

**CampWest Conference
Operating Code**

DRAFT

Establishment

The CampWest Conference has been established by the American Camp Association local offices of Evergreen, Northern California, Oregon Trail, Rocky Mountain, Southern California/Hawaii and Southwest.

The CampWest Conference Steering Committee is granted the authority by the local offices to manage the conference subject to limitations as outlined in this operating code and guidance from the above 6 local offices.

The boards of directors of the 6 ACA local offices will adopt an operating code and a 2-step transition plan and the first step of the transition plan will be implemented for the 2006 conference.

Purpose

The purpose of the conference is to provide an educational event for local office members and camps and for prospective members and camps with the primary target audience being year round and seasonal camp directors, camp administrative staff and supervisory camp staff. The administration of the conference will also provide leadership development opportunities for local office members.

Leadership and Organization

The leadership of the conference shall be provided by a steering committee. The steering committee will be comprised of a conference chair; functional coordinators who will chair the conference subcommittees of program, logistics, finance/development, operations, exhibits, and marketing /promotions; and a member at large representative from each of the ACA local offices listed in the operating code. The term of office for the steering committee will be 3 years with a varied rotation schedule. No member can serve more than 1 consecutive term unless approved to do so by the participating local office boards of directors. Member at large representatives may fill functional chairs as listed above. Functional chairs will be recruited and selected by the conference chair based on their skill and interest and approved by the conference selection panel.

A CampWest conference selection panel will be established consisting of a member from each host local office board of directors (who is not a rep to the steering committee) and the current CampWest chair. This panel will select the conference chair with candidates being eligible from any of the host local offices. An application process will be established that requires endorsement by the president of the local office in which the candidate is a member. The selection committee will also approve the selection of the steering committee functional coordinators by the CampWest chair.

The transition plan for the steering committee is as follows:

Step 1

- In 2006, the conference chair will be from the Northern California section.
- In 2007, the conference chair will be from the Southern California/Hawaii section. In addition, the chair of the 2008 conference will be selected through the application and selection process. This chair will be from a section other than Northern or Southern California/Hawaii (assuming skills and interest are present). The term of appointment for this chair will begin the 3-year term – one as a mentor with the current chair, one as the chair, and one mentoring the next chair.

Step 2

- In 2008, the conference will function with all parts of this operating code in effect.

Local office representatives to the conference steering committee will be appointed by each board and be accountable to that board in whatever manner the board chooses. All conference communication will be directed to the local office rep. The local office reps will also be accountable to the conference chair for all agreed upon work.

Decisions of the steering committee will be made by consensus. The steering committee will use the non profit status of its fiscal agent for fiduciary purposes. The steering committee will strive to make CampWest a self sustaining conference that has the potential to generate excess funds for its participating local offices. The steering committee shall be empowered to manage the affairs of the conference in order to accomplish the purpose including but not limited to: develop a budget, select venue, negotiate and enter into or terminate contracts; obtain insurance; open bank accounts; invest finds; make disbursements; pay bills; establish fees for registration, exhibitors, and speakers, and solicit sponsorship. All fiscal actions of the steering committee shall be audited by the fiscal agent on behalf of the participating local offices.

Members of the steering committee may be removed for cause by majority vote of the steering committee. The conference chair may be removed for cause by approval of all six host local office boards of directors

The meetings of the steering committee may be in person or by the use of technology that allows all participants concurrent access to the discussion and decision making of the group.

The administrative support for the conference will be provided by the Southern California/Hawaii local office and the costs will be included as a line item in the conference operating budget. The Southern California/Hawaii local office board of directors will approve the cost projection each year. This relationship will be reevaluated every 3 years based on level of service and the needs of the conference. The relationship

can be reevaluated more often if requested by more than three host local office boards of directors. This relationship will be considered a contract for service relationship.

Fiscal Relationship

The fiscal agent for CampWest will be agreed to by all six local office boards of directors and is assumed to be the same agent providing administrative support services to the conference. A separate fund will be maintained for CampWest and signers on this fund will include the chair of the conference and the coordinator of the finance/development committee. Any charges incurred by CampWest will be paid by CampWest and not by the fiscal agent.

The CampWest fund will be kept in accordance with standard bookkeeping practices for not for profit organizations. A budget will be developed, and the budget and financial reports will be available for review by the host local offices boards of directors. Final financial reports and distributions for each conference will be completed no later than the June following each conference. An audit/review of this fund will be conducted according to the recommendations of the American Camp Association.

Distribution of conference funds to committee members above the level of reimbursement will be determined by the operating principles of the conference. However, the conference shall follow all laws relevant to private inurement from a non-profit organization.

The financial relationship of the conference will be as follows:

Step 1

In 2006, all participating local offices will share financial responsibility (gain/loss) according to a formula based on local office participation in the planning and implementation of the conference and member attendance at the conference. 25% of the profit will be retained in the conference budget for use in future years as seed money and reserve.

The formula for financial distribution will be determined by percentage based on total points for the following participation:

- 1 point per participant attending the conference from that local office geographic region
- 5 points per speaker and exhibitor participating in the conference from that local office geographic region.
- 10 points per sponsor recruited by a member of that local office
- 10 points for each person serving on a conference subcommittee from that local office
- 25 points for each person serving on the conference steering committee from that local office including the conference chair
- Participants from outside of the western region will not be considered for the purposes of this formula.

Step 2

In years 2007 and 2008, the 2006 formulas will be reviewed for revision. The reserve policy will also be evaluated. It is anticipated that after 2008, all financial relationships will be equal provided each host local office remains committed to all aspects of the conference.

In the event of dissolution of CampWest, all bills and outstanding financial obligations will be made by the fiscal agent with any profit or deficit shared equally among the host local offices. If any assets exist other than excess or deficiency of funds, those assets may be sold and or distributed in accordance with the wishes of the host local offices boards of directors.

Operating Principles

The conference will strive to meet identified educational needs of camp professionals in the western region with primary target audience being camp directors and beginning supervisory personnel. There will also be an attempt to include student career development in some aspects of the conference. The conference format will strive to be unique to the western region and not just duplicate the national or other regional conference formats.

Marketing

A conference marketing plan will be developed by the steering committee annually and all participating local offices will actively implement the plan.

Financial

The conference will strive to establish a registration fee that is low in cost, unbundled, and promotes a group rate,

The conference will offer an exhibit hall with fees based on realistic expectations and benefits.

Early discount fees will be established to encourage early registration. Higher fees will be charged for those not members of the American Camp Association.

The conference will solicit sponsorships and establish a sponsorship package that is consistent and open. Potential sponsors will be reflective of and compatible with the purpose and philosophy of the American Camp Association. Sponsor solicitation will not be in conflict with national or local office interests.

No refund for registration or exhibitor fees will be given unless a written request is received postmarked no less than three weeks before the conference. A 25% handling fee will be retained.

Contracts can be negotiated by the members of the steering committee and approved by the conference chair, coordinator of the finance/development committee and the fiscal agent. All signed contracts must be on file with these people.

Signed contracts or completed voucher forms must be used to generate all payments with approval of the finance coordinator and the functional coordinator for that committee.

Steering committee members will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in participation in steering committee meetings, postage, telephone and printing. Steering committee members will also receive free registration to the conference, the cost of a shared hotel room during the conference, and free tickets to conference meals if the budget allows. They will also receive a subsidy to help with travel to the conference if the budget allows. All other conference expenses for the steering committee are the responsibility of the individual or their local office.

Subcommittee members with key onsite conference responsibilities may receive reimbursement in the form of free registration or hotel allowance if the budget permits. All projected reimbursements must be included in the conference budget for that operational function.

Program -

Program design will reflect the varied learning style of adult learners and include workshops, seminars, general sessions and specialized training events. Additional fees may be set for seminars and specialized training events to help offset the cost of quality featured speakers. The setting of speaker fees is the responsibility of the conference steering committee.

Speakers should be solicited in areas of expertise reflecting the trends of camp professionals and should support the current program initiatives of ACA. The conference program coordinator will seek references or endorsements for all speakers.

Evaluation will be completed on all workshops, seminars and specialized training courses as well as the conference as a whole. The evaluation process should reflect current technology availability.

Kindred group meetings may be held in conjunction with CampWest but all costs of those meetings including hotel space, av needs, food and program will be the responsibility of those kindred groups and not CampWest. CampWest does reserve the right to negotiate for those needs within the context of the entire conference contract and coordinate the implementation of those requests.

Administration –

The date selection for CampWest will be coordinated through ACA in cooperation with ACA and the other regional conferences following the guidelines for conference dates established by ACA. CampWest date selection will avoid all major religious holidays.

The conference will offer space for an ACA bookstore and enter into an arrangement with ACA for the operation and fiscal agreement for that operation.

An activity will be held to support the current fundraising campaign of national ACA.

Volunteers may attend one hour of programming for every hour worked at CampWest. Volunteers not attending as registered participants will register with a conference volunteer coordinator. The volunteer coordinator will submit a written report on volunteer participation to the conference steering committee by the steering committee meeting following the conference.

The logistics coordinator will work directly with the conference venues and make all meeting arrangements. The logistics coordinator and finance coordinator will review all venue master bills daily when on site.

The conference site will be selected by the steering committee with a target date of two years in advance. The city will be approved by the local office boards of directors. Site selection will be based on:

- Accessibility within the region
- Projected cost of airfare
- Proximity to major highways
- Free or low cost parking
- Adequate meeting space for program delivery plan
- Minimum of 10,000 square feet of exhibit hall space adjusted upward as the number of exhibitors increases
- Enough hotel rooms in the immediate area for the number of projected participants
- Hotel with a large number of 2 bed rooms
- Hotel with outdoor areas for program delivery
- Inexpensive room rates
- Free or inexpensive airport shuttle service
- Complimentary rooms with a suggested minimum of 1 room night/each 50 room nights booked.
- Complimentary suite for use of committee
- Free or inexpensive meeting room costs if hotel room block reached
- Availability of a variety of eating options in close proximity to the venue
- No (or minimum) hotel attrition expense
- Commitment to environmental stewardship

The conference operating code will be in effect unless all 6 local office boards of directors vote to void or amend it. Recommendations of changes to the operating code can be made by the steering committee or at least three local office boards of directors.