

Steps to Accreditation

Step 1 Self-evaluation

Local affiliate downloads the Guide to ProLiteracy America Accreditation from the Group Affiliates Only section of the ProLiteracy Web site: http://www.proliteracy.org/proliteracy_america/affiliates_only/. The affiliate then compares its policies and practices against the 16 standards.

Step 2 Application

Once the local organization determines it is ready to proceed with accreditation, it completes a formal application to complete the process, submits required organizational documents, and pays the \$400 accreditation fee. Organizations will have one year from the time their application is approved to complete the process—including the site review. Note that currently accredited affiliates are expected to complete the site review prior to the expiration of their current status or they will have a lapse in their status.

Step 3 Documentation

Once ProLiteracy America approves the application, it will provide the affiliate with all the materials necessary to complete the accreditation process and will ensure that accreditation-specific technical assistance and support are available. Now the affiliate must document that it meets all of the standards and submit checkpoint materials according to the timeline.

Step 4 Site Review

- Previously accredited affiliates will receive an electronic site review—i.e., the site review will be conducted from a distance and documentation will be shared electronically, sent in advance by mail, or by some combination of the two. ProLiteracy America assigns a site visit date and an impartial reviewer to conduct a one-day review to verify all standards are met, identify promising practices, and offer resource and referral services.
- Previously accredited affiliates may request an on-site (in-person) review by completing a request form and submitting an additional site review fee of \$400. ProLiteracy America

assigns a site visit date and an impartial reviewer to conduct a one-day review to verify all standards are met, identify promising practices, and offer resource and referral services.

- Affiliates seeking accreditation for the first time will receive an on-site (in-person) review at no additional cost.

Step 5 Accreditation Review Committee

The Accreditation Review Committee (an impartial group of volunteer literacy professionals) makes accreditation determinations based on the documentation submitted by the affiliate and the site reviewer's report.

If all of the standards are met, the local organization receives a four-year accreditation award and a variety of related benefits and resources.

If all of the standards are not met, the local organization submits one of the following:

- a program improvement plan leading to accredited status
- an appeal of the decision
- written notification of a decision to discontinue pursuit of accreditation and remain a general affiliate of ProLiteracy America