self-report may result in adverse enforcement action.

10.11 Coordination with Government Agencies

GAACS maintains cooperative relationships with licensing, health, education, and child welfare authorities. When required by law or necessary to protect public health, safety, or welfare, **GAACS** may notify appropriate governmental entities and share relevant findings consistent with confidentiality requirements.

10.12 Records and Documentation

- Compliance records are retained for a minimum of seven (7) years.
- Programs may request copies of their own compliance records upon written request.
- Records are confidential unless disclosure is required by law or necessary to protect public safety.

10.13 Publication of Accreditation Status

GAACS may publish accreditation, exemption, probationary, suspension, or revocation status for public transparency, including:

- Program name and location.
- Status type.
- Effective and expiration dates; and
- Enforcement actions, when applicable.

10.14 Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

All programs are expected to participate in continuous quality improvement through ongoing evaluation, corrective action, performance monitoring, and engagement in **GAACS** professional development initiatives.