

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SITE VISIT PROCESS AND TRAINING

Background: At its August 2020 meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) considered ongoing operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on site visits. The Commission also directed the appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee to study virtual site visits, including development of policies and procedures for the conduct of virtual visits, for consideration by the Commission in Winter 2021. The Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Site Visit Methods met from Fall 2021 through Summer 2023 related to alternative site visit methods required in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Summer 2023, the Ad Hoc Committee noted that a change to CODA's current site visit process was not warranted. However, the Committee believed CODA should continue to monitor the Department of Education's regulations related to site visit processes permitted for use by recognized accrediting agencies. The Committee also believed the ongoing review of CODA's site visit process, including feedback from programs and site visitors through CODA's Post Site Visit Survey and the ongoing training of site visitors, aligns with CODA's strategic plan for continuous quality improvement of the Commission. While no changes were warranted to the site visit process at that time, the Ad Hoc Committee believed that the Commission should transition the Ad Hoc Committee to the "Standing Committee on Site Visit Process and Training." At its Summer 2023 meeting, the Commission concurred with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee and directed formation of the Standing Committee on Site Visit Process and Training, with the following Charge.

Standing Committee on Site Visit Process and Training:

- Monitor trends and USDE regulations related to CODA's site visit process;
- Evaluate site visit feedback from site visitors and programs;
- Review and develop protocols and materials to enhance the site visit process;
- Oversee and provide input on training for new and reappointed site visitors;
- Oversee and provide input on training for programs preparing for site visits; and
- Oversee and provide input to educate new program directors on working with the Commission.

Report of the Standing Committee on Site Visit Process and Training: The Standing Committee on Site Visit Process and Training met via a virtual meeting on July 15, 2025. **Committee Members:** Dr. Frank Licari (chair), Ms. Margaret Bowman-Pensel, Dr. Theresa Gonzales, Dr. Paul Luepke, Dr. Monica Nenad, and Dr. Miriam Robbins were in attendance. Dr. Ngoc Chu and Dr. Deborah Weisfuse were unable to attend the meeting. **Commissioners:** Dr. Frank Licari, committee chair, and chair, and Dr. Cataldo Leone, vice chair, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), *ex officio*, were in attendance. **Commission Staff:** Dr. Sherin Took, senior director, Ms. Peggy Soeldner, senior manager, and Ms. Jamie Asher Hernandez, Ms. Jessica Lynk, Mr. Shawn Morrison, Dr. Yesenia Ruiz, Ms. Kelly Stapleton and Ms. Taylor Weast, managers, CODA were in attendance.

The Standing Committee began its discussion with a review of its Charge.

Review of Training Provided and Enhancements (2025): The Committee discussed the training programs and process enhancements completed in the first half of 2025 as well as potential future training programs and process enhancements (**Appendix 1**). The Standing Committee noted that virtual training options continue to be a popular modality for CODA's site visitors and educational programs. The Standing Committee also discussed the results of the 2025 New Site Visitor Training Survey (**Appendix 2, Commission only**), noting that the feedback was extremely positive, and the virtual training format was preferred. Using case scenarios, which was new to this year's training, was especially favored. The data showed that 50% of the attendees survey prefer live webinar training and 30% preferred on-demand webinar training, while only 16% of attendees would prefer in-person training.

The Committee noted that, for future training, it would be helpful to differentiate between new and returning site visitors and suggested the future surveys include an identifier to distinguish returning site visitor feedback from new site visitors.

Future Training and Enhancements: The Committee reviewed the Microlearning outlines for How to Bookmark PDFs (**Appendix 3, Commission only**) and How to Complete a Self-Study Guide (**Appendix 4, Commission only**) and noted there appears to be a need for these types of training videos. Following discussion, the Committee recommended moving forward with the design and production of Micro Learnings. The Committee also recommended surveying program directors and site visitors to learn the training needs of both audiences to develop a list of micro learning topics of interest and produce items on a regular basis.

Site Visit Feedback: The Standing Committee reviewed the CODA Post Site Visit Survey of Program Personnel (**Appendix 5, Commission only**) and CODA Post Site Visit Survey of Site Visitors (**Appendix 6, Commission only**). Following review of the surveys, the Standing Committee believes no changes are warranted at this time. [REDACTED]

Electronic Accreditation System: Through a verbal update, the Standing Committee learned that progress is being made on the electronic accreditation tool. Build out of the tool continues, and CODA staff have begun training and testing data in the production environment. Future plans include beta testing with site visitors and educational programs, hopefully beginning in late 2025.

Learning Management System: The Standing Committee was updated on the progress toward selection and implementation of a new Learning Management System (LMS) for CODA. The Standing Committee learned that after researching potential tools, it has been determined that the Learning Management System used by the American Dental Association (ADA), could meet the needs of CODA for posting, assigning, and tracking the learning of CODA site visitors and provide a method by which CODA can circulate training videos to program directors. The Committee suggested exploring the other learning management platforms as a potential solution should the ADA tool not meet CODA's needs.

Summary: Following consideration and discussion of the meeting material, the Standing Committee believed that the Commission should continue to work toward developing and implementing the training programs outlined in the future training programs and process enhancements (**Appendix 1**), and as discussed in the meeting (noted above). Additionally, the Standing Committee recommended that CODA staff finalize and publish the micro learnings (**Appendix 3 and 4, Commission Only**) and develop and distribute a survey to learn from site visitors and program directors what additional micro learning topics are of interest.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct staff to complete the design and production of the micro learnings (**Appendix 3 and 4, Commission Only**), for consideration by the Standing Committee and Commission in Winter 2026.

It is further recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct staff to survey CODA site visitors and program directors to gather information on the training needs of both audiences to develop a list of future micro learning topics, with a report to the Standing Committee and Commission in Winter 2026.

Training Provided and Enhancements to Process (January - July 2025)

Training/Information for Programs:

- Program Director 101
 - March 8, 2025 (at ADEA meeting) – about 20 people
 - March 20, 2025 (virtual) – 260 people
 - Materials posted to CODA website for on-demand access:
<https://coda.ada.org/site-visitor-resources>
- Q&A Session
 - March 9, 2025 (at ADEA meeting) – about 120 people
 - March 21, 2025 (virtual) – 193 people
 - Materials posted to CODA website for on-demand access:
<https://coda.ada.org/site-visitor-resources>
- Site Visit Orientation – April 1, 2025 (virtual)
 - Predoctoral – 31 people
 - Advanced – 113 people
 - Allied – 155 people
 - Materials posted to CODA website for on-demand access:
 - <https://coda.ada.org/site-visits/coda-dds-dmd-site-visits>
 - <https://coda.ada.org/site-visits/advanced-dental-site-visits>
 - <https://coda.ada.org/site-visits/allied-dental-site-visits>
- Allied Dental Program Directors CODA Update- June 10, 2025
(at ADEA Allied Director's Meeting) – 200 people

Training/Information for Site Visitors:

- Site Visitor Update – April 2 & 4, 2025 (virtual)
 - Predoctoral – 39 people
 - Advanced – 71 people
 - Allied – 82 people
 - Materials posted to CODA website for on-demand access:
<https://coda.ada.org/site-visitor-resources>
- Chair Training
 - Advanced –
 - Allied – February 12, 2025

- Predoctoral Chair Training – March 28, 2025; June 17, 2025
- Site Visitor Training (New Site Visitors, Returning Site Visitors, and Invited Review Committee and Commission Members)
 - June 12-13, 2025 - over 300 people

Enhancements to Site Visit Process (Protocols and Materials):

- Reviewed and Updated Site Visit Letters to Programs
 - Letter 2, 3, IA Developing – Allied and Advanced
 - Letter 3 – Predoctoral
 - Special Focused Site Visit and PACV Letters
 - Updated and enhanced email templates for site visit mailings
- Updated/Enhanced Educational Activity Site Form
 - To align with data reported in site visit report.

Enhancements to Guidelines and Documents Programs (Protocols and Materials):

- Revised all CODA Standards and documents, with web postings, following the CODA Winter 2025 meeting
 - Revised all CODA Standards and documents with updated ADA address in March 2025
 - Revised Website to include Resource tab and added two new webpages, one for site visitor resources and one for program resources
 - Revised Advanced Program guidelines to align across all disciplines
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**Future Training and Enhancements to Process
(To be conducted and/or developed; Blue could be priority)**

Training/Information for Programs:

- Program Director 101
 - Spring 2026
- Q&A Session – Spring 2026
- Site Visit Orientation – Spring 2026
 - Predoctoral

- Advanced
 - Allied
- Create Micro-Videos on Reporting Changes, Electronic Document Submission Process, and Other Topics

Training/Information for Site Visitors:

- Site Visitor Update – Spring 2026
 - Predoctoral
 - Advanced
 - Allied
- Chair Training
 - Predoctoral – Spring 2026
 - Advanced – 2026
 - Allied – 2026
- Site Visitor Training (New Site Visitors, Returning Site Visitors, and Invited Review Committee and Commission Members) – June 2026
- Create Post-Training Survey for Each Session
- How to Review a Program Application for Accreditation

Enhancements to Site Visit Process (Protocols and Materials):

- Continue to Review Site Visit Letters and attachments to clarify, streamline and enhance pre-site visit communications.
- Develop Site Visitor Manual, with sections for Predoctoral, Advanced and Allied.

Enhancements to Guidelines and Documents Programs (Protocols and Materials):

- Develop Process Charts for Programs to Report Changes (See most recent PD 101)
- Modify Guidelines to Create Working Table Format for Submission
- Review Self-Study Guides and Site Visit Schedules; increase length of IA visit (predoc)