

OCA Membership Inquiry Guide 2025-2026



ONTARIO CAMPS
ASSOCIATION

What is the Ontario Camps Association?

The Ontario Camps Association (OCA) is a voluntary, non-profit membership organization founded in 1933 that works to make Ontario a premiere destination for camp and outdoor education. **We aren't the government – we're an association of camp professionals committed to maintaining the highest standard of camp!** Keeping the Ontario camp tradition alive is at the heart of everything we do. That's why our Members adhere to more than 600 Health and Safety Standards designed to ensure the safety of campers and staff.

Today, 500+ Member camps and outdoor education centres serving more than 400,000 participants are OCA Accredited! The OCA Accredited Member logo on a camp or outdoor education centre's promotional material tells parents, caregivers, and other stakeholders that your facility continuously meets and exceeds industry safety standards and provides participants with quality camp and outdoor education centre experiences.

You are taking a big step to invest in your facility's future by joining OCA, and we have the resources and support to help you on this journey! Your next step? Read this guide, which contains important information about OCA's resources, membership benefits, and education opportunities.

[Click to learn about our Mission, Vision, and Values](#)

A Message From The OCA President and Executive Director

Welcome to the Ontario Camps Association - a vibrant community of passionate camp and outdoor education professionals who believe in the magic of camp. We are deeply committed to maintaining the highest standards in camping, ensuring that the rich tradition of Ontario camps continues to thrive today and into the future.

At the OCA, we're here to keep the spirit of camp shining all year long! Whether it's through our Standards program, numerous professional development events, or the countless resources we offer, everything we do is designed to support you and the heart and soul of the camp and outdoor ed industry.

This guide contains all the information you need to begin your journey with OCA. From helpful tools to important updates, think of it as your compass for navigating all things OCA. If you haven't already, be sure to bookmark ontariocampsassociation.ca and connect with the OCA on social media!

We can't wait to see what this season brings and we're so glad to be on this journey with you.

Yours in camping,
Jen Dundas, OCA President

Joy Levy, OCA Executive Director



What type of membership is the best fit for me?

The OCA has many membership types to include all of the people who make the camp and outdoor education possible! This Inquiry Guide will help you learn more about each type so you can apply for the membership that is right for you, your organization, or your business!

Provisional 1 Membership - Camps and Outdoor Education Centres

If you are a camp or outdoor education centre (OEC) ready to start your journey to become an OCA Accredited Camp/OEC and gain all the benefits of being an OCA Member check out these pages:

- About OCA's Standards - Page 4
- Provisional One Membership for Camps and Outdoor Education Centres (and Providers) - Page 5

Individual Member

This membership type is for individual camp professionals who are looking to join our professional community, gaining access to OCA's resources, and getting involved as a volunteer - driving change in our industry! Check out these pages:

- Individual Membership - Page 6

You may also be also a Director, member of a board, or hold a senior leadership position at a camp/OEC that isn't an OCA Member (yet!), and wanting time with OCA's resources to begin the process of getting ready for your Accreditation journey. If this is the case, we recommend you review the information for Individual Members AND Provisional 1 Membership.

Preferred Vendor Member

If you are a business that provides a product that camp and outdoor education centres need to know about or a service that can help camps/oecs or any business meet their goals, check out these pages:

- Preferred Vendor Membership - Page 7

Affiliate

Affiliates are organizations that are closely aligned with OCA's core values, and don't offer a paid service looking for a way to engage with a wider audience to support kids and participants of outdoor education.



About OCA's Standards

OCA requires Accredited Members to follow and maintain standards for operational excellence. More than 600 OCA Standards keep Members accountable and operating at a level of excellence. For parents and guardians, it means peace of mind that the facilities they send their children to are safe, accessible, and professionally operated.

We're a community of passionate people from all walks of life with one thing in common: our love for camp and outdoor education. Working together as a community, we make Ontario the very best place for people to go to camp.

The Standards Accreditation Process

The First Visit

Once a Provisional 1 (P1) application has been approved, the camp/OEC will have a Standards Visit in the upcoming summer. Camps will be paired with seasoned camp professionals who will provide support and guide them through the standards process in partnership with the office staff. In the fall, the Standards Accreditation Committee (SAC) will review the answer sheets from the visit and make a recommendation to the Board. Then, the camp/OEC will be informed of the Board's decision as to whether they will advance to P2 or remain at P1 status.

The Second Visit

The next summer, a second visit will take place. If both the first and second visits are successful, the camp/OEC will become accredited for either one or four years and will be informed of their status in the fall.

Unsuccessful Visits

If a Provisional Applicant is unable to become accredited after three summers of visits, the applicant will lose the opportunity to become accredited. However, after a one-year lapse, they may re-apply to restart the process as a Provisional Applicant.

Maintaining Accreditation

Once a camp/OEC becomes accredited, they are revisited either the next year or in four years. The Board will re-accredit the camp/OEC if they meet 100% of the applicable Mandatory Standards and 90% of the applicable Recommended Standards in each section. If a camp/OEC does not meet these requirements, the SAC will conduct a review. Once completed, the committee will make a recommendation to the Board. Camps/OEC's may be required to have an additional revisit ahead of the typical 4-year timeline if a change occurs either operationally or complaints arise against the organization. To view a list of changes that could amount to a re-visit, review the Introduction section of the OCA Standards Book.

Possible Visit Recommendations

- The camp/OEC is accredited for four years.
- The Board requires a letter of response or undertaking from the camp/OEC to comply with the Standards before a four year accreditation is given.
- The Board requires the camp/OEC to be re-visited the following year and requires a letter of response from the camp/OEC to comply with the Standards before a one year accreditation is given.
- The camp/OEC is not accredited and remains a Provisional Applicant.
- The Board may revoke the membership of any camp/OEC if, in their opinion, the camp/OEC does not adhere to the objectives, goals or standards of the OCA.

The Board's decision may be appealed. For more information, see the Introduction section in the OCA Standards.

Ordering Standards Books

Our Standards are available as a PDF on OCA's Website, however, we recommend that all Provisional Members purchase a hard copy of our Standards books to make the Accreditation process easier.

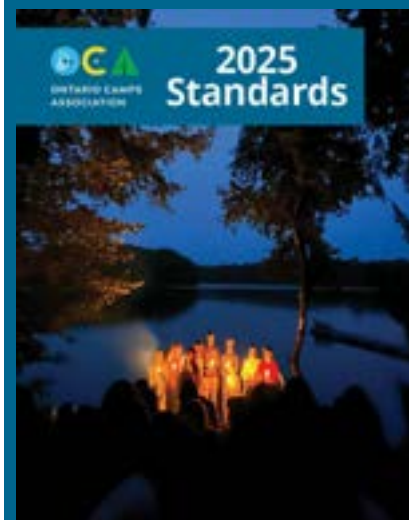
Ordering 2026 Standards Books

2026 Standards Books are available to order on OCA re:Members - [click here](#) to learn how to purchase a Standards Book. The final day to purchase in March 6, 2026.

\$109.99 + HST - Member Rate

\$145.99 + HST - Non-Member Rate

You can access OCA's Standards any time online!



Do you have questions about the Standards Process?

Please reach out to our Standards Accreditation Associate, Stephanie Masson, at stephanie@ontariocamps.ca if you have any questions!

Provisional 1 Membership for Camps and Outdoor Education Centres

OCA Accredited Camps and Outdoor Education Centres (OECs) are special – they represent the highest level of camping in Ontario! Our camps and outdoor education centres' commitment to meeting the highest industry standards means that parents, caregivers, and educators can feel assured that their participants and campers are in safe hands. The OCA Accredited logo signals all they need to know: your staff are committed to delivering safer and enriching programs for their campers/participants.

Joining OCA as a Provisional Member is your path to becoming OCA Accredited! You'll be mentored and supported through our Accreditation process, and gain access to all the membership benefits that make OCA membership a must for camps and outdoor education centres in Ontario!

Membership Benefits

Support

OCA has always been there to support our Members. With our government advocacy, OCA supports our whole industry, most recently, working around the clock to allow camps to re-open during the COVID-19 pandemic and gaining access to testing to keep campers, staff, and our community safer. OCA also supports camps/OECs through mentorship opportunities, support from OCA staff members, and through the efforts of our committees and Board of Directors.

Resources

Our weekly newsletter, the OCA Weekly, is full of resources, professional development events, and support opportunities. We also have a Members Portal on our website which houses our exclusive members-only resources. Collectively, our Board of Directors and wide network of camp industry professionals work with professional consultants including lobbyists, health experts, lawyers, policy advisors, social workers and more to provide OCA Members with up-to-date and accurate resources and support. Take a look in the sidebar (right) to learn about some of our stand-out resources.

Marketing

Once your camp/OEC is Accredited, it will be listed on our website directory, and available as a search result in our Find a Camp/OEC and Camp Rental searches! You'll be able to post jobs on the OCA Job Board. Accreditation also means that your camp/OEC will be allowed use of the OCA logo on your marketing materials including on your website.

Professional Development

OCA holds many professional development events throughout the membership year including our OCA Connects Conference and the Health Conference. OCA Members get discounted rates to attend these events, and also access to other free webinars we host through the years on timely topics.

Networking

The OCA provides many opportunities for camp and outdoor education industry professionals to build connections with their peers at other organizations.

Your Next Steps:

- Become familiar with Membership Benefits and the Accreditation Process here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/join-oca/>
- Start your Provisional One Application here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/application-camps-and-oecs/>
 - Submit Application to Rose Attard, Membership Director, no later than Monday, March 31, 2026.
- Create your OCA re:Members Profile - <https://members.ontariocampsassociation.ca/>
 - Please allow for up to 10 business days for all applications to be reviewed and for confirmation of approval.

Individual Membership

If you are a camp or outdoor education professional who is at a non-OCA Member camp and want to learn more about OCA through participation, or to gain access to all of our membership benefits, Individual membership is for you! You'll be joining our community of camp and outdoor industry professionals, dedicated to advancing our industry to be safer and better for campers, participants and staff. We have **three Individual Membership categories**: General Stakeholder, Camp & Outdoor Education Professional, and College & University Students. Have any questions about which category you fit it? Send an email to rose@ontariocamps.ca.

Membership Benefits

Support

Since 2023, OCA has been working to create a Strategic Plan and update our Bylaws. The OCA has engaged with Sagecomm, a full service strategic consulting and community engagement firm with the Strategic Planning Process. Keep an eye out for the full launch of the OCA Strategic Plan Framework coming soon! OCA has also been working BLG to update our Bylaws to be in line with the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. These updates help advance OCA and the industry as a whole.

Resources

Our weekly newsletter, the OCA Weekly, is full of resources, professional development events, and support opportunities. We also have a Members Portal on our website which houses our exclusive members-only resources. Collectively, our Board of Directors and wide network of camp industry professionals work with professional consultants including lobbyists, health experts, lawyers, policy advisors, social workers and more to provide OCA Members with up-to-date and accurate resources and support. See the sidebar on page 4 to learn about some of our stand-out resources.

Professional Development and Networking

OCA holds many professional development events throughout the membership year including our OCA Connects Conference, the Health Conference, and more! Check out the OCA Events on page 8 for more information.

Next Steps

- Become familiar with Membership Benefits and the Accreditation Process here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/join-oca/>
- Start your application here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/o-ca-member-application/>
 - Please allow for up to 10 business days for all applications to be reviewed and for confirmation of approval.

Affiliate Members

If you are an organization that is closely aligned with OCA's core values, and don't offer a paid service looking for a way to engage with a wider audience to support kids and participants of outdoor education, please contact us directly by emailing rose@ontariocamps.ca.

In the meantime, please become familiar with OCA's Membership Benefits by reading pages 8-9.



Preferred Vendors

OCA Preferred Vendors are vetted businesses that provide goods and services, supporting the camps industry! They offer products and services that are great for families, cottage owners, and other businesses.

How does the application work?

Please read the information on page 7 on how to apply. Please note that we ask for a reference letter to demonstrate that your business aligns with OCA's Mission, Vision and Values. Upon reviewing your references, OCA will inform you if your application has been successful, this process can take up to 4-6 weeks at which point you will be sent your welcome package which includes the Camp Contact Lists and your OCA Preferred Vendor Logo!

Our OCA Connects Conference and Exhibit Show

Our Exhibit Show during the OCA Connects Conference is Canada's Largest Camp Industry Tradeshow! This is a HUGE opportunity to get your products and services in front of hundreds of decision makers from camps, outdoor education centres, and other businesses. OCA Preferred Vendors have first access to registration and priority booth placement (over non-preferred vendors). We also host a Preferred Vendors Committee meeting before the Conference to discuss current industry trends, how to be successful in marketing to camps and outdoor education providers and Exhibit Show tips from the pros to help Preferred Vendors get the most out of their membership!

The Camp Contact Lists

Preferred Vendors are sent and permitted use of the annually updated Camp and Outdoor Education Centre and Preferred Vendor Contact Lists, for the duration of their membership. This resource is your direct line to camp directors and senior staff with purchasing power!

Marketing

All new Preferred Vendors receive a spotlight within our weekly newsletter, the OCA Weekly. In the spring, all our Preferred Vendors receive a spotlight in our Sunday Standard, which is our newsletter about our OCA Standards.

Membership Benefits

Make sure to read the OCA Membership Benefits on pages 8-9 to learn more about the membership benefits for Preferred Vendors!

Next Steps

- Become familiar with Membership Benefits and the Accreditation Process here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/join-oca/>
- Start your application here - <https://ontariocampsassociation.ca/oca-member-application/>
 - Please allow for up to 10 business days for all applications to be reviewed and for confirmation of approval.



Membership Benefits At-a-Glance

Being an OCA Member comes with benefits! Reference the chart below to learn about our benefits at a glance, and then continue to the next pages to learn more about our logos and the support OCA offers.

Educational Research

All Members receive this benefit

The Educational Research Committee works towards the advancement and assistance in the pursuit of camp-related research.

Marketing: Contact Lists

Members who receive this benefit: Preferred Vendors

Preferred Vendors will receive contact lists for all Accredited Camps/OECs for Marketing. Please make sure you are following Canada's anti-spam legislation (CASL) when sending emails to our Accredited Camps/OECs.

Marketing: Member Communications and Resources

All Members receive this benefit

Members have access to our exclusive Weekly newsletter, which includes information on OCA events, industry resources and news. OCA also sends email updates including The Sunday Standard, Conference Chronicles and event reminders throughout the year. Members also have access to our exclusive OCA Slack Channel.

Marketing: Sponsorship

All Members receive this benefit

Members have first access to Sponsorship opportunities for the OCA Connects Conferences. Opportunities include many marketing benefits to highlight your organization. Professional Development opportunities may be available throughout the year, pending availability.

Members Portal Access

All Members receive this benefit

Members have access to the OCA Members Portal which features OCA resources including items such as OCA Operations Resources and Support Programs, past conference materials, and past OCA communications (Weekly & Sunday Standard).

NEW - OCA Boardroom Rental

All Members receive this benefit

The OCA Boardroom is available for bookings by members who need a quiet, professional place to meet, plan, or collaborate. Each OCA Member has access to four bookings per membership calendar year.

Professional Development and Networking Events

All Members receive this benefit

Members can participate in many member-only professional development opportunities. Members also have access to special savings during public events like our OCA Connects Conference and Health Conference. NEW this year, there is a calendar on the OCA website that lists all upcoming events in one convenient spot.

Savings

All Members receive this benefit

Members who renew their yearly membership within the specific timeframe will receive a discount on professional development throughout the membership year. Members can also access membership-level pricing at the OCA Connects Conference and Health Conference.

**continue on the next page*

Membership Benefits At-a-Glance

Continued from page 6...

Lobbying & Government Relations

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Provisional Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, Affiliates, Individuals

Our Government Relations Committee represent the membership by lobbying and advocating for the best interests of the camp and outdoor industry.

Mentoring

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Provisional Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, Affiliates

The OCA will connect members with committees and individuals with knowledge and specific expertise in the field of your interest.

Voting

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Honorary Life Members, Individuals

Members will have the opportunity to vote on several areas of the association, including Board of Directors elections, Standards additions and edits, bylaw updates and motions at the Annual General Meeting. Vote weight varies based on membership.

Marketing: OCA Job Board

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, NEW Affiliates

Members will have the ability to create job postings specific to the camp and outdoor industry. Please provide the OCA Team 72 hours to approve and post listings.

Marketing: OCA Website Listing

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, Affiliates

Members will have a profile on the OCA website that can be edited and modified at their convenience. Listings can be located through the website directory and "Find a Camp/OCA" search options.

Marketing: Social Media

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, Affiliates

New members (Accredited, Preferred Vendors, and Affiliates) will receive recognition on OCA Social Media Platforms. Existing members will receive promotions throughout the year subject to timing and availability.

OCA Logos & Signage

Members who receive this benefit: Accredited Camps/OECs, Preferred Vendors, Affiliates

OCA Members receive digital logos for marketing materials such as your website, email signatures, etc. Physical signage is available to be posted at your operations.

Marketing: Preferred Vendor Spotlight

Members who receive this benefit: Preferred Vendors

Preferred Vendors are grouped based on their category and each category is spotlighted once through OCA communications during a membership calendar year.

Request for Proposal

Members who receive this benefit: Preferred Vendors

The ability to submit a request for proposal for different OCA special projects. Past projects included swag & promotional goods and the OCA Strategic Plan.

OCA Logo Use

We've created this handy guide to make it easier than ever to know if your business/organization has permission to use the OCA Logo. If you have questions about using the OCA Logo, please reach out to Lea Randall, Marketing & Events Associate, at lea@ontariocamps.ca. All Accredited Members, Affiliate Members and Preferred Vendors also receive a physical sign so they can proudly display their OCA membership! Once you have become a members, please reach out to Lea Randall to learn more about picking up your sign.



The OCA Accredited Member logo identifies to families, staff, and campers/participants that a camp/OEC meets the highest standards — only Accredited Camps and OECs (who have completed their two-year accreditation process, followed by Standards Visits every four years) are permitted to use the OCA Accredited Member logo.



Affiliates are provided the OCA Affiliate Member logo to use on their marketing materials. These organization are aligned with OCA's Mission, Vision and Values but do not operate camp or summer programs.



Preferred Vendors are provided the OCA Preferred Vendor logo to use on their marketing materials. This logo is only for use for current OCA Preferred Vendors in good standing.

Are you a Provisional Camp or OEC?

We are so happy to have you with us! Thank you for starting your OCA journey and working hard to make your program(s) safer for your campers and participants! As you read through these OCA membership benefits, please note - those who are working towards accreditation have **most** of the same benefits as Accredited Members.

As you know, the OCA Accreditation journey takes time, commitment, and dedication to meet the highest standard of camping in Ontario! The OCA Accredited Member logo visually represents the continued commitment to upholding OCA's 600+ Standards and belief in OCA's Mission, Vision, and Values. As such, **Provisional Members are NOT permitted to use OCA's Accredited Member logo and are not listed on OCA's website or social media channels. They also do not have use of OCA's Job Board.**

Once you are an Accredited Camp/OEC, the OCA team will send you all the information you need so you can start enjoying your newly acquired membership benefits! Until then, when asked, feel free to share that you are working towards your OCA Accreditation!

OCA Support and Resources

The OCA is here to support our Members. Collectively, our Board of Directors and our wide network of camp industry professionals work with professional consultants including lobbyists, health experts, lawyers, policy advisors, social workers and more to provide OCA Members with up-to-date and accurate resources and support. Here is a handy list of resources to bookmark for future use:

OCA Standards: ontariocampsassociation.ca/about/standards/

- You can access OCA's Standards any time online!

OCA's Website: ontariocamps.ca

- Our site is a one-stop shop for members of the public to learn about all that OCA has to offer!

OCA's Members Portal: ontariocamps.ca/members/home

- Some stand-out resources in the Member's Portal include the OCA Risk, Emergency and Crisis Resource Guide (2023), the Director's Resource E-Book, OCA Committees Blogs, the Communicable and Infectious Disease Best Practices and more!

OCA's Job Board: ontariocampsassociation.ca/job-postings/

- Posting on the OCA Job Board is open to all Accredited Camps, OECs, Preferred Vendors and NEW Affiliates. Please give the OCA team 72 hours (excluding holidays) to publish the post.

Slack:

- [Click here to read the OCA Slack Community Standards.](#)

OCA Events

The **OCA Connects 2026 Conference** will be at the Hilton Markham Suites Conference Centre from February 4-5, 2026. With numerous professional development workshops, the OCA Banquet, our OCA Exhibit Hall and networking opportunities, you don't want to miss our two-day conference!

- **Mark your calendars!** Regular pricing will begin Friday, November 14. Registration will close Friday, January 16.
- To stay up-to-date on updates regarding the OCA Connects 2026 Conference, make sure to visit [our website](#) and follow us on social media!

The **OCA Health Conference** is excited to be celebrating its 40th anniversary this year! We are excited to be returning to Trafalgar Castle School in Whitby, ON on Sunday, April 19, 2026.

- Stay tuned for more information in the spring!

Our Annual Report 2023-2024



OCA's Support Programs: Camp Property Matchmaking

The Camp Matchmaking Program is a mechanism to support OCA Members. Our intention is to connect "purchasers" in need of property to run their camp/OEC (to purchase or rent), and "sellers" looking for rental income or who are thinking of selling their property. OCA is the mechanism to connect. After that, it's up to the camps/OECs to discuss details, negotiate the terms of the contract, etc. Please reach out to Rose Attard, Membership Director at rose@ontariocamps.ca to start the process or with any questions.

OCA's Social Media

Click on the icons above to head to our social media channels and follow us today!

