



AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ACCREDITATION BOARD

Accreditation Coordinator Manual

Version February 2019

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STEP 1: PREPARING FOR ACCREDITATION

Now that your organization has decided to pursue accreditation, there are some important steps to consider in organizing the information for the application, as well as determining how to sustain accreditation and maintain your conformance with the standards into the future.

A. Establishing an Accreditation Committee

Benefits

An Accreditation Committee is very beneficial for several reasons. It helps with delegating the work in compiling narrative responses and gathering documents for evidence that demonstrate you are in conformance with the standards. It also serves to assist with planning for the site visit and maintaining accreditation in the future.

Composition

Your Accreditation Committee members should be comprised of staff from different departments of your organization that reflect an in-depth knowledge of how your organization manages or operates in relation to each of the standards. For example, whomever deals with Financial Management, whether it is a Chief Financial Officer or Finance Director, that person should be responsible for writing the narratives and understanding the best evidence to demonstrate conformance with the Financial Management standard. In general, your Accreditation Committee should have:

- Staff knowledgeable of the whole organization
- Staff with knowledge of each of the standard subjects (one person may be an expert in several standards)
- Individuals who can write a concise narrative
- Individuals who can assist with organizing and scanning documents

B. Appointing an Accreditation Coordinator

The Accreditation Coordinator is the main point of contact with AHAB throughout the accreditation process. This individual should be directly accountable to the Chief Executive and be very knowledgeable about the organization. The Accreditation Coordinator leads, oversees, and manages the activities of the Accreditation Committee.

The Accreditation Coordinator will be the individual who will submit the registration and the final application when complete.

The Accreditation Coordinator may “delegate” a person to assist with the application in the online portal. This will be covered in more detail in Step 2.

C. Accreditation Committee Activities

Review the Standards and Guidelines

The Standards and Guidelines are on the AHAB website to download for any organization interested in accreditation. They are arranged with 8 broad Standard domains, 47 more detailed Guidelines, and 110 Indicators. The document containing the indicators is “**Standards**

and Guidelines with Indicators” under **Resources/Tools** on the website. You can also delegate the different standards to different departments and utilize the worksheets for each standard under the “Worksheets” in the same **Tools** section of the website.

[Review the Readiness Survey](#)

The **Readiness Survey**, downloadable from the AHAB website under **Resources/Tools**, assists your organization with understanding accreditation and the standards. When completing the Readiness Survey this is the time to review your organization’s resources for completing and maintaining accreditation, as well as the documentation you utilize on a daily basis to manage your operations.

[Prepare Responses for the Registration Form](#)

Review and prepare the required information to submit on the Registration Form:

- Organization contact information for Chief Executive, Accreditation Coordinator, Board Chair
- Organization data:
 - Founding year
 - Current annual budget
 - Total # of Units
 - Total # of Sites
 - Number of full and part time employees
 - Type of organization
 - Mission
- Brief narrative describing why you are pursuing accreditation
- Summary of current operations, i.e. Low Income Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, MTW organization, LIHTC, etc.
- Verification¹ that the organization is applying for accreditation.

¹*In your application, the AHAB reviewers will be looking for documentation such as a board resolution, indicating the desire to pursue accreditation. The Executive and Board Chair will be copied on the email that is sent when the organization submits their registration.*

[Prepare your Application](#)

The Accreditation Committee should meet regularly to ensure the members are progressing with narratives for the application. The Accreditation Committee should also be reviewing documentation that will be submitted as evidence to support the narratives. This is covered in more detail in the tool: “**How to Write Narratives and Choose Documentation**” accessible on the AHAB website.

The Accreditation Committee should also determine their own internal timelines to ensure the application will be complete within 90 days from initial registration.

D. Preparation for Small Organizations

Executive as Accreditation Coordinator

Many organizations that are eligible for accreditation may have a very small team. The difference in size is that the Chief Executive may take on the full role of Accreditation Coordinator and writing the narratives, as well as gathering the evidence. This is acceptable, as long as the organization demonstrates its leadership and governing board have determined to pursue accreditation candidacy, complete the application and commit to the site visit. All other points to consider the pursuit of accreditation from a time and resource perspective on the organization is still relevant, regardless of the size of the organization. It is also acceptable to utilize interns or volunteers, per your organization's guidelines on utilizing these categories of resources to assist activities around fulfilling your mission.

STEP 2: REGISTERING FOR ACCREDITATION

Now that you've gone through Step 1: Preparing for Accreditation, the next step is Registering for Accreditation in the AHAB Accreditation Portal.

A. Accessing the Registration Form

1. Go to www.housingaccreditation.org/resources/ and click on the words "Click here to Register for Accreditation" under Step 2:



[Click here to Register for Accreditation](#)

2. On the form, enter in your organization's information you and your Accreditation Committee prepared in advance
3. Check the "Yes" box to verify your intent to apply to become a candidate for accreditation and certify the information you submit for determination is a true reflection of your organization and its capabilities as of this date.
 - a. **AHAB will be reviewing your application's documentation for a board resolution indicating the intent to pursue accreditation.**
4. Click the submit button.
 - a. You will see a message that says "Your submission is saved".
 - b. Close the browser window.
5. You will receive an autogenerated email, "Thank You for Submitting Your Registration" that acknowledges AHAB has received your registration. Your Chief Executive and Board Chair are also copied on this email.
6. Check your junk or spam mail for this autogenerated email if you do not receive an email from AHAB within 15 minutes.
7. AHAB will determine your eligibility by the next business day then send you an email that says "Eligible Notification" with instructions and a link to log in to the AHAB Accreditation portal as a first time user. The Accreditation Coordinator is the only email user that receives this link. [Click on the link in the "Eligible Notification" email and bookmark it.](#)

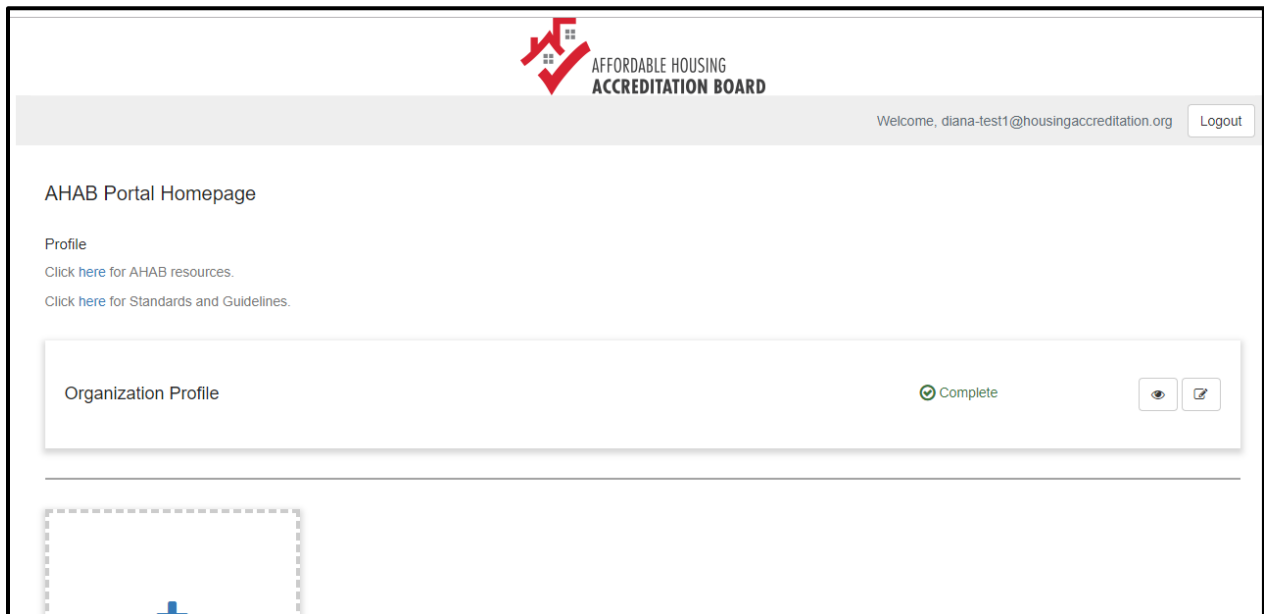
B. Accreditation Portal First Time Login

This process only needs to be completed one time. It is to establish a link between your individual email and your organization's information in the Accreditation Portal as a new user.

1. Follow the link in the "Eligible Notification" email (this is a one-time registration step)
2. Type in your email address that you used to register your organization as the Accreditation Coordinator
3. Click on "forgot password"
4. A "Forgot Password" email will be sent to your email account. Click on the link in the email to be redirected to establish your password.
5. You may need to copy and paste the link into your web browser.
6. If you do not receive an email within 5 minutes, check your spam or junk mail.
7. Enter your password and re-enter your password for confirmation in the appropriate fields.
8. Click the Reset button. You will be redirected to the AHAB Accreditation Sign In page.
9. **Bookmark this page – this is where you will enter the Accreditation Portal from now on to work on your application or view your organization information.**
10. Enter your email address and password.

Email admin@housingaccreditation.org if you have any problems logging in.

STEP 3: COMPLETE AND SUBMIT ONLINE APPLICATION



Screenshot 1: Organization Portal Homepage

A. Update Organization Profile

Before you begin your application, you will need to update your organization profile to ensure Accreditation Committee team members have access to the portal and the standards they are assigned to complete.²

In the Organization Profile, you are assigning Standards to different team members by entering their names and email addresses and sending them a link to access their part of the application.

You may assign an “Executive Delegate” to view progress on the application, as well as the final completed application before you submit.

You may assign an “Accreditation Coordinator Delegate” to complete standards, upload documentation into the Document Library and view progress on all standards in the application.

You may assign a “Standard Delegate” to complete each standard and upload documentation.

²This should reflect how you are organizing the management of your application within your organization. You may choose to have only two people working on the final narratives and uploading documentation, or you may have up to eight people.

As the Accreditation Coordinator, you are the only person able to submit the final application.

A few tips:

- From the AHAB Portal Home Page - Click on the small eye icon to **view** your Organization Profile.
- From the AHAB Portal Home Page - Click on the pen and paper icon to **edit** the Organization Profile.
- From the AHAB Portal Home Page – there are links to Standards Worksheets to download and distribute within your organization and to the Resources on the AHAB website.
- Update the Organization Profile information as needed. The Accreditation Coordinator is the only user with editing access to the Organization Profile.
- Enter the name and email address for the Executive Delegate, Accreditation Coordinator Delegate, and each Standard Delegate, see the next sections for details.

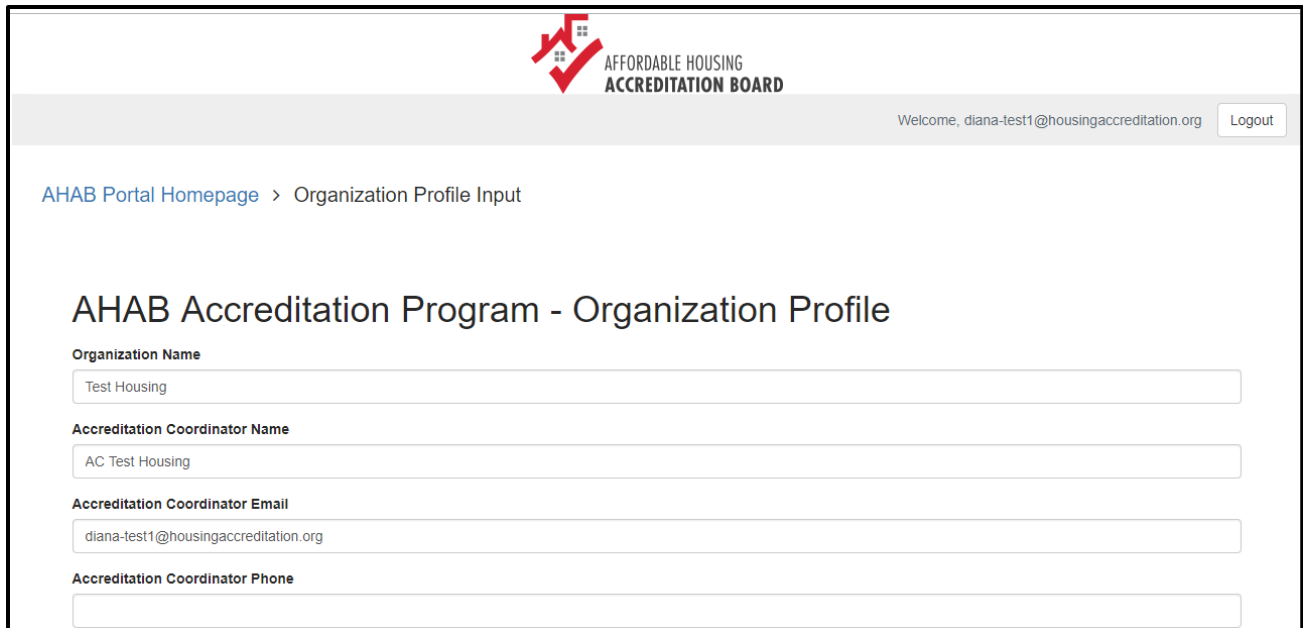
B. Change in Accreditation Coordinator

If your organization has a change in its Accreditation Coordinator, you will need to contact AHAB at admin@housingaccreditation.org. We will change the Accreditation Coordinator contact internally and provide you with instructions for ensuring the new Accreditation Coordinator has appropriate access to your application.

C. Assign Delegates to the Portal on the Organization Profile

This process grants permission for your team members to register and gain access to the accreditation portal.

- The Accreditation Coordinator will type in the name and email of the Executive Delegate which is the Chief Executive or his/her designee.
- The Accreditation Coordinator will type in the name and email of the Accreditation Coordinator Delegate assigned to assist with completing narratives and uploading documentation.
- The Accreditation Coordinator will type in the name and email of the Delegate assigned to each Standard, up to eight (8).
- SAVE at the bottom of the page before leaving the Organization Profile.



**AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ACCREDITATION BOARD**

Welcome, diana-test1@housingaccreditation.org Logout

[AHAB Portal Homepage](#) > Organization Profile Input

AHAB Accreditation Program - Organization Profile

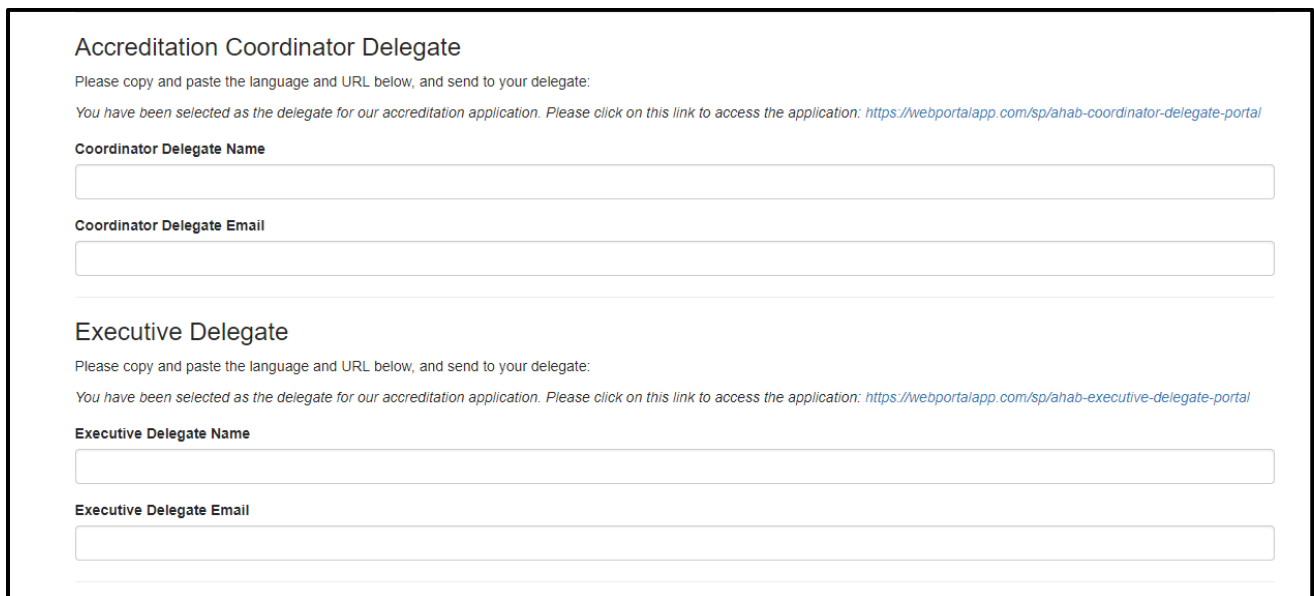
Organization Name

Accreditation Coordinator Name

Accreditation Coordinator Email

Accreditation Coordinator Phone

Screenshot 2: Organization Profile



Accreditation Coordinator Delegate

Please copy and paste the language and URL below, and send to your delegate:
 You have been selected as the delegate for our accreditation application. Please click on this link to access the application: <https://webportalapp.com/sp/ahab-coordinator-delegate-portal>

Coordinator Delegate Name

Coordinator Delegate Email

Executive Delegate

Please copy and paste the language and URL below, and send to your delegate:
 You have been selected as the delegate for our accreditation application. Please click on this link to access the application: <https://webportalapp.com/sp/ahab-executive-delegate-portal>

Executive Delegate Name

Executive Delegate Email

Screenshot 3: Organization Profile – AC Delegate and Executive Delegate Designations

D. Invite Delegates to the Portal

To invite delegates (users) to the portal, the Accreditation Coordinator must copy the URL associated with the Executive Delegate, Accreditation Coordinator Delegate and Standard Delegate and paste the URL into individual emails to send the link to the respective delegate.

1. The Delegates will follow the same process as the Accreditation Coordinator for creating a password.

- a. The Accreditation Coordinator Delegate will have the ability to view and edit all aspects of the application
- b. The Executive Delegate will have the ability to view and edit all aspects of the application.
- c. Standard Delegates will be able to edit the standard(s) to which they've been assigned, including having the ability to upload documents.
- d. Standard Delegates will have view only access to the Standards they are not assigned.
- e. The Accreditation Coordinator is the only Accreditation Committee member who can submit the final application.
- f. All Delegates with access to the application will be able to upload documents to the Document Library.

Accreditation Standard 1

Please copy and paste the language and URL below, and send to your delegate:

You have been selected to assist with completing Standard 1 for our accreditation application. Please click on this link to access the Standard 1 application:
<https://webportalapp.com/sp/ahab-portal-standard-1>

Delegate Name (Standard 1)

Delegate Email (Standard 1)

Accreditation Standard 2

Please copy and paste the language and URL below, and send to your delegate:

You have been selected to assist with completing Standard 2 for our accreditation application. Please click on this link to access the Standard 1 application:
<https://webportalapp.com/sp/ahab-portal-standard-2>

Delegate Name (Standard 2)

Delegate Email (Standard 2)

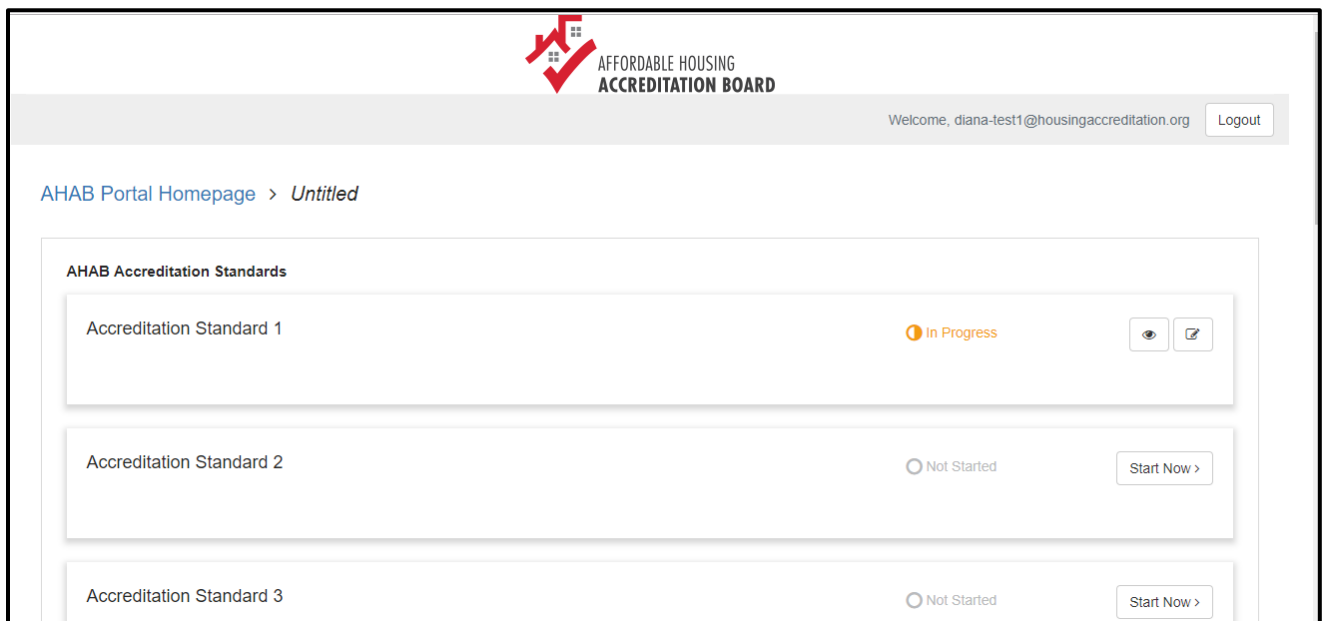
Screenshot 4: Organization Profile – Standard Delegate Designations

E. Start on the Application for the Individual Standards

1. Accreditation Coordinator begins the response portion of the application by navigating back to the AHAB Portal Home Page and clicking *Get Started*.
 - a. When the page opens, Standard 1 will show as “In Progress”
 - b. The other Standards will say “Start Now” until a Delegate has started to edit the standard.
 - c. The delegate for Standard 1 will begin by clicking the pencil and paper icon to enable the ability to provide written responses to Standard 1 guidelines and indicators.



Screenshot 5: AHAB Portal Home Page – Get Started after Organization Profile is Completed



Screenshot 6: AHAB Portal Home Page – Start Completing Individual Standards

2. Standard 2-8 Delegates will begin entering information by clicking the *Start Now* button for their assigned standard.
3. The Standard Delegate will complete a narrative for each indicator under each guideline within their standard. Please refer to the “**How to Write Narratives and Choose Documentation**” resource on the AHAB website for details about completing narratives and including documentation as evidence to support the narrative.
4. Each narrative should be concise and should describe the organization’s status, process, and how the uploaded documentation supports the provided narrative.

5. After entering the narrative response for each indicator in the guideline, delegates will select the level to which the organization meets the guideline:
 - a. Meets -- No compliance problems are present
 - b. Meets -- Compliance problems exist but all are being resolved successfully
 - c. Partially Meets -- Plans (awaiting results or to be enacted) have been developed to address area
 - d. Does Not Meet -- Plans to address compliance problems are not viable or have not been developed.

Does your Organization meet Guideline 8.4:

- Meets - No compliance problems are present
- Meets - Compliance problems exist, but all are being resolved successfully
- Partially Meets - Plans (awaiting results or to be enacted) have been developed to address area
- Does Not Meet - Plans to address compliance problems are not viable or have not been developed

Submitted Documentation (please list with a short description):

Resident Advisory meeting minutes
Executive team meeting agenda and minutes

The accreditation portal will refresh periodically, saving information you have entered. However, to ensure all of your information is saved, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save Draft.

Saved at 12:44:23 PM ✔ Saved

Screenshot 7: Standard 8 – “Does your Organization meet Guideline 8.4?” with “Saved” version

6. Delegates will indicate the location within the application of the supporting documentation by checking “Document Library” or both “Document Library” and “Additional Documents”:
 - a. If a document has been uploaded to the Document Library by another committee member, the Standard Delegate can reference the document in the Document Library. See Section **F. Document Library**.
 - i. “Please list file name(s) and description(s):” Delegates should provide the filename of the document(s), File name and location within the document that supports conformance
 - b. The Delegate can upload up to 2 additional documents following the respective guideline.
 - i. The documents uploaded within the guideline are those that are unique only to that guideline’s conformance.
 - ii. Uploads at the guideline level are limited to two documents per guideline.
 - iii. Uploads at the standard level are available at the bottom of the application for each standard, and provide 10 additional fields. See **Screenshot 9**.

- iv. Delegates will provide the exact location in the document they are referencing to support the narrative. See “**How to Write Narratives and Choose Documentation**” resource for more detailed instructions.
- v. Delegates will click the *Select a file* button, giving them access to the documents on their computer. Delegate double clicks on the desired document, loading the document into the application

Supporting Documentation: Use the checkbox below if you would like to reference or include supporting documentation.

Guideline 1.10 Supporting Documentation

Included in Document Library Section

Additional Documents

Please list file name(s) and description(s):

Bylaws

Name of Document & Description (1)

Board Meeting minutes

Document Upload (1)

+ Select a file GOVERNANCE-BYLAWS-AHAB_Amended November 29, 2016_FINAL.docx

Name of Document & Description (2)

Document Upload (2)

+ Select a file

The accreditation portal will refresh periodically, saving information you have entered. However, to ensure all of your information is saved, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save.

Screenshot 8: Supporting Documentation upload for Guideline 1.10

Additional Supporting Documentation for Standard 1

Do you have additional documentation for Standard 1: Governance?

Yes

No

Standard 1: Additional Document 1 - Name & Description

Standard 1: Additional Document 1 Upload

+ Select a file

Standard 1: Additional Document 2 - Name & Description

Standard 1: Additional Document 2 Upload

+ Select a file

Standard 1: Additional Document 3 - Name & Description

Standard 1: Additional Document 3 Upload

+ Select a file


Screenshot 9: Additional Supporting Documentation Standard 1 (file uploads up to 10)

- 7. To save your work, before completing the narratives in the Standard, delegates should click the **Save Draft** button.
 - a. The portal refreshes and saves the information periodically, but to ensure all information entered is saved, delegate should **Save Draft**

8. The **Save** button that is next to the **Save Draft** should be clicked only when all information is finalized and ready to be reviewed by the Accreditation Coordinator just prior to the final submission. See **Screenshot 7**.
9. The **Save** button for any of the 8 Standards, can be clicked by the assigned Standard Delegate, the Accreditation Coordinator, or the Accreditation Coordinator Delegate.

F. Document Library

1. The documentation submitted as evidence to support your narratives that is relevant to several Standards or Guidelines may be uploaded into the Document Library.
 - a. The Accreditation Coordinator and Accreditation Coordinator Delegate may upload files to the Document Library, which is pre-populated with names of Common Documentation that are ready to accept the uploads. See **Screenshot 10**.
 - i. Documents that demonstrate conformance in more than one guideline should be uploaded to the Document Library.
 - ii. Documents should be referenced with File Name, Description and Location within the document following each guideline.
 - iii. Click the *Select a file* button, to provide access to the documents on your computer. Double click on the desired document to upload.
 - b. The Accreditation Coordinator and Accreditation Coordinator Delegate may upload files to the Document Library, which are unique to your organization, and may be uploaded in the spaces indicating "Upload 1", "Upload 2", etc. See **Screenshots 11 and 12**.
 - c. In some instances, as an alternative to uploading files, you may refer to a document on an external website by typing the URL into the Description field.
2. Delegates can also upload documentation directly related to the Standard they are assigned. See section **E.6.b.** above and **Screenshot 8**.

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[AHAB Portal Homepage](#) > [Test Housing](#) > Document Library Input Draft

[Review Common Documentation here.](#)

Organization

Common Documentation

Articles of Incorporation or Enabling Legislation

By-Laws

Board or Governance Composition

Screenshot 10: Document Library – Common Documentation Fields

Eligibility Determination

Resident Communication

Additional Uploads

Additional Uploads - Check the next available box to upload a new document.

- Upload 1
- Upload 2
- Upload 3
- Upload 4
- Upload 5
- Upload 6
- Upload 7
- Upload 8
- Upload 9
- Upload 10
- Upload 11
- Upload 12
- Upload 13
- Upload 14

Screenshot 11: Additional Upload Checkboxes – open an upload field below to choose a file – see Screenshot 11

Upload 14
 Upload 15
 Upload 16
 Upload 17
 Upload 18
 Upload 19
 Upload 20

Upload 1 - Name & Description

Upload 1

+ Select a file

Upload 2 - Name & Description

Upload 2

+ Select a file

Save Draft Save

Screenshot 12: Document Library – additional upload fields

G. Getting Ready to Finalize the Application

1. After each Delegate has completed the narratives and uploaded supporting documentation, they will finalize the Standard by clicking the **Save** button. This action allows the Standard to be reviewed for final submission as part of the entire application.
2. The Accreditation Coordinator and Executive Delegate review the application to determine if all Standards are ready to submit.
 - a. A last check of all Standards, including all documentation uploaded within each Standard should be performed by the Accreditation Coordinator.
 - b. A last check of all documents in the Document Library should also be performed by the Accreditation Coordinator.
3. Upon determining that the application is ready, the Accreditation Coordinator navigates to the Accreditation Standard 1 submission page, and at the top left of the page, checks the **Yes** box under **Ready to Submit**. See **Screenshot 13**. The Accreditation Coordinator then navigates to the bottom of Accreditation Standard 1 and clicks **Save**. See **Screenshot 14**.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACCREDITATION BOARD

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[AHAB Portal Homepage](#) > [Test Housing](#) > Accreditation Standard 1 Input Draft

Organization

Ready to Submit *
 Yes

Standard 1: Governance (10 Guidelines with 22 Indicators)
 The governing body is responsible for adopting and revising policies and the budget, and for providing organizational oversight with the advice of appropriate legal counsel. Board members represent diverse professional backgrounds enabling them to obtain resources to benefit the organization's mission.

Guideline 1.1: Members of the governing body are appointed in full compliance with its organizational documents.

Indicator 1.1.1 Narrative: The governing body has a process for reviewing and appointing members reflecting the community it serves and complying with its bylaws.

Screenshot 13: Accreditation Standard 1 – Ready to Submit button

Supporting Documentation: Use the checkbox below if you would like to reference or include supporting documentation.

Guideline 1.10 Supporting Documentation

Included in Document Library Section
 Additional Documents

Please list file name(s) and description(s):

Bylaws

The accreditation portal will refresh periodically, saving information you have entered. However, to ensure all of your information is saved, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save Draft.

Screenshot 14: Accreditation Standard 1 – “Save” button after checking “Ready to Submit”

H. Final Submission

1. The Accreditation Coordinator navigates back to the Portal Home Page and clicks the green “Submit” button at the bottom. See **Screenshots 15 and 16**.



Screenshot 15: Accreditation Application Submission Button



Screenshot 16: Accreditation Application Submitted

2. Once the application has been submitted, following the above outlined steps, the Accreditation Coordinator and Executive Director will receive an email confirming submission of your application for accreditation.
3. Once the application is submitted, it is considered final and is no longer available for edits.
4. AHAB will conduct a completeness review of the application. This review is to ensure that the application is ready for the Organization Review Team.
5. AHAB will respond to the applicant, indicating whether the application has been accepted as complete within 5 days.
6. If the application is not complete, the applicant will be contacted by the assigned AHAB Accreditation Specialist concerning what additional or different information is required to complete the application.

7. AHAB will ensure the portal is open for the housing organization to upload additional documentation or narratives if required based on the completeness review.
8. The housing organization will be given a specific timeframe, not to exceed 30 days to respond to the completeness review.
9. If the housing organization does not respond within the given timeframe, the process will proceed with the originally submitted information.
10. If a housing organization requests an extension within the first 30 days, it may request an additional 30 day extension.
11. After one 30 day extension is granted, and the applicant does not meet that deadline, the process will proceed with the originally submitted documentation.
12. AHAB's completeness review does not include the review of the documentation for conformity with the Standards and Guidelines. The Organization Review Team will make the determination as to whether any given guideline is demonstrated, based on the submitted documentation, narratives and the site visit.
13. It is the responsibility of the housing organization to ensure that complete documentation is submitted, that documentation is submitted using acceptable file formats, that documents open right-side up, that documents are in final form (i.e. not draft), that examples are within the scope of AHAB's accreditation authority, and that documents are dated and provide evidence that they are authentic to the housing organization.
14. The housing organization may be asked to resubmit documentation that does not conform to these requirements. This may require additional work for the housing organization and delay the review process.