

## A Beginner's Guide to AASHTO Accreditation

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I get asked a lot of questions about all of our programs. Some of the most commonly asked questions are regarding the [AASHTO Accreditation Program \(AAP\)](#). This is understandable, as it can seem like a daunting task for a new laboratory to get the accreditation process started.

### Where to Start?

For a laboratory that is new to our program, the very first step is to [Request Registration](#) on our website. By registering your laboratory, you will have full access to all of our on-line features and documents.

Once registered you may [Request Services](#), including a request for AASHTO accreditation. Since AASHTO accreditation applies to specific laboratory locations and does not have umbrella coverage from the parent entity, each location will need to be registered on our site and must follow the same processes for obtaining accreditation.



### What are the Program Participation Prerequisites?

To become AASHTO accredited, your laboratory will need to participate in both the Laboratory Assessment Program ([LAP](#)) and the Proficiency Sample Program ([PSP](#)). There are individual fees associated with both of these programs. If you wish to be AASHTO accredited based on your involvement in the Cement and Concrete Reference Laboratory's ([CCRL](#)) Laboratory Inspection Program and Proficiency Sample Program, there are also individual fees associated with those. Please contact CCRL directly for more information regarding their programs.

### How does my laboratory obtain AASHTO accreditation?

- Ensure that your laboratory's quality management system meets (QMS) the requirements of the [AASHTO Accreditation Procedures Manual](#), [AASHTO R 18](#), and any other ASTM quality system specifications that you may need to comply with such as C1077, D3666, D3740, and E329.
- Schedule an [on-site assessment](#) with AASHTO re:source for asphalt binder, emulsified asphalt, hot mix asphalt, aggregate, soil, sprayed fire-resistive materials, or metals testing accreditation. For concrete, cement, masonry, or rebar testing accreditation, please contact [CCRL](#) for the on-site assessment. For more information regarding AASHTO re:source assessments, you may wish to reference a previous newsletter article "[Seven Steps for a "Perfect" On-Site Assessment.](#)"
- Pay the application fee. This invoice will be issued after you have requested AASHTO accreditation.
- Enroll in the appropriate AASHTO re:source or CCRL proficiency sample programs. Enrollment in AASHTO re:source-supplied samples will be done automatically once we receive your request for accreditation. Please contact [CCRL](#) for enrollment in their program.
- Complete your [Initial Accreditation Form](#). The documentation provides us with your organizational structure, along with other basic laboratory and personnel information.
- Resolve the nonconformities noted in your on-site assessment within 60 days of the issuance of the report. Please log in to our website and click "View My Accreditation Events" to submit responses.

### How does my laboratory maintain AASHTO accreditation?

Congratulations! Your laboratory is AASHTO accredited...now what? Unlike other accreditation or certification programs, AASHTO accreditation does not expire as long as your laboratory actively and effectively participates. AASHTO accreditation is a continuous process of laboratory quality improvement. Accreditation remains active as long as your laboratory is effectively participating in the programs and continues to comply with the AASHTO Accreditation Program Procedures Manual requirements. If your laboratory ceases to comply with the requirements, accreditation will be suspended and will ultimately be revoked unless your laboratory can demonstrate compliance by the deadline specified in your suspension notice.

Maintaining AASHTO accreditation is similar to obtaining it. You will want to make sure you do the following:

- Undergo an Annual Review. Once accredited, your laboratory will undergo an Annual Review. At this time you will be required to complete your Annual Review form and submit required documentation associated with the review.
- Participate in the current assessment tour and every tour thereafter. A "tour" is one full sweep across the country by laboratory assessment staff. A new tour occurs about every 24 months for AASHTO re:source and 30 months for CCRL. An email announcement will be sent prior to when AASHTO re:source is scheduled to be assessing in your area. Check out the current AASHTO re:source [assessment schedule](#).
- Resolve the nonconformities noted in your on-site assessment within 90 days of the issuance of the final report.
- Test proficiency samples. Throughout the year, AASHTO re:source and CCRL will send you material for samples you are enrolled in. Accredited laboratories must perform all offered test methods within the scope of their accreditation (i.e. every accredited test). Once testing is complete, you will need to enter your data on-line for analysis. Your laboratory will be issued ratings based on the data entered. If your laboratory received low ratings, further action may be needed.

### More Questions?

If you have more questions regarding the AASHTO re:source programs, please reference the FAQ pages on our site, call our offices at 240-436-4900, or email [info@ashtoresource.org](mailto:info@ashtoresource.org).

[AAP FAQs](#)

[LAP FAQs](#)

[PSP FAQs](#)

*Editor's Note: This article was updated in June 2016 to ensure the most up-to-date information is presented.*

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The Road to  
AASHTO  
Accreditation

Resolve the  
Nonconformities  
From Your On-Site  
Assessment Report



Receive Your On-  
Site Assessment



Submit Initial  
Accreditation  
Review Form and  
Supporting  
Documentation



Enroll in the Proficiency  
Sample Program



Schedule an On-  
Site Assessment  
and Request  
Accreditation



Start Here:  
Register Your  
Laboratory

Make Sure Your  
QMS Meets the  
Specification You  
Need to Comply  
With



Pack your bags - You are heading  
down the road to AASHTO  
Accreditation! It can seem like a  
daunting task for a new laboratory to  
get the accreditation process started,  
but don't worry. We will help you  
navigate around any bumps in the  
road towards attaining accreditation.

You will want to start by  
registering your laboratory at  
[AASHTOresource.org](http://AASHTOresource.org). Registering on our  
site will give you access to all the  
tools you need to work your way  
towards AASHTO Accreditation.  
From there, you can steer through  
the on-site assessment and  
sample testing program.



## How Does My Laboratory Obtain AASHTO Accreditation?



Ensure that your laboratory's quality management system meets the requirements of the AASHTO Accreditation Procedures Manual, AASHTO R 18, and any other ASTM quality system specifications that you may need to comply with such as C1077, D3666, D3740, and E329.



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Enroll in the appropriate AASHTO re:source or CCRL proficiency samples. AASHTO re:source will automatically enroll you in our samples once we receive your request for accreditation. Please contact CCRL to enroll in their program.



Submit your Initial Accreditation Form and documentation to [aap@ashtoresource.org](mailto:aap@ashtoresource.org). This information provides us with your organizational structure and other basic laboratory personnel information.



Resolve the nonconformities noted in your on-site assessment within 60 days of the issuance of the report. Please log in to our website and click "View My Accreditation Events" to submit responses.