

Mecklenburg County Council

COPE & Climbing

NCAP Standards

Updated: January 22nd, 2021

Contents

Overview	1
PD-107 Outdoor Ethics.....	2
PD-110 Program Accessibility for Persons with Special Needs.....	3
PD-111 New Programs and Activities	4
PD-112 Council Program Design, Safety, and Risk Review	5
PS-206 COPE and/or Climbing Programs	6
RP-256 The CHECK Program.....	8
SQ-409 COPE and/or Climbing Staff.....	9
RP-463 COPE and/or Climbing Program Support.....	10
HS-501 Youth Protection	11
HS-504 Medical Screening and Follow-Up.....	12
HS-510 First Aid Kits	13
FA-701 Camp Facility Evaluation and PostCamp/PreCamp Inspection	14
FA-715 COPE and Climbing Facilities	15
AO-805 Emergency Procedures	16
AO-807 Communication Systems	17

Overview

This document contains the details on how our council COPE & Climbing program meets the NCAP standards. All of the included standards apply to both camps Belk and MSR unless indicated otherwise.

When reading this document, please refer to the indicated section of the NCAP standards for a full explanation of the standard. Look for the COPE & Climbing callout:

[National Camp Accreditation Program](#)



PD-107 Outdoor Ethics

Updated: Nov 9th 2015

- A. Stay on marked trails when walking between elements.
- B. Do not harass, capture, molest or harm wildlife in any way.
- C. Follow Leave No Trace front country guidelines. We also include LNT as a portion of our instructor training and our climbing merit badge courses.
- D. Follow Tread Lightly guidelines by parking and driving on designated areas as indicated by the camp ranger.
 - a. At Belk Scout Camp only one vehicle is allowed to be parked at the tower shelter.
 - b. Drive along the back side of the field at the far end of the zip lines between the zip lines and the trees approaching the tower shelter between the zip lines and the BMX track.
 - c. Park along tree line or behind the storage building.

PD-110 Program Accessibility for Persons with Special Needs

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

Persons with special needs will be accommodated on an as needed basis after taking their needs into account and discussing them with the person and camp director & ranger if needed. Final consideration is at the discretion of the COPE/Climbing Director.

PD-111 New Programs and Activities

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

Prior to a new program or element being introduced it must be reviewed and approved by the COPE & Climbing committee. It must be reviewed for staff training requirements and hazard analysis. Once approved it will be documented appropriately and communicated to all council COPE & Climbing instructors. All new program documentation is available to committee members on the program website.

PD-112 Council Program Design, Safety, and Risk Review

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

The COPE & Climbing committee will periodically review the program offered as determined by the committee chair. This review may take place at camp if necessary to view the element or the program area in question. The program will be documented in the COPE & Climbing Committee Policies and Procedures document and made available to all interested parties including but not limited to COPE & Climbing instructors, camp rangers, camp directors and the council officer. All policy and procedure documents are made available on the program website in PDF file format for easy viewing.

PS-206 COPE and/or Climbing Programs

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

- A.1. The COPE & Climbing committee reviews our equipment inventory at each camp and evaluates program needs. An inventory of all equipment is kept at each camp and updated each year or as new equipment is purchased and put into service.

Staff may use personal harnesses and helmets after inspection by a COPE or Climbing Level II instructor or director.

When outside groups use the COPE or climbing areas at either camp we supply the staff and equipment for a fee. The fee is set and collected by the council office. Waivers and insurance documents are filed with the camp ranger.

- A.2. Both towers have fall zones marked with railroad ties and gravel pits. Anyone inside the fall zone must wear a helmet.
- A.3. Rope logs are kept for all in service ropes. The logs are stored in a separate well marked binder.
- A.4. Inspection logs are used before all course events. The logs are stored in a separate well marked binder.
- A.5. An opening inspection checklist is used to open the tower each program day.
- A.6. Both camps have a secure, locked equipment closet. Ropes, hardware and harnesses are hung on pegs on the wall and helmets are stacked neatly on shelves.
- B. The climbing faces of the towers at Belk Scout Camp and MSR are age-appropriate for scouts of all ages, including all Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venture Scouts.
- C.1. An opening inspection checklist is used to open the tower each program day.

Each set of participants is instructed in our safety guidelines, including but not limited to the following:

- Listen to the instructors
- Shirts tucked in & shoes tied – no open toed shoes such as sandals, crocs or Keens.
- Remove loose clothing or items on the belt, in pockets or on their head
- Tie back long hair
- Stay hydrated

Operating procedure documentation is available for all COPE & Climbing elements. This documentation is reviewed regularly by the program committee. All documentation is posted to the program website in PDF file format for easy viewing. Operating procedures are included as appropriate for each camp.

- C.2. All instructors & staff are trained in Challenge by Choice. No participant is coerced or forced to attempt an activity but may be encouraged to “climb one rock higher.”

- C.3. All instructors and staff are trained in proper spotting and belaying commands & techniques. Participants are trained in these commands & techniques as the activity requires it.
- C.5. All instructors and staff are trained in Weather Hazards. A camp radio is used to help monitor weather conditions.
- C.9. The CHECK system is used by all instructors and staff and explained to participants before beginning any COPE/Climbing activity.
- C.10. See standard AO-805 for safety and emergency plans.
- C.12. A rescue bag is available at both camps and the contents as well as procedures for their use are reviewed by the COPE & Climbing committee.

RP-256 The CHECK Program

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

CHECK posters are posted and visible around the tower at both Belk and MSR.

Instructors have the CHECK hangtag for easy review. Instructors are trained to use CHECK for all belayed activities.

Many of our helmets have the CHECK sticker clearly visible. We verified with Petzl that this was allowed on our program helmets.

SQ-409 COPE and/or Climbing Staff

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

Our council COPE & Climbing program uses committee approved lesson plans for training new level I and II instructors. A sample set of documents are included. This includes a course flyer and schedule. These files are updated for each course and are archived electronically for easy referral by committee members and the instructors conducting the training.

Our training courses are offered by multiple Level II and Director level instructors using the approved lesson plan. Level II courses are overseen by a COPE & Climbing Program Manager and have been properly evaluated by a Trained Program Evaluator.

Any Director level instructor may reassess/reevaluate a level I instructor in conjunction with a second Director or Level II instructor (COPE or Climbing as appropriate) and issue a new training card.

We have an “onboarding” process for all new instructors (separate document) that includes details such as adding the instructor to our communication list, granting access to program policies and procedures.

We maintain instructor timesheets at both camps to track how often instructors work an event. We want to gauge their level of involvement with the program to guide our Directors for reassessing level I instructors.

Training Records

The committee maintains a MS Excel file listing all trained instructors in the council. The file states the training level, training date and training expiration date for all instructors. The Excel file is kept on a shared Dropbox file accessible to at least two members of the committee. The file in PDF form is posted to the program website and all instructors are taught where to find the file online. This file serves as the master training record for all instructors in the council. It is reviewed monthly by a member of the committee and is updated upon this review or whenever a new training course is completed.

A condensed version of this master file is shared with the camp ranger at both of our camps. The camp rangers are instructed that the version of this file is the master list of who is allowed to open the COPE & Climbing facilities at either camp (i.e. who is allowed to get the keys). The camp ranger (or camp master) should verify the identity of the individual when asked for the facility keys. A sample of this file is included.

All instructors keep their current training card and are instructed to bring a copy of the card with them to camp whenever they are staffing an event.

RP-463 COPE and/or Climbing Program Support

Updated: January 22nd, 2021

Our council operates a year-round COPE & Climbing committee.

The committee is composed of up to 9 trained instructors composed of Program Trainers, Directors and council trained Level II or I instructors. Committee members serve a three-year term. We also have one member of the council professional staff on the committee.

The committee chair is a NCS trained COPE & Climbing Program Trainer or Director.

The current committee chair is Rob Seate. NCS training:

- Climbing Director – 2015 Camp Bert Adams, Covington, GA
- COPE Director – 2016 Camp Mountaineer, Farimont, WV
- COPE & Climbing Program Trainer – 2020 Mecklenburg Scout Reservation, Nebo, NC

HS-501 Youth Protection

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

All COPE & Climbing instructors and staff are BSA Youth Protection trained.

A copy of the *BSA Guide to Safe Scouting* is available in the camp director's office.

A copy of the *Age Appropriate Guidelines* is available in the program storage closet.

HS-504 Medical Screening and Follow-Up

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

A qualified adult as determined by the camp director or health officer will review participant medical information and report concerns to the COPE and/or Climbing instructor as needed.

HS-510 First Aid Kits

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

First aids kits are provided by the camp staff to the COPE & Climbing equipment closet. It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure that the first aid kit is easily accessible and placed in an appropriate location.

FA-701 Camp Facility Evaluation and PostCamp/PreCamp Inspection

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

Refer to standard FA-715 for verification.

FA-715 COPE and Climbing Facilities

Updated: May 3rd, 2018

- A. Controlled access at each camp/facility:
 - a. At MSR all low COPE elements are located out of direct sight in the woods. At all elements a warning sign is posted.
 - b. At MSR the tower's climbing face is secured by swinging double doors that can be locked in place restricting access to the lowest 12' of the face.
 - c. At Belk Scout Camp each climbing face has removable holds up to 12' high. They are installed and removed daily for program operation.
- B. Before each use, COPE & Climbing instructors conduct a site inspection and complete an inspection report sheet. (See separate binder for inspection logs.)

The Council COPE & Climbing committee completes an annual inspection and creates a maintenance need and improvements checklist. (See included pages.) The COPE & Climbing committee reviews facility needs at each committee meeting. A sample committee meeting agenda is included. The checklist is shared with the council Outdoor Program and Camping Committee for their regular review.

- C. Annual inspection is conducted by an ACCT approved vendor. Copies of the inspection report are included with this standard and are available at the council office.

AO-805 Emergency Procedures

Updated: June 2nd, 2015

The COPE & Climbing committee maintains written emergency procedures and reviews them as needed for updates as determined by the committee chair.

Separate procedures are maintained for each camp and documented in individual files. Each should be included with these standards.

AO-807 Communication Systems

Updated: May 1st, 2018

At least one instructor should have a camp provided radio when at the tower or COPE course.

We will use cell phones as backups to the radio.

If either option above is unavailable, runners will be sent to the camp office.