



SARA Quick Start Guide

FIELD TRIPS (Scope of SARA)

Does the scope of SARA include class field trips?

What does the *SARA Policy Manual* Say?

Section 5.3 Field trips and seasonal residential activity

SARA covers class field trips that do not involve multi-night residency across state lines among member states.

Section 5.10 Physical Presence

Generally, an institution has physical presence when it operates a campus, branch instructional facility whether leased or owned, or administrative office within the boundaries of a state. However, because the specific definitions of physical presence currently vary greatly from state to state, especially with regard to out-of-state institutions that seek to conduct any activity within another state, SARA has established its own uniform standards for physical presence vs. distance education. For purposes of participation in SARA, these standards apply, but they do not affect the application of existing state laws to institutions that choose to operate outside of SARA or which are based in states that are not SARA members.

b. An institution does not have physical presence, and is therefore covered by SARA in SARA member states, if it is:

10. Engaging in field trips to visit existing sites or facilities for academic purposes not involving the establishment of residential or instructional facilities.

What is the rationale?

SARA applies solely to postsecondary distance education activity conducted across state lines. Since field trips may occur across state lines, SARA policy clarifies the characteristics of interstate activity that SARA covers. As long as field trips do not involve multi-night residence across state lines among member states, the scope of SARA includes the activity.

What does my institution need to do?

- Communicate with the colleges, departments, and/or faculty at your institution that offer field trips and make them aware of the SARA policy related to field trips.
- Seek to monitor field trip locations and durations as applicable for your institution.
- Contact your state's [SARA State Portal Entity](#) for specific guidance or directions regarding this requirement.

About SARA Quick Starts: When institutions participate in SARA, they agree to a set of compliance requirements as detailed in the [SARA Policy Manual](#). SARA Quick Starts are intended to help institution personnel understand a particular requirement to help them maintain compliance, communicate with colleagues regarding SARA requirements, and explain the requirement to students and other stakeholders. Institutions should always check for any state-specific requirements with their [SARA State Portal Entity](#).

Still Have Questions?

1. SARA State Portal Entities have the responsibility and authority to hold institutions in compliance with SARA policy. This information is intended to be general guidance for institutions; institutions should be in regular contact with their [SARA State Portal Entity](#) for specific requirements, directions, and guidance.
2. Feel free to email NC-SARA: info@nc-sara.org

Resources:

- [SARA Policy Manual](#). Section 5.3; Section 5.10 b.

Last updated 12.15.2023