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SECTION ONE: Overview

AAA
AAA IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION OF SOME 80 MOTOR CLUBS, WITH OVER 1,100 BRANCH OFFICES SERVING MORE THAN 45 MILLION MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. When traveling in Canada, the CAA logo is synonymous with AAA.

Although AAA is changing at a rapid pace, one thing remains the same --- the association’s lifelong commitment to providing safety, security, and peace of mind to its members. According to AAA’s Basic Beliefs, “We exist for our members and will judge everything we do by how well it serves their needs.”

- In 1902, only 23,000 motor vehicles were registered in the United States. Roads were treacherous and driving was restrictive. Meeting in Chicago, delegates from nine independent motor clubs, representing fewer than 1,000 members, united to combat unfair traffic laws and to campaign for better roads and more reliable vehicles. AAA is now a federation with more than 1,000 service offices throughout the United States and Canada. The AAA National Office is located in Heathrow, Fla.
- In 1905, AAA published its first road maps, and two years later, established the Bureau of Touring Information, supplying national information on roads, hotels, service garages, and vehicle regulations.
- In 1915, AAA began the first emergency road service program.
- In 1937, the first field representatives were hired to inspect lodgings and restaurants.
- In 1963, AAA began rating accommodations as good, very good, excellent, and outstanding.
- In 1977, the diamond rating system was introduced for lodging evaluations during AAA’s 75 anniversary.
- In 1988, with the cooperation of Cornell University, the diamond rating system for restaurants was developed.
- In 1989, the diamond rating system for restaurant evaluations was introduced.

Looking to the future, AAA is developing customized products and services – enhanced travel and entertainment offerings, financial services, improved automotive services, and new membership privileges – designed to meet the ever-changing needs of our members.

As one of the world’s largest travel organizations, AAA annually:

- Evaluates more than 30,000 accommodations, 14,000 restaurant and 4,200 campgrounds for travel publications and electronic information delivery.
• Publishes nearly 300 million copies of travel-related materials for the exclusive use of members, including more than 38 million TourBook guides.
• Provides over $3 billion in travel agency services.
• Provides more than $2 billion in American Express Travelers Cheques.

When new members join AAA, they join a network with the collective resources to develop new products, services, and technologies, and the ability to influence legislation affecting all motorists and travelers.

A AAA listing makes good business sense for a lodging establishment, since 26 percent of all U.S. households have AAA memberships. AAA members are an excellent market for the hospitality and tourism industry. Member research shows:

• 97 percent of AAA members who use TourBook guides take an average of six trips each year and spend an average of nearly 17 nights in a hotel or motel.
• 91 percent of AAA members who use TourBook guides stay in hotels and motels.
• 86 percent of AAA members who use TourBook guides traveled for pleasure and 39 percent for business.

(Compiled by Simmons Market Research Bureau)

AAA Publishing
AAA PUBLISHING IS ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST TRAVEL INFORMATION PUBLISHERS. The various departments within the Publishing group work closely together to collect, produce, and distribute, in both print and electronic format, a variety of travel publications to AAA clubs and the retail marketplace.

Member–only products include 24 TourBook guides, seven foreign TravelBook guides, and 11 CampBook guides, as well as 75 regional, state, and city sheet maps. The combined circulation of these products exceeds 100 million copies annually. In addition, AAA publishes dozens of products sold at discount to members at club travel stores and in the retail market outside clubs.

AAA Publishing, in cooperation with AAA/CAA clubs, creates and owns most of the product content used in AAA publications, including the diamond ratings, all editorial content, the Official Appointment licensing, and display advertising.

AAA Tourism Information Development
AAA TOURISM INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT IS THE DIVISION OF AAA PUBLISHING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DIRECT MANAGEMENT OF THE AAA DIAMOND RATING PROCESS. The department exists to provide pertinent travel information that effectively meets AAA/CAA member needs and expectations. Our full-time and professionally trained representatives evaluate all diamond rated establishments appearing in AAA travel publications. They collect data, assign ratings, and create valuable intellectual property for AAA publications. Although AAA Publishing
provides a variety of travel information, only the exclusive diamond rating means that the establishment has passed a stringent evaluation conducted by our extensively trained professionals.

AAA Tourism Information Development recognizes the importance of maintaining a close, collaborative working relationship with the hospitality industry. Therefore, we have developed ongoing relationships with many industry associations. Additionally, AAA maintains three separate scholarship programs that promote the growth and development of future hospitality industry professionals and assists in creating opportunities to ensure a brighter future for the hospitality industry.
SECTION TWO: The Diamond Rating Process

Applying for a AAA Diamond Rating

AAA considers all valid applications for evaluation. Each establishment must initially meet AAA's (27) minimum diamond rating requirements (see below) for consideration of an evaluation for a diamond rating. Currently listed establishments need not reapply, as our Tourism Editor will routinely conduct an evaluation of properties on a continual basis.

All applicants should carefully read this section. If a property meets all diamond rating requirements as outlined below, they may complete the AAA Application for Evaluation. They must include recent and accurate pictures of the exterior, public areas, as well as examples of a standard guest unit and bathroom, and return to AAA. Please note that if our research indicates past disqualifying issues, the property may be asked to provide written documentation of the corrective action taken since that date.

AAA does not guarantee an immediate evaluation of all properties that apply but does guarantee a fair review of all applications. Additionally, AAA reserves all rights to apply priority consideration to those properties demonstrating traits that provide the highest degree of AAA member value. Through ongoing member research, AAA has developed criteria reflecting key elements of consideration in making travel related decisions. Some examples of AAA member value criteria are:

- LOCATION
- NEWLY BUILT/RENOVATED
- HIGH DEGREE OF CLEANLINESS AND COMFORT
- APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED CONDITIONS
- PRICE (willingness to provide a discount or best rate available)

Once AAA has received a completed application, a property will be advised in writing of its status within the next five working days. A property that has received a letter from AAA stating that it has been accepted for further consideration can expect an unannounced evaluation within one year from the date of the letter.

Once a property is approved, it will be evaluated at least once per evaluation cycle by a AAA Tourism Editor. All evaluations are unannounced to ensure that our Tourism Editors see a property just as our members would see it. The conditions noted at the time of the annual evaluation will be the basis of the decision to list or rate a property. This decision is at the sole discretion of AAA. AAA will make every effort to ensure that a property is fairly represented.

If, after continued review, or up to and including the end of one year, the property is determined to be of limited AAA/CAA member value, a letter will be sent advising that the property has been released from any further consideration.
Listings are provided without charge to approved properties.

Diamond Rating Requirements
Diamond Rating requirements reflect the basic expectations of AAA/CAA members as established through surveys and continuous feedback. Prior to the assignment of a diamond rating, an establishment must be able to meet the following requirements:

Management Style of Operation
1. The establishment must be a primarily transient operation.
2. The establishment must be in compliance with all local, state, and federal codes.
3. If the establishment is not open all year, an accurate operating schedule must be provided and continually updated for AAA publications.
4. Guests must have easy access to 24-hour incoming and outgoing phone service, ensuring prompt guest unit message delivery. **Emergency messages must be delivered to the guest immediately upon receipt.**
5. The establishment must assist AAA in resolution of all member complaints.
6. The establishment must accommodate unannounced AAA property evaluations within a reasonable period of time.
7. The establishment must provide AAA rates and discounts upon request and must honor AAA published rates and discounts as last contracted.
8. Property management, or their representative, must be readily accessible at all times for guest needs or requests.
9. All property staff must conduct business in a professional and ethical manner providing attentive, conscientious service to guests.

Exterior and Public Areas
10. All property signage must be legible and visible as appropriate.
11. All facilities directly associated with a property must meet all appropriate AAA Diamond Rating Requirements.
12. Adequate illumination is required in all public areas. This includes sufficient lighting in all corridors, stairways, landings, and parking areas.

Guest Unit Security
13. Each guest unit door must be equipped with both a primary lock and a secondary deadbolt lock.
   A primary lock is defined as a device that permits a guest to enter a unit using some form of key and allowing the door to be locked while the unit is occupied and when the guest leaves the unit. Passkeys assigned to appropriate staff members will function to operate only these locks.
   A secondary lock is defined as a mortised, deadbolt-locking device with a throw that extends at least one inch from the edge of the door. This permits a guest an extra measure of security against any unwanted intrusions. Unlike the primary lock, deadbolt master keys will not be provided to guests or to staff. **Master key systems will be acceptable when the emergency master key is only available to top management and security personnel.**
Secondary Lock Variances
In certain instances, the requirement for secondary locks may be modified to meet a variety of exceptions. The most common are noted below. AAA claims the right of final arbitrator in all decisions of this nature.

**Sliding Glass Doors** – Each sliding door must be equipped with an effective locking device. A secondary security lock is required on all ground floor doors and those which are accessible from common walkways and adjoining balconies.

**French Doors** – In addition to the deadbolt lock requirements, surface-mounted slide bolts must be provided at the top and bottom to secure the stationary/auxiliary door. These bolts must extend into the upper door frame and the lower door frame or floor and must be strong and sturdy mechanisms.

14. Each door to connecting guest units or maintenance corridors must be equipped with a deadbolt lock.
15. Each guest room entry door must have a viewport or window convenient to the door.
16. **Windows** - Each window overlooking a common walkway or in a ground floor unit must be equipped with a functional lock.

Fire Protection
17. An operational, single station smoke detector is required in each guest unit. Hard-wired smoke detectors are preferred. When battery-operated detectors are used, there must be an adequate maintenance program to routinely test and replace batteries. *Properties must meet all federal, state, and local fire codes.*

Housekeeping and Maintenance
18. All facilities directly associated with a property must be clean and well-maintained throughout.
19. At a minimum, each guest unit must be thoroughly cleaned with complete bed and bath linens changed between guest stays. *Fresh linens, maid services, and bathroom supplies must be available upon request.*

Room Décor and Ambiance
20. Each guest unit must have adequate shades, drapes, or blinds to cover all windows or other glass areas to provide the guest with privacy.
21. The level of soundproofing must be adequate to muffle outside noises and normal sounds in adjacent units and public areas.

Furnishings
22. Each guest unit must contain a comfortable bed with one mattress pad, two sheets, a blanket, a suitable bedspread, pillows, and pillowcases.
23. Each guest unit must have a nightstand or equivalent by each bed, a functional chair, clothes-hanging facilities, hangers and drawer space for two guests, and a wastepaper basket.
Illumination

24. Each guest unit must have an active light switch at the main entry. In addition, each guest unit must have good illumination at a writing surface, a sitting area, and at each bed. **Illumination is a very important guest need. Overall unit brightness is considered. Dark shades or dark walls may impact unit brightness.**

Bathrooms

25. Each guest unit must have its own private bathroom. All bathroom floor surfaces must be easily cleaned. Carpeting is not acceptable in the commode area.

Fixtures

26. All bathrooms must contain a commode, a sink with a well-lighted mirror and convenient electrical outlet, adequate shelf space, a tub or a shower with a non-slip surface.

Supplies

27. Each bathroom must be equipped with toilet tissue, a cloth bath mat and two soaps. Each guest must be provided a large bath towel, hand towel, face cloth and a drinking tumbler.

The Evaluation and Rating Process

The evaluation process is made up of three parts: AAA/CAA Diamond Rating requirements, objective rating guidelines for both physical attributes and service levels (where applicable), and subjective elements based on experience and training. First, all establishments must meet diamond rating requirements and be determined to provide member value. This validation is conducted through a combined process of applications, referrals, and media research.

If a property is presumed to qualify, one of our Tourism Editors will visit and observe the curbside appeal, exterior, and other factors pertaining to the basic foundation of the establishment. This preliminary review will verify that this property clearly exhibits characteristics that would appeal to AAA/CAA members. If satisfied, our representative will contact the owner, general manager, or property designee for a brief interview. This interview is an extremely important part of the evaluation as factual data is gathered for inclusion into our travel information inventory with potential use in AAA’s worldwide printed and electronic publications. This session also gives the property representative a chance to advise AAA/CAA of any plans for improvement that may be forthcoming.

Following the interview, the Tourism Editor will tour the property with the property representative, verifying the existence of the AAA/CAA diamond rating requirements outlined above. Additionally, our representative will apply a set of diamond ratings guidelines (see related links) that represent objective criteria prevalent throughout the lodging industry. This tour will include an evaluation of all public areas and a cross section of rooms. The Tourism Editor will discuss both strengths and weaknesses of the
property, including expert subjective comments pertaining to overall quality as seen at the time of the evaluation. This dialogue is unique to the AAA Diamond Rating Process and is a valuable resource to any property.

The overall evaluation process will include the review of six key areas:

- MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
- HOUSEKEEPING AND MAINTENANCE
- EXTERIOR, GROUNDS, AND PUBLIC AREAS
- ROOM DÉCOR, AMBIANCE, AND AMENITIES
- BATHROOMS
- GUEST SERVICES (if applicable)

Management and staff
Properties will receive a mark of pass or fail based on the manner of interaction with all property representatives. The Tourism Editor will be evaluating the degree of hospitality, professionalism, and deportment. It is critical to receive a passing mark to be considered for a diamond rating.

Housekeeping and Maintenance
All establishments must be clean, comfortable, and well-maintained. The Tourism Editor will evaluate the overall condition of the property and assign a housekeeping and maintenance designation as either: outstanding, excellent, or good. All properties must achieve at least a good designation to be considered for a diamond rating.

Exterior, grounds, and public areas
This area is assigned a specific rating overall based on the criteria as listed under the Diamond Rating Criteria section. Varying weights are applied based on the classification of the property. For example, the exterior, grounds, and public areas at a resort carry more weight than at a downtown hotel.

Room décor, ambiance, and amenities
This area is assigned a specific rating overall based on the criteria as listed under the Diamond Rating Criteria section. Varying weights are applied based on the classification of the property. For example, the room décor, ambiance, and amenities at a hotel carry more weight than at an outdoor vacation resort.

Bathrooms
This area is assigned a specific rating overall based on the criteria as listed under Diamond Rating Criteria section. Weights remain relatively the same regardless of classification.

Guest Services
A high level of guest services is the hallmark of the coveted AAA Four and Five Diamond ratings. Properties that display the potential (as determined by AAA/CAA Tourism Editors) to achieve these ratings will receive an anonymous overnight evaluation of guest services. To achieve a Four or Five Diamond rating in this area, a
property must offer and excel in a respective percentage of the services as listed in the service guidelines. All properties must achieve at least a Four Diamond rating in guest services to be considered for a Four Diamond rating overall. A property must achieve a Five Diamond rating in guest services to be considered for a Five Diamond rating overall.

The achievement of a AAA Diamond Rating means that an establishment is one of an exclusive group that has successfully completed this thorough evaluation process.

If the determination is made that an establishment should be listed, the Tourism Editor will assign, or recommend, a diamond rating or other appropriate designations. The overall rating is determined by weighting, combining, and averaging the individual ratings for the six key areas previously noted. Each rating assignment is based on conditions that exist at the time of the evaluation.

At the conclusion of the evaluation, the Tourism Editor will provide the property representative a written summary of the evaluation, including the rating decision. The frequency of subsequent AAA evaluations varies slightly, depending on the classification and the assigned rating of each establishment.

**The AAA Five Diamond Award**

This prestigious award is reserved for only the finest properties throughout North America. Less than 0.25 percent of all lodgings evaluated by AAA receive this coveted mark. Establishments must consistently reflect Five Diamond characteristics in both physical attributes and level of guest services.

If the AAA Tourism Editor determines that an establishment meets our maximum criteria, and all elements represent a first-class experience, he/she will recommend consideration for AAA's prestigious Five Diamond Rating. All Five Diamond rating recommendations are forwarded to AAA's Five Diamond Committee for thorough review. Once the committee's assessment is concluded, the establishment will be advised in writing of the outcome.
AAA Diamond Ratings represent a combination of the overall quality, the range of facilities, and the level of services offered by a property. These widely recognized and trusted symbols help AAA/CAA members choose lodgings that will meet their needs and expectations.

AAA Tourism Editors are responsible for determining a property’s diamond rating based on established standards. These criteria are established with input from our trained professionals, AAA/CAA members, as well as various lodging industry professionals.

AAA’s Diamond rating criteria are broad guidelines to designate what is typically found at each rating level. The size, age, and overall appeal of an establishment are considered, as well as regional architectural style and design. Diamonds are assigned based on the overall guest impression rather than on individual criteria. Therefore, meeting all of the criteria in certain categories or failing to meet a few criteria will not necessarily affect the diamond rating.

The final factor in determining the diamond rating for a property is professional judgement. This is a very important part of the rating assessment. Tourism Editor expertise is based upon ongoing training and experience in conducting more than 850 evaluations a year.

What the Diamond Ratings Mean

One Diamond:
These establishments typically appeal to the budget-minded traveler. They provide essential, no-frills accommodations. They meet the basic requirements pertaining to comfort, cleanliness, and hospitality.

Two Diamond:
These establishments appeal to the traveler seeking more than the basic accommodations. There are modest enhancements to the overall physical attributes, design elements, and amenities of the facility typically at a moderate price.

Three Diamond:
These establishments appeal to the traveler with comprehensive needs. Properties are multifaceted with a distinguished style, including marked upgrades in the quality of physical attributes, amenities, and level of comfort provided.

Four Diamond:
These establishments are upscale in all areas. Accommodations are progressively more
refined and stylish. The physical attributes reflect an obvious enhanced level of quality throughout. The fundamental hallmarks at this level include an extensive array of amenities combined with a high degree of hospitality, service, and attention to detail.

**Five Diamond:**
These establishments reflect the characteristics of the ultimate in luxury and sophistication. Accommodations are first class. The physical attributes are extraordinary in every manner. The fundamental hallmarks at this level are to meticulously serve and exceed all guest expectations while maintaining an impeccable standard of excellence. Many personalized services and amenities enhance an unmatched level of comfort.
Section Four: Additional Information

The Listing
Once a property is approved, AAA Publishing establishes the content and format of each listing in all of our publications. The basic listing is provided at no cost to the establishment. This listing does not contain advertising or promotional phraseology purchased by the operator.

The listing copy describing the lodging is based in part on objective information provided by the establishment. This listing information is updated annually, and the establishment will be contacted either in person, by mail, or via the telephone.

Failure to provide this information in a timely manner will result in the deletion of the establishment from our database.

Additionally, AAA’s professionally trained Tourism Editors enhance our inventory with descriptive prose for each establishment. This skilled degree of subjectivity enables us to capture the feel of an experience and pass along this valuable information to our members.

Each diamond rated property has the opportunity to participate in the AAA Official Appointment Program, entitling the establishment to use the renowned AAA/CAA emblem and diamond rating in its advertising and promotions. This program also entitles the establishment to an enhanced listing in AAA publications. Personalized display advertising in AAA publications is also available.

FYI Designation
This designation means that a property has not been diamond rated by a AAA Tourism Editor but is of notable significance and potential member value. The property is unrated due to one of the following reasons:

- The property is too new to rate.
- The property is under construction.
- The property is undergoing extensive renovations.
- The property has not been evaluated.
- The property does not meet Diamond Rating requirements.

Property Classifications
All Diamond Rating Properties are classified using three key descriptive elements.

First, all lodgings are classified by style of operation:

Bed and Breakfast: Small-scale properties emphasizing a high degree of personal touches that provide guests an "at home" feeling. Guest units tend to be individually
decorated. Rooms may not include some modern amenities such as televisions and telephones, and may have a shared bathroom. Usually owner-operated with a common room or parlor separate from the innkeeper’s living quarters, where guests and operators can interact during evening and breakfast hours. Evening office closures are normal. A continental or full, hot breakfast is served and is included in the room rate.

**Condominium:** Vacation-oriented or extended-stay, apartment-style accommodations that are routinely available for rent through a management company. Units vary in design, décor and often contain one or more bedrooms, living room, full kitchen, and an eating area. Studio-type models combine the sleeping and living areas into one room. Typically, basic cleaning supplies, kitchen utensils and complete bed and bath linens are supplied. The guest registration area may be located off site.

**Cabin/Cottage:** Vacation-oriented, small-scale, freestanding houses or cabins. Units vary in design, décor and often contain one or more bedrooms, living room, kitchen, dining area, and bathroom. Studio-type models combine the sleeping and living areas into one room. Typically, basic cleaning supplies, kitchen utensils, and complete bed and bath linens are supplied. The guest registration area may be located off site.

**Country Inn:** Although similar in definition to a bed and breakfast, country inns are usually larger in scale with spacious public areas and offer a dining facility that serves at least breakfast and dinner.

**Motel:** A one to three story establishment typically with exterior room entrances facilitating convenient access to parking. The standard guest units have one bedroom with a bathroom and are typically similar in décor and design throughout. Public areas are limited in size and/or the variety of facilities available.

**Ranch:** Typically a working ranch with an obvious rustic, western theme. In general, equestrian-related activities are featured, but ranches may include other animals and activities as well. A variety of guest unit styles is offered in a family-oriented atmosphere.

**Small-scale Hotel:** A multistory establishment typically with interior room entrances. A variety of guest unit styles is offered. Public areas are limited in size and/or the variety of facilities available.

**Large-scale Hotel:** A multistory establishment with interior room entrances. A variety of guest unit styles is offered. Public areas are spacious and include a variety of facilities such as a restaurant, shops, fitness center, spa, business center, or meeting rooms.

**Vacation Home:** Vacation-oriented or extended-stay, large-scale, freestanding houses that are routinely available for rent through a management company. Houses vary in design, décor and often contain two or more bedrooms, living room, full kitchen, dining room, and multiple bathrooms. Typically, basic cleaning supplies, kitchen utensils, and
complete bed and bath linens are supplied. The guest registration area may be located off site.

**Second, a determination is made to the overall concept, and a lodging may be:**

**Independent:** Any lodging operation consisting of no more than two separate outlets of the same name and concept. This definition includes all types of concepts, service levels, and styles of operation.

**Chain:** Any lodging operation with three or more separate outlets of the same name and concept, service level, and style of operation.

**Finally, the respective service level is noted:**

**Full Service:** A full range of services and facilities is available, and any self-service aspects are solely at the preference of the guest. Property is staffed 24 hours a day with extended hours of operation in key areas. All facilities are on premise and typically include a full-service restaurant, lounge, conference facilities, and business and fitness centers.

**Moderate Service:** A variety of services and facilities is available, but with limited hours of operation. Self-service aspects may be required at unconventional hours. Limited staffing during the off hours is typical. Food and beverage outlet, meeting rooms, and business and fitness centers are some of the facilities that may be available.

**Limited Service:** Only the basic services and facilities are available. Self-service aspects are predominant. Commonly, a continental breakfast may be offered rather than having a restaurant on premises. A kiosk may be available for self-check in. Office closures during the off hours are typical.

**LODGING SUB-CLASSIFICATIONS**

If applicable, lodgings may be further sub-defined as:

**Resort:** Recreation-oriented, geared to vacation travelers seeking a specific destination experience. Travel packages, meal plans, theme entertainment, and social and recreational programs are typically available. Recreational facilities are extensive and may include spa treatments, golf, tennis, skiing, fishing, or water sports. Larger resorts may offer a variety of guest accommodations.

**Casino:** Extensive gambling facilities are available such as blackjack, craps, keno, and slot machines.

**Classic:** Renowned and landmark properties, older than 50 years, well known for their unique style and ambiance.
**Historic:** These properties are typically over 75 years of age and exhibit many features of a historic nature with respect to architecture, design, furnishings, public record, or acclaim. Properties must meet one of the following criteria:

- Maintained the integrity of the historical nature
- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- National Historic Landmark
- Located in a National Register Historic District

**Accessibility**

Full access to lodgings, and their public areas, is an important issue for mature travelers and those with disabilities. Currently, there are 54 million Americans with disabilities, about 20 percent of the population; 5.3 million Canadians have a disability, about 18 percent of the population. In the U.S., this powerful market segment has a combined annual income of nearly $700 billion -- $175 billion in discretionary dollars. They spend an average of $3,000 per trip, representing $117 billion in travel dollars. Yet, because of barriers to travel, 80 percent of people with disabilities do not travel.

AAA has long recognized the importance of meeting the needs of all travelers by providing barrier-free travel information for travelers. In 2001, AAA began displaying a new Accessible Features icon in AAA and CAA membership publications and in retail products.

Also in 2001, new, expanded accessible criteria icons will appear with selected properties in AAA specialty retail publications.

**Accessible Features:** This property has some accessible features. It may be fully accessible, semi-accessible or meet the needs of hearing-impaired individuals. Call the property directly to determine exactly what accessible features are offered.

**HOH/Deaf:** Suitable for a guest who is deaf or hard of hearing but has no mobility impairment. Communication and alerting equipment can be portable.

**Visually Impaired/Blind:** Suitable for a guest who is blind or has low vision but has no mobility impairment. Property provides orientation to public areas and guestroom.

**Dexterity Impaired:** Suitable for a guest who has any condition that limits hand/arm movement and fine motor activities. Performing tasks requiring fine motor skills are difficult or not possible.

**Mobility 1:** Suitable for a guest who is able to ambulate; may use a mobility aid such as cane, crutch or walker; may be frail; has limited stamina, is a slow walker; experiences balance difficulties. Can stand and is able to use stairs.

**Mobility 2:** Suitable for a guest using a wheelchair or electric scooter; has good upper body strength or is able to stand but is unable to use stairs; is able to
transfer independently; can manage without lateral transfer space; can manage with transfer shower or tub.

**Mobility 3:** Suitable for a guest using a manual or electric wheelchair but does not have good upper body; cannot transfer independently or only under ideal conditions; may need assistance; requires lateral transfer space, 2 grab bars and a roll-in shower.

AAA's accessibility criteria are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and include additional features that are important to the mature or travelers with disabilities. The Tourism Editor will check for **Accessibility Features** during the inspection of a property.

Accessibility is not a requirement for listing and will not affect an establishment's diamond rating. However, we strongly encourage properties to make every effort to meet the needs of all guests – including the mature traveler and those with disabilities.

**Member Complaint Procedures**
AAA closely monitors the number and type of comments we receive from members regarding listed establishments. When members write to us expressing dissatisfaction with a particular lodging, it is tracked through the AAA National Office Member Relations department. All complaints are carefully reviewed for validity. The establishment is then notified of each complaint so they have an opportunity to respond and resolve the matter within a reasonable period of time.

Of the more than 46,000 listings in AAA publications, the average ratio of member complaints received by AAA/CAA clubs and the National Office is less than one per establishment. Even though a complaint may be satisfactorily resolved, the complaint becomes a permanent part of the establishment’s record.

Because we are a member-driven organization, we are highly sensitive to the needs of our members. Therefore, our Member Relations department will continually track, warn, and take judicious action with regards to AAA/CAA member complaints. If a member complaint is determined to be of an extreme nature, an establishment may be disapproved immediately and without warning. This action is at AAA’s sole discretion.

If a property has been disapproved for excessive member complaints, a written request for a reevaluation may be submitted, accompanied by an explanation of the actions taken to limit future complaints. *Note:* Such properties may not reapply until two years have elapsed from the date of disapproval.

**The AAA Appeals Process**
The appeals process was established as a resource for all restaurants, lodgings,
campgrounds and attractions evaluated by AAA Tourism Information Development department. The process was created to:

- Aid in maintaining a fair and respectful relationship with the hospitality industry
- Allow establishments to raise issues without fear of forfeiting future opportunities for a fair evaluation
- Ensure that all issues are addressed in an efficient and timely manner
- Help identify policies, practices, or procedures that may be in need of review

How does an establishment file an appeal?

Establishments should first contact the AAA Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. EST at (407) 444-8370. In many cases, our analysts will be able to resolve the concern immediately.

If resolution is not obtained, the establishment's call will be directed to the AAA Regional Manager for that particular evaluation territory.

If an issue remains unresolved after the above steps, an establishment is asked to state its concerns in writing for review by the AAA Appeals Committee. All appeals entertained by the committee must be in writing from the establishment only. Properties should exercise utmost care to specifically state concerns and provide their case for the committee’s final review. Each appeal is thoroughly researched and given thoughtful consideration and substantive reply.

The AAA Appeals Committee convenes on a monthly basis and is comprised of five voting members of AAA management from various business lines within the association. After consideration of an establishment's appeal, the committee will take one of three actions:

- Support the appeal
- Reject the appeal
- Table the appeal pending further information or reevaluation

Please note: The committee’s decision on a property's appeal will be considered as AAA’s final decision. The establishment will be notified by mail as to the status of the appeal within 45 days of receipt of their written statement.

Green Programs

AAA supports environmental management in the lodging industry to the extent that truly effective programs maintain quality standards of guest comfort. We strongly encourage continued use of programs that offer guests choices without consequences for noncompliance. Effective green programs are intended to reduce waste without reducing guest comfort.

As an example of good environmental practices, we fully support the AH&LA endorsed Project Plant™ program, such as optional bed linens and towel reuse, provided that
guests are offered a choice and are not penalized or charged for daily laundering selection.

Other energy, water, and solid waste management programs are encouraged. However, AAA does have concerns in two areas, as they may have a significant effect on a property's listing or diamond rating.

- Water-saving showerheads that significantly limit water flow.
- Energy-saving light bulbs that reduce actual foot-candle output, causing dimness at the task areas.