

# NCAA Guidelines Everyone Should Know

As a supporter, booster or alumnus of an Atlantic Coast Conference institution, you should be aware that there are certain NCAA guidelines and regulations that your favorite institution must abide by. These regulations affect student-athletes, coaches, administrators and you.

## DEFINITIONS

### Representative of Athletics Interests

A "representative of the institution's athletics interests" (athletics representative), or booster, is an individual who is known (or who should have been known) by the institution's staff to:

- a) Have participated in or is a member of an agency or organization promoting the institution's intercollegiate athletics program (e.g., a booster club, athletic foundation, university club);
- b) Have made financial contributions to the athletics department or to an athletics booster organization of that institution;
- c) Be assisting or to have been requested (by the athletics department staff) to assist in the recruitment of prospects;
- d) Be assisting or to have assisted in providing benefits to enrolled student-athletes or their families (e.g., helping to arrange summer and/or vacation employment); or
- e) Have been involved otherwise in promoting the institution's athletics program.

**ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ATHLETICS INTERESTS, YOU WILL ALWAYS RETAIN THAT IDENTITY.**

### Prospective Student-Athlete (Prospect)

A prospective student-athlete, or prospect, is any student who has started classes for the ninth grade. Also, a student who has not started classes for the ninth grade becomes a prospect if the institution provides such an individual (or his/her relatives or friends) any financial assistance or other benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally.

### Junior College Prospects

The same recruiting rules that apply to high school prospects also apply to junior college prospects.

### Four-Year College Prospects

An athletics staff member may not have contact with a student of another four-year college, directly or indirectly, without first obtaining written permission from the first institution's athletics director, regardless of who makes the initial contact. The first institution is not required to grant, and may in fact deny, such permission. The recruiting rules that apply to high school prospects also apply to four-year college prospects, if permission is granted to have contact.

---

## RECRUITING

Recruiting is any solicitation of a prospect (or his/her family or legal guardian) by a member of an institution's staff or by a representative of the institution's athletics interests for the purpose of

securing the prospect's enrollment (and ultimate participation) in the institution's intercollegiate athletics program.

A prospective student-athlete becomes a recruited prospective student-athlete when an institution's staff member(s) or an athletics representative do any of the following:

- a) Provide the prospect with an official (expense paid) visit to the institution;
- b) Have an arranged in-person, off-campus encounter with the prospect (or his/her parents or legal guardians); or
- c) Initiate or arrange a telephone contact with the prospect (or family member or guardian) on more than one occasion.

### **Additional Regulations Related to Recruiting for Athletics Representatives**

1) An athletics representative may only speak to a prospect via telephone if the prospect initiates the phone call and the call is not for recruiting purposes. All inquiries regarding an institution's athletics program must be referred to the institution's athletics department.

2) An athletics representative may observe a prospect's athletics contest on his/her own initiative, but may not contact the prospect on such an occasion.

3) An athletics representative may not contact a prospect's coach, principal or counselor in an attempt to evaluate a prospect.

4) An athletics representative may not visit a prospect's educational institution to pick up film/videotape or transcripts pertaining to the evaluation of the prospect's academic eligibility or athletics eligibility.

5) An unavoidable incidental contact made with a prospect by an athletics representative is permitted, provided:

- a) the contact is not prearranged by the athletics representative or athletics department staff member;
- b) the contact does not take place on the grounds of the prospect's educational institution or at practice or competition sites involving the prospect or his/her team;
- c) the contact is not made for the purpose of recruitment of the prospect, and
- d) the contact involves only normal civility.

### **Offers and Inducements**

Institutional staff members or representatives of athletics interests may not directly or indirectly provide, arrange for the provision of, or offer any financial aid or other benefits to a prospect (or the prospect's relatives, guardian or friends) other than expressly permitted by NCAA regulations. This shall apply regardless of whether similar financial aid benefits or arrangements are available to prospective students in general.

**Specifically prohibited items include, but are not limited to:**

- a) arranging employment for a prospect's relatives;

- b) a gift of clothing or equipment;
- c) co-signing of a loan;
- d) providing a loan to a prospect's relatives or friends;
- e) cash or like items;
- f) any tangible items, including merchandise;
- g) free or reduced-cost services, rentals or purchases of any type;
- h) free or reduced-cost housing;
- i) use of an institution's athletics equipment (e.g., for a high school all-star game); or
- j) sponsorship of or arrangement for an awards banquet for high-school, preparatory school or two-year college athletes by an institution, its athletics representatives, or its alumni groups or booster groups.

#### **Extra Benefits to Enrolled Student-Athletes**

An extra benefit is any special arrangement by an institutional employee or athletics representative to provide a student-athlete (or his/her relatives, guardian or friends) a benefit not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation. Receipt of a benefit by a student-athlete (or his/her relatives, guardian or friends) is not considered a violation of NCAA legislation if it is demonstrated that the same benefit is generally available to the institution's students (or their relatives, guardian or friends) not on a basis related to athletics ability.

#### **Extra Benefits include, but are not limited to:**

- a) cash or loans in any amount
- b) co-signing or arranging a loan
- c) gifts or free services (e.g., airline tickets, cash, restaurant meals)
- d) use of an automobile
- e) rent free or reduced cost housing
- f) money for, or a guarantee of, bail or bond
- g) employment of a student-athlete at a higher rate than the wages paid for similar work
- h) payment to a student-athlete for work not performed
- i) transportation (aside from transportation related to an occasional home meal)
- j) tickets to an athletics, institutional or community event
- k) financial aid for a post-graduate education
- l) promise of employment after college graduation

m) invitations to your home or summer home for purposes other than an occasional meal

---

## **GUIDELINES**

As a Representative of Athletics Interests, What Can You Do??

YOU MAY provide tickets to a professional sports contest to an institution for entertainment of student-athletes involved in an away-from-home athletics contest.

YOU MAY provide an occasional meal in your home to a student-athlete or an entire team.

YOU MAY provide transportation to your home for a student-athlete who will be receiving an occasional meal there.

YOU MAY provide a summer job to a student-athlete as long as it is at a normal rate of pay for that position and the student-athlete is paid for work actually performed, but remember to check with the compliance office at the institution before doing so.

YOU MAY make a financial donation to a high school athletics program in your locale provided: a) You make the donation of your own accord,

b) Your donation is distributed through the normal channels established by the high school, and

c) Your donation is not earmarked for a specific prospect.

## **Alumni Organizations**

Prospective student-athletes may attend luncheons or dinners in their immediate locale that are sponsored by bona fide alumni organizations of an institution. These alumni organizations must meet specific criteria to be considered as such. Please check with the institution's compliance office for more specific information.

## **Five Basic Rules to Remember**

1) Do not do anything for a prospective student-athlete or an enrolled student-athlete without specific permission from the institution's athletics department.

2) Only coaches and athletic department staff members may be involved in the recruiting process. Alumni, friends and other athletics representatives who are not employed by the institution may not contact a prospect (or his/her family or guardian) via written correspondence, telephone, or in-person (either on or off campus) for the purpose of soliciting their participation in the athletic program.

3) A prospective student-athlete remains a prospective student-athlete until he/she enrolls (e.g., begins classes) full-time at an institution, or until he/she begins official team practice immediately prior to the start of classes.

Even if the prospect signs a National Letter of Intent or financial aid agreement to attend an institution, he/she remains a prospect until one of the above occurs.

4) An enrolled student-athlete risks losing his/her athletics eligibility if he/she accepts any benefit based on his/her status as an athlete or because of his/her athletics skill, or a benefit not generally afforded to other students.

5) NCAA rules applicable to enrolled student-athletes are not only applicable during the academic year, but they are also applicable during the summer months. Enrolled student-athletes are bound by NCAA rules until the end of the academic year in which their athletics eligibility is completed.

### **Still have questions?**

The above information does not explain every rule and regulation of the NCAA. Please call your institution's athletics department if you are still wondering if you should or shouldn't do something. Don't put your favorite institution, a prospective student-athlete or an enrolled student-athlete at risk of a penalty or loss of eligibility. Please ask.

---

### **POSSIBLE PENALTIES FOR IMPROPER ACTIONS**

There are many penalties the NCAA may impose upon a student-athlete (prospective or enrolled), an institution, a coach or a representative of athletics interest. Some of those penalties include, a) Ceasing recruitment of a prospective student-athlete;

- b) Loss of eligibility of an enrolled student-athlete;
- c) Having to sit out of competition for a limited period of time (enrolled student-athletes);
- d) Forfeiture of competitions;
- e) Prohibiting a coach from recruiting off-campus for a period of time;
- f) Institutional fines;
- g) Suspension of a coach for one or more competitions;
- h) Reduction in the number of scholarships an institution may award in a sport(s);
- i) Reduction in the number of expense-paid recruiting visits that an institution may provide;
- j) Prohibiting a team from participating in postseason competition;
- k) Institutional probation, or
- l) Disassociation of relations with a representative of athletics interests.