



# Component Accreditation Update

## March 2021

### Executive Summary

The next three-year Component Accreditation cycle was due to be completed in 2022 (covering activities taking place in 2021). However due to economic and operational stresses on components caused by the pandemic, the AIA Board of Directors at their March 2021 meeting voted to defer full accreditation for one year to allow components to more fully recover. That said, some of the Core Member Services requirements demand annual attention to ensure components remain viable and legally and financially compliant. The Component Relations team in conjunction with the Core Member Services Work Group submitted the proposed accreditation changes below to the AIA Board of Directors who voted in approval:

- Postpone the full 2022 accreditation process for one year to allow components to recover more fully from pandemic pressures.
- Refine the accreditation process to examine a small subset of Core Member Services in 2022 to ensure continuation of the most valued member services, reduce risk, and ensure continued business operations of components.
- The full accreditation process would resume in 2023 and repeat every three years thereafter.
- Continue to examine the short list of services (“Component Accreditation Check-up”) on an annual basis to ensure legal and financial compliance.
- Adjust the continuing education requirements to allow and encourage components to collaborate to deliver high-quality continuing education.

### Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed the AIA component network both financially and operationally, as has been recognized by the Component COVID-19 Task Force. Financial uncertainty and associated cutbacks will continue into 2021, stressing the capacities of both staffed and all-volunteer components of all sizes in the U.S. and internationally.

At the same time, now that components have completed two rounds of accreditation since 2016, it is apparent that certain aspects of accreditation merit annual attention. It has been documented that the three-year cycle of accreditation can result in lapses. This occurs when there is volunteer turnover—and in some instances, staff turnover—that leaves some of the most business-critical Core Member Services undone.

In the case of certain Core Member Services that must be maintained on a continuous and annual basis, such lapses in performance can result in a breakdown in communication and coordination

between AIA and components, members being deprived of continuing education opportunities, and potential legal and financial exposure for the component.

## Accreditation Requirements

The 2022 accreditation cycle (which examines 2021 activities) has been simplified and is a check-up to examine a short list of five activities that are most critical to the continued viability of each component.

Those Core Member Service items to be examined include four existing requirements previously approved by the Board of Directors and one amended requirement:

- **Tax:** File the component's federal tax return [IRS Form 990, for non-profit 501(c)(6) associations].
- **Insurance:** Maintain current insurance coverage, specifically, a directors and officers (D&O) policy and a general liability policy for the component.
- **Corporate Filing:** Maintain the component's current state nonprofit corporation filing with the applicable Secretary of State's office.
- **Officers:** Inform AIA of the component's incoming roster of officers by December 31 of the prior year.

The continuing education requirement ensures that every member has access to sufficient course credits through their own component, and that they have the opportunity to meet the requirements of AIA membership through programming at their own component. The previous requirement has been slightly amended to give additional flexibility to components in their course delivery, by allowing content to be co-created with another component to foster inter-component cooperation in delivery of education, and follows (in bold below):

- **Continuing Education:**
  - Deliver to members an aggregate total of at least 18 LU/12 HSW hours per year. Up to 14 of these hours may be in partnership with any CES Provider.
  - Continue to deliver to members at least 4 component-curated credit hours of LU or HSW content. Such courses are to be created and managed using the component's own CES Provider account.
  - **If a component does not deliver 4 LUs on its own, but it actively works with another AIA component to co-create educational content for members, it may satisfy the above 4 credit hour requirement by demonstrating how it meaningfully contributed to the co-created content.**

Going forward, these check-up accreditation requirements would be examined **annually**, while the remainder of the full Core Member Services would continue to be examined only **every three years**.

## **Timeline**

The following timeline describes the process and steps for the next few years. It's important to remember the Component Accreditation Check-up will be done every year in the off years of the full accreditation submission to ensure legal and financial compliance at all times.

### **2021**

March: Board approval of one-year deferment and adoption of Component Accreditation Check-up.

Announce changes to components.

Apr – Nov: Coaching, training on 2022 check-up requirements with components as needed.

May 15: Tax filing deadline for nonprofits.

Oct: Portal and application training (as needed).

Announce 2023 full Component Accreditation requirements.

Nov 15: Application portal for 2022 Check-up opens.

Dec: Deadline to report 2022 officers in Fonteva.

### **2022**

Jan 15: Application portal for 2022 Check-up closes

Feb: Training begins for both staffed and unstaffed for Full Accreditation.

Feb 21 – 25: Grassroots

Feb – March: Review Check-up applications. Finalize and extend component accreditation through 2023.

March – Sept: Coaching/training on 2023 Full Accreditation with components as needed.

Sept. 15 Open portal for Full Accreditation.

Oct: Portal and application training (as needed).

### **2023**

Jan 15: Application portal for 2023 Full Accreditation closes.

Feb. (TBD): Grassroots

Feb – April: Review Full Accreditation applications. Finalize and award 2023 Accreditation certificates.

May: 3-year Full Accreditation certificates mailed to components.

A full calendar for subsequent years will be posted on Component Connect.

