



Site Visit Protocol

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Introduction

The program you will be visiting as part of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Accreditation process has shown a tremendous commitment to providing high quality early childhood education. Your arrival at their facility is the final step in their process of pursuing NAEYC Accreditation. It is important to show the utmost respect to all of the program and teaching staff as well as the children and their families throughout your time at the program.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that all programs receiving a site visit for NAEYC Early Childhood Program Accreditation receive a fair and equitable assessment, all NAEYC assessors must conduct themselves in a professional manner and collect and report data consistently.

The following protocol has been established to ensure that NAEYC's Accreditation system is reliable and credible. All assessors must adhere to this protocol when conducting a site visit.

General Protocol

Sources of Evidence (SOE). Programs that submitted candidacy materials in September 2009 and later will be evaluated using 5 sources of evidence: family surveys, teaching staff surveys, program portfolios, classroom portfolios, and observation. Observable evidence is evaluated by means of 2 tools – the *Group Observable Evidence (GOE) Tool* and the *Program Observable Evidence (POE) Tool*.

Site Visit Schedule. Each source of evidence reviewed, and the time allotted to complete the related assessment tool, will be identified on the *Site Visit Schedule*. The lead assessor is responsible for preparing and printing the schedule prior to arrival at the program. For examples of site visit schedules, see the “Site Visit Forms/Samples” section of the Assessor Protocol folder in the Assessor Online Community or in the Step 4 section of the NAEYC website under Meeting the Standards, Sample Site Visit Forms.

Multiple assessors. If more than one assessor is involved, the schedule should specify what each assessor will be scheduled to do at all times.

Timing. While the *Site Visit Schedule* will be tailored to meet the individual schedule of each program, the review of each source of evidence must occur within the time frames specified below.

Copies. Bring enough copies of the schedule so the program administrator and each assessor receive a copy.

Changes. Each assessor should annotate his or her copy during the visit to show the actual times each scheduled task was performed. Assessors should record actual task start and finish times even if those times are identical to the scheduled times already on the schedule. Before the end of the visit, the lead assessor is responsible for creating a final annotated copy of the visit schedule, showing the actual time all tasks were begun and ended, and by whom. This annotated final schedule becomes part of the site visit process verification procedure and must be mailed back to the NAEYC Academy along with the green forms outlined below.

Signatures. The *Site Visit Schedule* should include lines at the bottom for the assessor(s) and program administrator to sign and date the final schedule during the Closing Meeting.

Confidentiality and Ethical Conduct. Assessors are expected to conform to NAEYC standards for ethical conduct at all times. Everything assessors see and hear on a visit is confidential. Assessors do not repeat anything about the staff, children, or facility to those outside the NAEYC Academy staff structure.

Tools. NAEYC site visit tools and worksheets are proprietary and are NOT to be shown to, or otherwise shared with, program administrators or staff during the visit. You may share the green site visit process forms, which are posted publicly on the NAEYC website.

Arrival. Arrive at the program within 15 minutes **after** the opening of normal program operations, unless the program opens before 6 AM. In that case you may start within 15 minutes **after** 6 AM. If more than one assessor will be part of the assessment, plan to meet outside the program and enter as a team. This is important to ensure that the assessment team has the opportunity to review the site visit schedule prior to meeting with the program administrator.

ID. Wear NAEYC identification badges during site visits.

Accepting Refreshments and Resources. With a few exceptions, assessors may NOT accept refreshments or resources (phone use, office supplies) from the program. The exceptions are:

- Assessors may accept water from programs at all times.
- Assessors may accept coffee or tea if the program normally provides these beverages on site. Assessors may not accept coffee or tea purchased for them off-site.
- Assessors may accept other light refreshments if failing to do so would offend the cultural norms of the program.
- If an assessor needs to photocopy additional documents in order to conduct the site visit, the assessor may ask for permission to use the program's photocopier.

If you need to make extra copies of assessment tools, you must do the copying yourself – you cannot give proprietary documents to program staff to copy. Be very careful not to leave pages on the copier when you are done.

Offer to pay for copying. If there is a charge, pay it and submit the expense to NAEYC.

Assessors should be prepared to carry meals, snacks, drinks, extra pens, and a mobile phone to the site, or should have informed themselves of available resources nearby before the start of the visit.

Demeanor. Be cordial and pleasant (Smile!) when interacting with staff and children. Remember that staff may be nervous about your visit and they will do their best if you can put them at ease. While you should do minimal talking in the classrooms during observations, you may certainly make common small talk with staff. Do respond briefly to children when *not* doing so would set an awkward tone. Move if you are in the way of program administrators, teachers, children or families.

Dress. Wear functional “business casual” clothing for visits. You can expect to go outside, sit in tiny chairs or on the floor, and spend long hours at programs. Dress appropriately. Consider wearing layers, as you never know if a program's facility will be too hot or cold. Also, do not wear anything (jewelry, bright clothes) that calls attention to you. You want to blend into the background as unobtrusively as possible.

Your Belongings. Limit the personal belongings you take into a program. Whenever possible leave personal items in a locked car. However, if this is not possible, consult with the program administrator to find a safe location to store your belongings during the visit. This is an important safety precaution as purses and bags can contain items dangerous to children.

If you bring food into the program, be aware of food restrictions that might be in effect. For example, if the program forbids peanut products throughout the facility due to a severe allergy, do not bring such products into the center.

Lunch Break. Lunch breaks are recommended, but it is left up to the individual assessor to decide whether to work through lunch, eat on premises, or take a longer break off premises. If you leave the premises for a lunch break, notify the program staff when you are coming and going. Secure all confidential information and proprietary tools while you are off the premises.

Mobile Phone. If you carry your mobile phone into the program, be sure it is in silent mode so that you do not interrupt the on-going program activities/environment. Do not make or receive phone calls during classroom observations.

Closets. Do not look through closets, drawers, cabinets, or other closed spaces without first getting the program administrator’s permission. General permission to look where needed should be obtained at the Orientation Meeting (see below).

Order of Tasks during the Site Visit. Some tasks on the site visit must be done in a specified sequence, or at a specific time with respect to the beginning or end of the visit. Other tasks may be ordered in whatever way best suits the assessor’s appraisal of the program’s schedule and the assessor’s needs. Factors affecting scheduling and order of tasks include:

- the time of day the program opens and closes;
- whether groups to be observed meet full days, part days, and/or not every day;
- whether groups to be observed have nap times;
- the size of the program, including whether the program is a program with satellite locations.

The following tasks must be executed in a specified sequence or at a specific time:

Orientation Meeting	Immediately upon arrival on the first day of a visit. There are a number of information-gathering and information-giving tasks that must be done as part of the Orientation Meeting.
Required Criterion 5.A.03 Worksheet	Start completing this worksheet before beginning any group observations. Complete the worksheet after all group observations are completed and before presentation of the MERF. In extreme circumstances it may be necessary to begin and complete this worksheet after all of the observations have been completed, but before presentation of the MERF. For example, if the program is a half-day program, it may be important to begin observations as soon as possible to complete all observations before the groups dismiss.
Missing Evidence Request Form (MERF)	Compile missing evidence during review of the Program Portfolio and surveys. Complete the form and present it to the administrator about 2 hours before the end of the visit. Receive evidence and complete tool ratings about 1 hour before the end of the visit.
Closing Meeting	Last scheduled task on last day of visit. Several tasks, such as the <i>Safety Concerns Report</i> and the <i>Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form</i> , are completed during the Closing Meeting. All other tasks must be completed before the Closing Meeting.

The remaining tasks described below can be done in any sequence. Note that some of them do require specific time durations, or minimum (“*Allow AT LEAST xx minutes*”) durations. Some task durations, such as those for orientation and closing meetings, are given as estimates (“*Allow about xx minutes*”) to be used in constructing the schedule.

Assessor Equipment and Supplies for the Visit. Assessors will receive a set of assessment tools, process forms and worksheets that have been custom-ordered for each program visit to accommodate the number of observations expected for that program. Details of the order process are to be found in the Pre-Visit Protocol. Additionally, assessors must carry the following equipment and supplies to each site visit:

- The program’s Site Visit Document from NAEYC’s Data Management System (DMS). The assessor may carry a print copy or a digital copy.
- The *Classroom Selection and Randomization Worksheet* completed by the assessor during pre-visit planning, along with printouts of random number sets generated as part of the randomization process (see the Pre-Visit protocol for details). This will have to be mailed back to the Academy with the visit forms.
- Measurement tools supplied by the Academy: trowel, tape measure, and choke tube. Assessors have also been provided a fanny pack to carry these tools and disposable booties for infant room observations.
- Extra copies of the following forms, used optionally or used in support of the ratings process. They may be downloaded from the “Assessor Protocol” section of the Assessor Online Community (iCohere):
 - *Extra copies of the Required Criterion 5.A.03 Worksheet*
 - *Extra copies of page 3 of the Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form.*
- NAEYC ID badge and business cards.
- Pens, post-it tabs, paper clips or binder clips, and a clip board or similar equipment for holding rating forms during observations. Assessors have an annual office supply allocation with which to purchase the supplies that work best for them.
- Mailing supplies (Tyvek envelopes, UPS shipping labels) for mailing visit packets back to the Academy.

Orientation Meeting with the Program Administrator

(Allow about 30 minutes)

The site visit begins with an orientation meeting between the assessor(s) and the program administrator.

Introductions. The lead assessor should identify him- or herself as such, and introduce all other assessors. Assessors have been given business cards which should include your name and the Academy Information Center number and should be given to the program administrator at this time. If you are doing a multi-day visit, include your cell phone numbers. It may become important for program staff to be able to contact you by phone if a problem arises after hours, between your days at the program. If this is a reliability visit or a research visit, remind the program administrator and staff that this is the case.

Schedule. Review the *Site Visit Schedule* and provide a copy to the program administrator. Verify at this time that you are observing at least half of the total number of all groups, and seeing at least one example of each age category in the program. Also verify that the scheduled times for group observations are times when those groups are in session and not napping. **For programs with infant groups verify that all infants are not anticipated to be asleep during the scheduled observation time.** (Note: Any time when a group is in session with one or more awake children is a valid time to observe.) **Observation times should NOT be moved or rescheduled around ‘specials’ such as art, music, or walks. Observation times may be moved or changed if a group is going on a field trip or will be transported off-site; otherwise assessors should make every effort to observe groups at the times originally scheduled.**

Portfolios. Tell the program administrator that only the Classroom Portfolios for the selected classrooms will be reviewed. Review of the Program Portfolio and the Classroom Portfolios must occur in a private space, not in classrooms. Locate the portfolios and check them using the *Assessor Source of Evidence Worksheet*. Worksheet completion is now required for all site visits. **If the program has created electronic classroom or program portfolios verify that the schedule allows time (10 – 15 minutes) for program staff to orient you to the portfolio software, computer and logistics. This is not a time in which evidence is being assessed, but rather an opportunity to understand the mechanics and navigation of the electronic portfolio(s). This may include the password(s) and log in information necessary to complete the review, location of the portfolio on the computer and other information. All passwords and log-in information will remain confidential.**

Survey Evidence. Ensure that the Family Surveys and Teaching Staff Surveys are available for review at the allotted survey review times. Also, confirm that the program has compiled summary information on survey responses. While we provide Excel worksheets among the self-assessment resources to facilitate compilation of the survey data, it is not necessary that programs present these worksheets. Any clear tally of survey responses (counts of “Yes”, “No”, “Don’t Know” and “Not Applicable” responses for each question) is acceptable as evidence, including summary evidence from on-line administration of the surveys using Survey Monkey or a similar program. If survey responses have not been tallied, inform the program administrator that you need the summaries in order to complete the assessment. If necessary alter your scheduled survey review time in order to give the administrator time to compile summaries. However, do not extend the overall visit time to

wait for summaries. This is why it is important to check for them at the orientation meeting.

Remind the administrator that you will need a photocopy of the summary forms to send back in the visit packet. If the administrator does not have the copies made for you yet, request that they be prepared by the scheduled time of the MERF.

Observed Staff. For each group to be observed, identify the staff expected to be present at the observation time, including break subs. Note staff names on the group observation tools and on the *Required Criterion 5.A.03 Worksheet*.

Request that documentation of pediatric first aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, be available for each of the staff members to be observed. These documents are used in conjunction with group observable evidence to make ratings on the Program Portfolio and GOE tools.

Ask the administrator if any “other adults” are scheduled to be in the groups during the observations; note these as well.

Staff Changes. Verify that no staff changes have occurred since the last communication with the NAEYC Academy. If there has been a change in staff, the program administrator must compile the staff qualifications for the new staff and identify the changes on the *Fax Cover Sheet for Teaching Staff Changes on Day of Visit*. This information may either be given to the assessor for inclusion in the mailed site visit materials, OR returned directly to the program’s Accreditation Coordinator at the NAEYC Academy. See further instructions and detailed response options on the form.

Note: Assessment of staff qualifications is done by NAEYC Academy staff in Washington, D.C.; assessors do not rate the information.

Facility Orientation. Ask the program administrator for a short guided walk through the facility. Make it clear that this is not the official Program Observable Evidence data collection time, but just an orientation.

In conjunction with the facility orientation, have the program administrator point out where child and staff files are kept. Also ask the administrator to identify the spaces used most often for gross motor play by each group to be observed-- including indoor and outdoor spaces, spaces owned by the program, and spaces not owned such as public parks or fields. Be clear about which groups use which spaces and which climbing equipment. If the program does not have a playground on the facility grounds, ask what outdoor environment the program uses most often. If they use two environments equally, assess both of the environments that are associated with that group and rate accordingly. Otherwise, when determining which outdoor environment to assess for a group, ask the administrator which outdoor environment each group uses the most.

If possible during the facility orientation, touch base with the teaching staff of any infant groups to be observed to determine if all infants are anticipated to be asleep during the scheduled observation. You will have already asked the program administrator, but often classroom staff knows more precisely.

If the program occupies part of a larger facility, be sure you understand where the program’s space begins and ends. Determine the location where the assessor’s review of the program documentation (portfolios, surveys, etc.) can be completed in private.

Children with Special Needs. For each group that will receive an observation, confirm which groups include children with identified special needs, and identify the types of special needs. Tell the program administrator that you will ask the teaching staff if any of these children are present in the group when you start each observation.

Site Visit Process Forms. Show the administrator the green forms (*Site Visit Process Verification Form, Missing Evidence Request Form, Required Criteria Form, Safety Concerns Report, and First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form*) related to the site visit process. Briefly review the protocol for each (see details of protocol, below). Tell the program administrator that verification of the reported licensing status (required criterion 10.B.04) and staff pediatric first aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children (required criterion 5.A.03), will need to be provided at the time of the Program Portfolio review.

Let the administrator know that assessors do not evaluate issues of possible licensing non-compliance. This information is evaluated at the NAEYC Academy. Leave blank copies of these green forms with the administrator for the remainder of the visit.

Access to materials. Tell the program administrator that you will be looking through books, CDs and other materials in the classrooms during observations. Ask for permission to open closets, cabinets and drawers while in classrooms, in order to best make ratings of which criteria are met. If necessary, clarify with the administrator which spaces in each classroom may or may not be accessed.

Note to administrator: The assessor can only give credit for materials and equipment that he or she has access to. It is generally to the program's advantage to allow access to classroom storage areas during the site visit.

Data collection tools. Show the program administrator the tools used to ensure accurate data collection:

- *Trowel* for measuring the depth of cushioning material under gross motor play equipment, if applicable.
- *Measuring tape* for measuring fall zones, height of play equipment, and hazardous entrapment areas on play equipment.
- *Choke tube* for assistance in determining if toys are too small for infants and toddlers.

Meeting completion. Finally, review the *Site Visit Process Verification Form*. Confirm that all orientation tasks were addressed. The program administrator and the lead assessor are required to initial the Orientation Meeting section of the form upon completion. Do that now. Note on the visit schedule the time the orientation meeting ends. Thank the program administrator, smile, and begin the assessment!

Site Visit Tools

Each of the tools below includes a Notes Page at the end of the tool or the tool's separate answer sheet. Handwritten notes are optional on all tools with the exception of the *Group Observable Evidence (GOE) tool*. However, the rating scale statements on the Notes pages on the *Program Observable Evidence (POE)*, *GOE*, *Program Portfolio (PP)* and *Classroom Portfolio (CP)* are mandatory.

Program Observable Evidence (Allow about 15 -- 30 minutes)

The *Program Observable Evidence (POE) Tool* contains a set of criteria that require overall review of the program facility, both inside and outside. The assessment tool primarily looks at the adult spaces of the program and requires a careful review of what spaces and materials are accessible to children. "Accessible to children" means closets, corridors, kitchens, staff bathrooms and other non-classroom areas that are unlocked and unstaffed at the time of the assessment. If you are assessing a program with satellite locations, conduct one POE assessment at the site with the largest number of classrooms.

Note that the program observation made while completing the *POE Tool* is not the same as the facility orientation done as part of the Orientation Meeting. Assessors must complete the *POE Tool* unaccompanied by program staff. Like other observable ratings, *POE Tool* ratings must be made while the observation is in progress -- not afterward.

Assessors must complete the rating scales on the POE Notes Page following the completion of the POE.

Program Portfolio (Allow 2.5 hours)

Program Portfolio (PP) evidence may be organized and presented in a variety of ways. You may see crates and/or binders of information. Evidence may be arranged by standards and criteria or by some other organizational scheme. Programs are asked to clearly highlight and/or label evidence with the criterion(s) and indicator(s) they believe it meets. However, it is possible that this may not have been done. If the evidence provided is not well organized or labeled, review the information given and do your best to rate each criterion/indicator on the *Program Portfolio Assessment Tool Answer Sheet*.

Assessors must complete the rating scales on the PP Notes Page following the completion of the PP.

Duration and Scheduling of PP Review. Because it takes a long time to review the Program Portfolio, assessors may divide the 2.5 hour allotment for PP review into 2 separate times on the schedule, or divide it between 2 assessors. It is important to use the full amount of time allotted if needed to thoroughly to review the Program Portfolio. The review should take at least an hour. If you completed the review of all information submitted in less than 1 hour 45 minutes, you must explain the reason why on the *Program Portfolio Answer Sheet Notes Page*. **If you rated '5' on all of the Notes Page rating scales, this is sufficient to explain why the review took between 1 hour and 1 hour 45 minutes and you don't need to write a note. However, if ratings are '4' or less, a note describing why it took less than 1 hour 45 minutes is required. If the ratings are '1' or '2' in any area, you *must* describe why.**

Missing Evidence. There is an opportunity to provide the program administrator with a written list of missing evidence (see *Missing Evidence Request Form* procedure, below) near the end of the site visit. It is important that assessors do not discuss the evidence presented, but simply identify a list and brief description of the criteria and indicators for which more information is needed. Compile a list of missing portfolio evidence onto the *MERF* as you review the program portfolio.

Assessing staff qualifications criteria 6.A.05, 6.A.06 and 10.A.02. Because the assessment of staff educational qualifications is a complex process requiring review of many documents, it is performed by Academy staff in advance of the site visit. Documentation of educational level of teacher assistants, teachers and the program administrator is received when programs submit their candidacy materials. Academy staff review documentation for all staff and make a rating of whether the program meets the criteria. These ratings are included in the program's Site Visit Document, which assessors must download from NAEYC's Data Management System (DMS) and have on hand during the visit.

Assessing Required Criteria 5.A.03 and 10.B.04. In order to rate these criteria on the Program Portfolio, assessors must:

- Complete the *Required Criterion 5.A.03 Worksheet* by verifying pediatric first aid training (including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children) documentation. Review documents for each classroom staff person who was observed in a group, and who was identified as having completed pediatric first aid training. Follow directions on the worksheet and, if necessary, on the *Missing Evidence Request Form* and the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* in order to arrive at a final rating for 5.A.03 on the Program Portfolio. See detailed instructions for these forms below.
- Complete the *Required Criterion 10.B.04 Worksheet* by verifying that the program is currently licensed or regulated. See detailed instructions for this form below.

Teaching Staff Surveys and Family Surveys (Allow about 15 minutes total)

During the Orientation Meeting, programs should provide all completed Self-Assessment versions of the Teaching Staff Surveys and Family Surveys, as well as **photocopies of survey summary results.** **If the program has summarized the surveys using NAEYC's "Family Survey Results" and "Teaching Staff Survey Results" Excel workbooks (found in the TORCH resource library), the worksheets the assessor needs to receive are titled:**

- *Spreadsheet for Teaching Staff Survey Results in Self Assessment*
- *Spreadsheet for Family Survey Results during Self Assessment*

Assessors do NOT need to collect worksheets titled *Criterion Ratings from Teaching Staff Summary Responses* and *Criterion Ratings from Family Survey Summary Response*"; these are for the program's use only.

Briefly review the summary forms given to you to ensure that the data is complete. If necessary, request additional information on the MERF. Request a copy of whatever is given to send back in the visit packet; put the program ID on the top of each survey summary sheet. You will not be rating the criteria yourself; that will be done automatically at the Academy.

Teaching Staff Surveys must have an 80% return rate to be counted as evidence. Family Surveys must have a 50% return rate to be counted as evidence. However, collect the summary sheet given to you by the program even if it does not meet the return rates.

Alternate Survey Form. Assessors may encounter programs that provide findings of the Self Study version of the surveys rather than the Self-Assessment versions. If this occurs, **request the correct version on the MERF. If the program does not have the Self-Assessment versions**, return copies of the Self-Study survey summary forms to NAEYC with the visit materials.

Alternate Summary Format. Programs sometimes tally their survey responses by hand, or using some form other than the Excel spreadsheet survey summary forms provided by NAEYC. This is acceptable as long as the data **show actual numbers of Yes, No, Don't Know and N/A responses to each survey question as well as the number of surveys distributed and the number returned; percentage-only data is not acceptable.**

Group Observable Evidence (GOE) (Allow EXACTLY 1 hour for direct observation + an optional 10 minutes for supplemental location observation for each group, + an optional 10 minutes for supplemental infant observation.)

Selection of Groups to Observe. Random selection of classroom groups for observation is necessary to maintaining the validity of the NAEYC Accreditation system. Random selection is a research-based practice that allows for confidence in the assessment system by assuring that no human bias factors potentially contribute to the decision as to which groups are observed. Groups are identified prior to the site visit and are reported to the program administrator as part of the *Site Visit Schedule*.

Determining which classroom groups and how many classroom groups are observed during a site visit depends upon the following guidelines:

- Observe at least 50% of the total number of groups in the program;
- Observe at least one group from each eligible age category (infant, toddler/two, preschool, kindergarten);
- In programs with satellite locations, observe at least one group from each site; and
- Within each age category, use random selection to pick specific groups to observe.

There are special considerations related to mixed-age groups, which are described in more detail in the *Randomizer- Classroom Observation Selection Protocol*, part of the pre-visit protocol.

Guidelines for Conducting Group Observations. The following guidelines will help ensure that the group observation process is conducted as unobtrusively as possible and will help to make this a positive experience for everyone involved.

- Begin a classroom observation if the group includes at least one awake child and one teaching staff member. Do not begin an observation if no children have arrived, or if all children have departed for the day, or if there are children present but they are all asleep.

- Classroom observations should last exactly one hour, with a 10-minute time exception (1) if you do not get to observe interior or exterior group environments, or (2) if infant observations result in less than 20 minutes of “awake” time (see details below). This means that you stay with children and staff for one hour, wherever they are. If at the end of the hour you have not observed the group’s interior or exterior environments, leave the group if necessary to observe the area not seen. Be sure the time you enter the classroom is noted on the *GOE* cover page along with the time you exit the classroom. There is a place on the cover page to record the 10-minute additional times if you need them.
- **Special Protocol for Infant Groups: When observing infant groups, you may begin an observation if at least one infant is awake. However, at least 20 minutes of total “awake” time must be observed; the minutes of “awake” time do not need to be consecutive. If by the end of the 60 minute observation, 20 minutes of “awake” time has not been observed, an additional 10 minute time exception is allowable to complete the infant observation. If at least one child is awake at the end of the regular period, continue the observation for up to 10 minutes. If no child is awake at the end of the regular period, return to the group later in the day to observe awake infants for up to 10 additional minutes. Make a note if this is the case and speak with the staff to arrange an appropriate time to return to the group when the children will most likely be awake. Make a notation of the total “awake” time and any time frames in which all infants are asleep on the GOE Notes page. If at the completion of the observation you have still not observed a total of 20 minutes of “awake” time including the 10 minute time exception, leave the room and contact the Academy for further instruction.**
- Upon starting **each** observation, confirm the names of the teaching staff present and the status of other adults present (parents, volunteers). **It may be that you can determine the names of the staff present by reading their nametags, seeing their photos posted, or listening to their conversation. If none of these means is available, briefly ask staff to confirm names, and then begin the observation. You do not need to ask classroom staff about children with special needs, or dialogue with them about looking through closets and cabinets. Keep all talk to a minimum.**
- Do not interfere with the classroom activities in any way. Be as unobtrusive as possible. Move if you are in the way of teachers or children.
- Station yourself around the perimeter of the classroom as inconspicuously as possible. You may walk around to get a better vantage point during the observation. When observing with another assessor, stay inside or go outside together.
- You may sit in a chair or on the floor. Do not sit on other furniture such as shelves, tables, the children’s chairs near an activity table, or on play equipment.
- Refrain from talking to other assessors when you are in the classroom. Do not receive or make phone calls or text messages during observations.
- You may acknowledge children if they approach you, but do not otherwise take part in classroom activity. You can tell them that you are watching them play today or that you have to finish your work.

- Do not ask teaching staff to talk with you while they are engaged in activities with the children.
- Try to keep a pleasant or neutral facial expression so children and/or staff are neither drawn to you nor concerned about your response to them.
- Note if staff are not present with the group for the entire observation or for only some portion of the time. This is critical for verifying that at least one staff member is present at all times who has current pediatric first aid certification as described in required criterion 5.A.03.
- Remember when conducting the classroom observation, you are considering the full experience of the children in the identified group. Therefore, in instances where two or more groups are combined (for example, in the outdoor space), all teacher – child interactions should be considered when completing ratings.
- Remember to bring your trowel, measuring tape and choke tube into the observation. Wear your booties into infant rooms that do not allow shoes. **Bring your outdoor wear if there is a chance you will be following a group outside during the hour.**
- Assessors are required to make notes on the GOE Notes Page. Note generally what went on in the observation period. It is helpful if you note what was observed that led to negative ratings for specific criteria. Assessors are also permitted to make notations for their own use on other parts of the GOE tool. When writing notes, keep the notes as objective as possible. State the facts and describe what you are seeing. Keep the notes specific to what you are seeing and what is occurring during the one-hour observation. Do not give general information regarding the program, the weather, or situations unless they directly pertain to and have affected the observation.
- **Assessors are also required to complete the rating scales on the GOE Notes Page in addition to writing general notes regarding what occurred during the observation period. You are also encouraged to make notes, time permitting, regarding negative ratings. The rating scales are not a substitute for writing general notes.**
- If an assessor witnesses the possible failure of a required criterion during an observation, the assessor is required to write detailed notes on the notes page of the GOE tool describing what child and/or adult was involved, the physical layout of the environment (if applicable), the time or duration of the incident (if applicable) and the setting. If there is a half-wall, bookcase, full-wall, window, door, or any other physical structure in the classroom that is pertinent to the description of the incident, make the location and placement of the physical structure clear in the notes. These notes and details **must be** transferred onto the *Required Criteria Documentation Form* to be shared with the program administrator during the Closing Meeting.

Classroom Portfolio (*Allow AT LEAST 30 minutes each*)

Classroom portfolios (CPs) should be reviewed in a private location. Classroom portfolios are rated for only the groups selected for observation in the randomization protocol.

Programs are permitted to submit a single classroom portfolio to represent more than one group. If this is the case, assessors rate the portfolio only once, completing one *Classroom Portfolio Assessment Tool Answer Sheet* for the portfolio in question. Note on the cover page of the answer sheet all the groups to which the rating applies. Also note on your visit schedule that the CP assessment period included multiple groups with one portfolio review. If you have any concerns about whether the CP provides adequate evidence for all the groups it was said to represent, make note of that on the *CP Answer Sheet Notes Page*.

Relationship to Observational Evidence. Assessors may schedule the review of a group’s classroom portfolio either before or after the time of the group’s observation. In either case, a group’s classroom portfolio evidence must be rated independently of what was directly observed in the classroom. Evidence from each source must stand on its own.

Duration of Assessment: It is important that the assessor takes the full amount of time allotted to review each Classroom Portfolio. Remember that evidence supporting a criterion may be unlabeled, or labeled for a different criterion. Use at least the full 30 minutes to complete each classroom portfolio review, unless you were able to thoroughly and completely review all information submitted in less time. If this is the case, explain it on the *Classroom Portfolio Assessment Tool Answer Sheet Notes Page*. **If you rated ‘5’ on all of the Notes Page rating scales, this is sufficient to explain why the review took between 20 and 30 minutes. However, if any ratings are ‘4’ or less, a note describing why it took less than 30 minutes is required. If the ratings are ‘1’ or ‘2’ in any area, you *must* describe why.**

Assessors must complete the rating scales on the CP Notes Pages following the completion of the CP.

Required Criteria Assessment

Required criteria are those that are considered basic to quality. Failure to meet any one of these criteria, through any individual source of evidence, may result in a decision NOT to accredit the program.

These are the required criteria, in brief:

- 1.B.09: No physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion.
- 3.C.02: Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers/twos by sight and sound at all times.
- 3.C.04: Teaching staff supervise preschoolers and kindergarten children primarily by sight; supervision for short intervals by sound alone is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight.
- 5.A.03: Presence of a staff member trained in pediatric first-aid, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing, at all times with each group of children; staff trained in CPR if necessary due to program characteristics (swimming, wading or particular health needs).
- 5.A.12.a: Infants [12 months or younger] are placed on their backs to sleep, on a firm surface that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, unless otherwise ordered by a physician.
- 10.A.02: The program administrator has the educational qualifications for the job.
- 10.B.04: The program and facility are licensed to operate or are otherwise regulated; and the program is in good standing.

If at any time during a visit the assessor reviews documentary evidence or directly observes evidence of failure to comply with any of the listed criteria, this protocol is followed:

Complete the Visit? The assessor generally continues with all observations and other tasks needed to complete the accreditation visit, regardless of whether a required criterion may have been failed. However, if a child is in *immediate risk for harm or abuse*, the assessor should halt the observation or other visit procedures and intervene. NAEYC's code of ethical conduct calls for active response in such cases.

Report Serious Incidents. Call NAEYC staff at the Academy (Accreditation Coordinators, Reliability Specialists, or Managers) during the visit to report if an incident has occurred that may need to be reported to state licensing authorities. Unless there is immediate risk involved, wait until completion of a group observation to call. Be ready to describe the details of what happened, who was involved, and when it took place.

Worksheets. In order to evaluate required criteria 5.A.03 and 10.B.04, multiple pieces of evidence must be reviewed and organized. Assessor worksheets have been created to aid the process for these 2 criteria. The worksheets carry their own detailed instructions.

Worksheet for criterion 10.B.04 (Licensing). Assessors must complete the *Required Criterion 10.B.04 Worksheet* by following these procedures. Request the program's license. If the license is a full license, current and valid, then required criterion 10.B.04 is rated 'Yes'.

Temporary, Provisional, Probationary or Expired Licenses: If the license is in a temporary, provisional, probationary or expired status, put 10.B.04 on the MERF and request a full, current, valid license. If the program produces a full, current and valid license, rate 10.B.04 'Yes' on the Program Portfolio. If the program does not produce a full, current and valid license after the MERF, rate 10.B.04 as possibly not met, ('No'), on the Program Portfolio Answer Sheet and complete the *Required Criteria Documentation Form*.

License Exempt Programs: If a program is license-exempt, indicate that additional documentation is needed for criterion 10.B.04 on the MERF and give the responsible person the *License-Exempt Acknowledgement Form* at the time of the MERF. If the program executes and returns the form, rate 10.B.04 'Yes' on the Program Portfolio. If the program does not execute the form on the day of the visit, rate 10.B.04 as 'No' on the Program Portfolio and as possibly not met on the *Required Criteria Documentation Form*. The program may choose to submit the completed form up to 5 business days after the visit. See the *License-Exempt Acknowledgement Form* for further instruction.

72-Hour Notification Form: If the program has reported that they are on a temporary, probationary, provisional or expired license due to the occurrence of a critical event, ask if the program has submitted a *72-Hour Notification Form* to the Academy. If they have, indicate this on the 10.B.04 worksheet. If they have not, direct them to the NAEYC website for further information (<http://www.naeyc.org/academy/pursuing/changes>) and/or give the program the *72-Hour Notification Form Flyer/Postcard*. Instruct the program to submit the form immediately and to call the Academy (800-424-2460 and choose option 3, then option 1) if they have further questions. Do not request evidence about the critical event; the Academy will follow up.

Required Criteria on the *Missing Evidence Request Form*. If evidence for a required criterion is missing from the Program Portfolio, or if the evidence provided in the Program Portfolio is not meeting the required criterion, the assessor lists it on the *Missing Evidence Request Form (MERF)*. See further details below, in the section about the *MERF*.

Site Visit Process Forms

A set of forms is used by the assessor during the site visit to document that the site visit process was completely and accurately conducted. These forms are made available to the public on the NAEYC website. While the forms are not used to collect the evidence for making the accreditation decision itself, they provide evidence that the site visit process was followed. The forms create structure for certain tasks during the site visit process. The forms include lines for signatures and/or initials of assessors and program administrators; by signing the forms they acknowledge that the processes were conducted as described. These forms provide crucial evidence about the site visit process that may be called upon in the event that a program appeals its accreditation decision.

Site visit process forms are printed in green to distinguish them from proprietary tools and worksheets. Blank copies are given to the administrator at the start of the visit, and completed copies are made for the administrator to keep at the end of the visit.

Site Visit Process Verification Form

(Time to complete this form is included in Orientation Meeting and Closing Meeting)

The *Site Visit Process Verification Form* is a 2-page, 2-part checklist that guides assessors through tasks that must occur at the beginning and end of the site visit. It ensures the reliability and validity of the site visit assessment by providing a framework for execution of many details of the visit protocol.

Page 1 of the *Site Visit Process Verification Form* is executed during the Orientation Meeting at the beginning of the site visit. It reminds the assessor of all necessary information-giving and information-gathering steps to be completed during the meeting. At the end of the Orientation Meeting the assessor reviews the checklist with the program administrator, confirming that all tasks have been addressed. Both parties initial the bottom of the first page to confirm. The assessor should leave a blank copy of the form with the program administrator, and answer any questions he or she may have.

Page 2 of the *Site Visit Process Verification Form* is executed during the Closing Meeting, the last task of the site visit. The checklist on this part of the form reminds the assessor to share and get signatures on various visit forms, and prompts for other actions needed to complete the visit (such as photocopying of shared forms). After the checklist tasks have been completed, the assessor reviews the checklist with the program administrator, and again both parties initial below the checklist to affirm that the Closing Meeting tasks were completed.

Finally, page 2 of the *Site Visit Process Verification Form* also has a section for signatures and affirmations of the visit process as a whole. The program administrator and all assessors present must sign this form.

Missing Evidence Request Form (MERF)

(Allow about 15 minutes to compile; 15 – 30 minutes to review)

Purpose of the MERF. The *Missing Evidence Request Form* provides the program an opportunity to locate existing documentation that the assessor may not have found when reviewing the Program Portfolio. It may also be used to document missing Family or

Teaching Staff Survey evidence. Use this form only to request *missing* evidence for a criterion or indicator. If evidence is presented that does not meet the requirements for a criterion or indicator, no further evidence should be requested. *See the section on Required Criteria (above) for an exception to this rule relating to required criteria.*

Completing the MERF. The *MERF* is introduced to the program administrator during the Orientation Meeting. The assessor should leave a blank copy of the form with the program administrator, and answer any questions they have.

Note missing evidence by source of evidence (Program Portfolio, Family Survey, Teaching Staff Survey) on pages 2 and 3 of the *MERF*. For PP evidence, list the criterion and/or indicator, then briefly describe the content of the criterion or indicator.

The table on page 3 of the *MERF* shows which missing evidence is from required criteria, and which is from emerging criteria, as a means for programs to prioritize the missing evidence task. Circle any criteria in this table that you have listed on pages 2 and 3 above.

For one type of evidence that might be missing for required criterion 5.A.03, the assessor will give the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* to the program administrator along with the *MERF* (see detailed instructions below).

Scheduling the MERF. There is a strict scheduling protocol with respect to the *MERF*.

Schedule the presentation of the *MERF* after completion of the *Program Portfolio Assessment Tool* and the *Family and Teaching Staff Surveys*. Submit the completed *MERF* to the program administrator *no more nor less than 2 hours, plus or minus 30 minutes*, before scheduled completion of the site visit. Note the time the *MERF* was given on your schedule and on page 3 of the *MERF*.

Allow the program administrator and any assistants he or she chooses *at least one hour, and no more than 1.5 hours*, to submit and label any missing evidence. Program administrators may make one or more copies of the *MERF* to assist them with their task. During the hour, give the program administrator and his or her assistants access to the Program Portfolio and the survey evidence. The assessor may rate classroom portfolios or do an observation during this time.

At the conclusion of about one hour assessor(s) will receive compiled and labeled additional evidence from the program administrator. If the program administrator took the original copy of the *MERF*, it must be returned to the assessor(s) at this time. Note the time evidence was returned to you on page 3 of the *MERF*.

Reviewing Additional Evidence. The assessor(s) will then immediately review the additional evidence and complete all ratings on tools. If the administrator was given the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* along with the *MERF*, verify that the administrator completed the signature section on page 2 of the form. If evidence for any required criterion is still missing, the assessor should finalize the *Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form* at this time. The entire review should take no more than one half hour. During this time, if the program staff submits additional evidence, the assessor(s) will accept it and review it. No further evidence will be accepted and rated after the review period is completed.

The assessor(s) should then proceed directly to the Closing Meeting, scheduled for the last half hour of the site visit. The *MERF* should be signed during the Closing Meeting.

First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form

(OPTIONAL: may submit and review with MERF; OR may need to review at Closing Meeting)

The *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* is an optional form that provides a means of addressing incomplete evidence regarding required criterion 5.A.03, which relates to pediatric first aid training (including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children) among teaching staff. This form is introduced to the administrator at the Orientation Meeting, and a blank copy is left with the administrator at the end of the Orientation Meeting. However, it is used only if evidence for 5.A.03 is found to be missing or incomplete when the *Program Portfolio* is reviewed. The program is assessed on the documentary evidence for 5.A.03 first compiled by completing the *Required Criterion 5.A.03 Worksheet* (see below). When the evidence compiled on this worksheet shows the criterion is not met for one or more groups, assessors must list the missing evidence on the *MERF*.

Depending upon the nature of the missing 5.A.03 evidence, the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* may be given to the administrator along with the *MERF*, or it may be given at the Closing Meeting. Here are 3 options for the types of missing evidence typically encountered when assessing 5.A.03:

- **OPTION 1: No Pediatric Component Documented.** The program had at least one staff member present with each group of children who had a certificate showing current first aid training, BUT the documentation did not show clearly that the training included a pediatric component. The first aid certificate DID clearly show that training included management of blocked airways and rescue breathing OR the staff member had a certificate showing completion of CPR training.
- **OPTION 2: No Rescue Breathing/Blocked Airway Component Documented.** On the day of the visit, the program had at least one staff member present with each group of children who had a certificate showing current first aid training, BUT the documentation did not show clearly that the training included rescue breathing and management of a blocked airway. A certificate showing completion of CPR training would meet this component.
- **OPTION 3: No Certified Staff in a Group.** The assessor observed one or more groups in which no staff member present had a certificate showing current pediatric first aid training, including management of blocked airways and rescue breathing (or completion of pediatric CPR training instead of the blocked airway/rescue breathing component of a first aid course).

If Option 1 ONLY is the case, check the first box on page 1 of the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* and give the form to the administrator along with the *MERF*. The administrator may sign the acknowledgment section of the form and return it to the assessor with evidence requested for other criteria on the *MERF*. If the administrator attests that the staff with certificates did receive training that included a pediatric component, then the assessor should rate the criterion as met on the Program Portfolio and GOE tools.

If Option 2 or 3 is the case, check the corresponding box on page 1 of the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form*. If the administrator cannot provide additional evidence supporting current first aid certifications (including rescue breathing and management of blocked airway) for all groups when returning evidence requested on the MERF, then the assessor must do the following:

1. Rate the criterion as NOT met on the Program Portfolio and GOE tools.
2. Complete the *Failed Required Criterion Form* for 5.A.03.
3. Give the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* to the administrator at the Closing Meeting when the *Failed Required Criterion Form* is reviewed.

The administrator must sign the acknowledgment section of the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* at a later date, when all conditions have been met. The completed form can be faxed or emailed to NAEYC within 30 days of the site visit (see below).

Note that it is possible for more than one of the 3 options to be true. That is, one group may have staff that lack documentation of pediatric component, while another group may have staff lacking any documentation of blocked airway/rescue breathing, and yet another group may have no training certificates at all. In that case, you will have to fill out the *Failed Required Criterion Form*, and the *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* will have to be executed by the administrator at a later date.

Safety Concerns Report (SCR)

(Allow about 15 minutes to compile; 5 minutes to review [in Closing Meeting])

The *Safety Concerns Report* is a method for communicating to the program any observed safety concerns. The SCR includes categories of safety issues that create a risk of harm to children's health or safety, and that may be corrected by the program within a short time frame. The kinds of safety concerns included on this form do NOT refer to NAEYC required criteria, which are reported on the *Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form* (see below).

The SCR is introduced to the program administrator during the Orientation Meeting. The assessor should leave a blank copy of the form with the program administrator, and answer any questions they have.

An assessor may notice safety concerns at any time during the visit, whether or not he or she is conducting a formal group or program observation at the time. The assessor(s) should carry the SCR throughout the visit, noting safety concerns as they occur, or making notes onto the form upon completing a group observation or other visit task. If safety concerns are noted during an observation they may also be used to rate criteria as "not met" on the observable evidence tools.

If more than one assessor is conducting the site visit, all assessors should compile safety concerns on working copies of the SCR form. The lead assessor should then combine all concerns onto one final copy of the SCR prior to the Closing Meeting.

If there are no safety concerns noted, check the box on page 1 of the form and initial where indicated.

At the Closing Meeting, review the contents of the report with the administrator. Remind the administrator that once the form is presented, no further documentation or follow-up by the program will be accepted as further evidence related to formal visit ratings. The ratings are done; this form is advisory only. Avoid lengthy discussion of what is noted, and make it clear if necessary that you cannot change visit ratings at this time. When you are finished reviewing the *SCR*, have the administrator sign the form at the Closing Meeting. By signing the form, the administrator agrees to take immediate corrective action to address the safety concerns noted, or to communicate the safety concerns to others who have the authority to take action. A copy of the form is left with the program, and also kept by the assessors.

Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form (RCF)

(Allow about 15 minutes to compile; 15 minutes to review [in Closing Meeting])

The assessor fully documents the possible failure of required criteria on the *Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form*. The *RCF* is introduced to the program administrator during the Orientation Meeting. The assessor should leave a blank copy of the form with the program administrator, and answer any questions he or she may have. This form is also used to document that there were no failures of required criteria. Compile the *RCF* just before the Closing Meeting, after the *MERF* has been distributed to the program and after missing evidence has been received back, reviewed and rated. Review the *RCF* with the program administrator at the Closing Meeting.

Assessor Determination on Page 2 of RCF. *Something must be checked on this page!* The assessor must indicate whether all required criteria were met, or whether one or more required criteria were *possibly not* met. For required criteria 5.A.03, 5.A.12, 10.A.02 and 10.B.04, secondary check boxes prompt additional assessor follow-up:

- **5.A.03:** Assessor must give the Program Administrator the *First/Aid CPR Acknowledgment Form*.
- **5.A.12.a:** Assessor must ask the Program Administrator is there is a physician's order or note permitting the infant to be placed to sleep in a position other than the back.
- **10.A.02:** If the designated Program Administrator was changed after the program submitted candidacy materials and the Academy has not yet received documents concerning the qualifications of the current Program Administrator, the assessor must give the Program Administrator the *Fax Cover Sheet for Staff Changes on the Day of Visit*.
- **10.B.04:** If criterion 10.B.04 is possibly not met, check one of the three statements to indicate what occurred. Follow the directions on the form.

Documentation of Evidence on Page 3 of RCF. The assessor should complete one copy of Page 3 for each source of evidence relating to an instance of a possible failed required criterion. If a single criterion is documented by more than one source of evidence (for example, 5.A.12.a is assessed by *Group Observable Evidence* and by *Program Portfolio*), create one Page 3 documentation for each source of evidence that appears to be failed. If multiple instances of the same criterion failure are present (for example, the assessor observes 2 separate instances of infants being improperly placed to sleep on their stomachs), one Page 3 documentation should be created for each instance. Because of the possibility that

you may need multiple copies of page 3, assessors should carry a supply of extra *RCF* page 3's with their standard visit supplies. Indicate at the top of Page 3 how many copies of Page 3 are being submitted.

Describe the evidence as completely and legibly as possible. For observable evidence, it is important to convey the details requested about the scope and severity of the incident—*where* it happened, *how long* it lasted, *which* and *how many* children or staff were involved, *how* the incident ended (e.g., staff solved it or assessor called their attention to a problem), etc. Some other tips to keep in mind when writing up observable evidence:

- Use “Teacher” and “Child” instead of proper nouns; number them if more than one teacher or child is involved in the incident or situation.
- Use full sentences, not bullet points or short phrases that can confuse the narrative.
- State observed details. Avoid judgmental language.
- Avoid extraneous information.

Presentation at Closing Meeting. Solicit the administrator’s written response at the Closing Meeting. Responses should be written at the bottom of page 3. The back of the page may be used if necessary to provide additional details. If the administrator chooses not to respond on the day of the visit, he or she should check the box on Page 3. *Either the box must be checked, or a written response must be made.* If the program chooses to submit additional documentation after the visit, they have 5 business days to submit that documentation and/or response to the Academy.

Signatures on Page 4 of *RCF*. It is important that the lead assessor and the program administrator (or other program representative) sign on Page 4. The communication of failed required criteria can become crucial to the final decision as to whether the program gains accreditation or not. It is the lead assessor’s responsibility to fully complete this document.

Site Visit Materials Checklist

(Complete this form after the visit; do not include on visit schedule)

The *Site Visit Materials Checklist* is a control form that allows the lead assessor and Academy staff to account for all tools, tool answer sheets, worksheets and forms being returned to the Academy at the end of a site visit. This one-page form is completed by the assessor after the visit, when he or she is checking and packaging site visit materials for shipment to NAEYC. The bottom of the form is for Academy staff use only and is used to expedite routing of the forms through the scoring and decision process.

The lead assessor should complete the visit information at the top of the form, then use the first column to list how many of each tool, answer sheet or form is being returned to the Academy. For example, if four classroom portfolios were evaluated, you will indicate that you are returning four *Classroom Portfolio Answer Sheets*. The assessor should initial this form once, at the bottom of the list (middle of page). Return the *Site Visit Materials Checklist* on the top of the pile of documents; it is the first thing Academy staff will need when they open the package.

Closing Meeting with the Program Administrator

(Allow about 30 minutes)

The Closing Meeting is an opportunity for the assessors and program administrator to verify that the assessment was conducted as outlined in this protocol and on the *Site Visit Process Verification Form*. Assessor(s) and program administrators sign and date several forms in the closing meeting. The closing meeting is also the time for the program administrator to respond in writing to possible failures to meet required criteria. Remind the program administrator that assessors are not able to discuss any of the results of the assessment at the closing meeting.

The program administrator is entitled to receive copies of all forms reviewed in the closing meeting, as well as the *Missing Evidence Request Form* (presented earlier, but signed during the closing meeting; see protocol above). Programs should receive copies of all forms that they are asked to sign. If the program does not have a photo copier, the lead assessor should arrange to copy and mail all relevant forms after the visit is completed.

Forms to Review in the Closing Meeting

Specifically, assessors must review the following forms:

Site Visit Schedule, annotated during the visit to reflect any changes in the schedule as actually executed. The assessor should take some time reviewing the schedule, noting that sufficient time was taken for each assessment task, noting when additional time was needed for tasks (for example, additional 10 minutes for observations), and noting where the original schedule was altered, and why. It is very important that the program administrator be able to understand and confirm that protocol was followed with respect to how much time was allotted to tasks.

After reviewing it, the assessor(s) and program administrator should sign the bottom of the schedule, indicating that it was reviewed and appears accurate. The administrator is NOT agreeing by signing that everything in the schedule is correct. He or she may decide upon later review that something is not right. However, the administrator is acknowledging receipt of the schedule, with amendments to reflect its actual execution.

Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form, regardless of whether or not any of the criteria were observed to be met or not met. This form requires signatures by the assessor(s) and the program administrator.

Missing Evidence Request Form, regardless of whether or not any documentation was requested. This form requires signatures by the assessor(s) and the program administrator.

Safety Concerns Report. Review the form. It requires a signature by the program administrator.

72-Hour Notification Form. Give the responsible person the 72-Hour Notification Form. Leave the form with the program. If they have any questions about what to report or around a specific situation, direct the program to call the Academy Information Center (800-424-2460; choose option 3, then option 1).

NAEYC Accreditation Decisions and Next Steps handout. It is recommended that the assessor NOT read through this entire handout at the Closing Meeting. Assessors should briefly summarize the main points in the handout, and urge the administrator to review it carefully after the visit has been completed.

Administrator Evaluation of the Site Visit, which the program administrator is asked to return directly to the NAEYC Academy within 5 days of the visit.

Site Visit Process Verification Form. This form requires both initials (at the bottom of the “Closing Meeting” section) and signatures by the assessor(s) and the program administrator.

Other Tasks

Ask program staff to make photocopies of the final *Site Visit Schedule*, *Missing Evidence Request Form*, *Required Criteria Site Visit Documentation Form*, *Safety Concerns Form*, *First Aid/CPR Acknowledgment Form* (if it was completed during the visit), and *Site Visit Process Verification Form*. Copies of these forms must be left with the program administrator. If the program does not have a photocopier, the assessor should inform the administrator that copies will be made and mailed back to the program immediately following the visit.

If there were staff changes reported at the Orientation Meeting that had not been previously reported to the Academy, the assessor should have given the program administrator the *Fax Cover Sheet for Teaching Staff Changes on Day of Visit*. If the administrator has the documentation assembled by the end of the visit, the assessor can collect it now and include it with the materials mailed back to the Academy. Include the *Fax Cover Sheet* form on top of any such documents. Remember that the administrator has the option of preparing and sending these forms after the completion of the visit.

Record the Closing Meeting completion time on both copies of the *Site Visit Schedule*.

Make sure you have packed up all used and unused copies of NAEYC tools and other proprietary forms before you leave the site.

Finally, tell the program administrator that upon completion of the visit no further alterations to the scoring tools will be made. Thank the administrator and his or her staff for their accommodation of your site visit, and for all their hard work on behalf of program quality improvement.

After the Visit

Prepare and check the visit documents before mailing them.

Review each assessment tool answer sheet and be sure all ratings are complete. Be sure that all identifying information on every assessment tool, worksheet and form is complete and legible (Program ID, Group numbers, Assessor ID, times, etc.). Put the pages of each tool or form in correct order. If a tool was part of a reliability assessment, the “Reliability Check?” data field on the answer sheet cover page should be marked “Yes” for both the white and yellow copies of paired answer sheets.

Remove paper clips, rubber bands, Post-It notes, or other extraneous materials before mailing.

Return Data to the NAEYC Academy.

The *Site Visit Materials Checklist* lists all tools, answer sheets, forms, worksheets and other documents that must be (or may be) returned to the Academy. Put that form on top of the document pile. Place all visit materials in a Tyvek envelope. Use UPS ground shipping to return visit materials to the NAEYC Academy.

Materials must be shipped within one week of completing the visit.

Record Keeping

UPS Tracking. It is the assessor's responsibility to record and save the tracking information for the package. Completed visit materials are very valuable; if visit materials do not arrive, it is essential that the Academy is able to track them using all available resources. The NAEYC Academy reserves the right to withhold payment to the assessor for any visit until the materials are received.

DMS Information Entry. Log into DMS, go to the Program's Visit Scheduling screen, and input the date the site visit materials were mailed to the NAEYC Academy along with the UPS tracking number. It is also imperative that the "site visit date" field in DMS is correct. Check the visit date you entered during pre-visit scheduling, and update it if necessary to reflect the date the visit was conducted. The Decisions Manager needs this information to assure that visits are being completed on time and materials are being sent promptly.

Financial Accounting. Assessors are required to complete expense reports and submit expense receipts and for all site visits. Follow current directives of the Academy's Accreditation Operations staff regarding financial accounting.

Assessor Evaluation of the Site Visit

Evaluations must be completed by all assessors who take part in a visit. It is important that the Academy receive this feedback in order to inform on-going reliability issues and training for assessors. These evaluations are accessed and completed through the Assessor Online Community (iCohere). You will need to know the program ID, program name, and the visit date. If you had a co-assessor, you need to know that assessor's ID number as well.

- Log into the Assessor site in iCohere.
- Click on "Web Forms" in the navigation bar.
- Scroll down to "Assessor Evaluation of the Site Visit", and click on the "Add New Evaluation" button.

Notify the NAEYC Academy of any issues or discrepancies found in tools or procedures when you are out in the field. Utilize the *Criteria Suggestion Form* posted in the Assessor Online Community for tracking these issues.