

A BOOSTER'S GUIDE TO NCAA RULES & REGULATIONS



This publication was compiled to assist alumni and friends in complying with NCAA Rules and regulations governing the conduct of our Institution and its athletics programs.

The Northeast Conference and the Metro Atlantic Athletics Conference, in conjunction with the Athletics Department at Sacred Heart University, as members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, are primarily responsible for insuring that its various constituencies (i.e. University staff and faculty, student-athletes, alumni and friends) abide by the NCAA rules and regulations. Under those rules, alumni and friends can be categorized as "representatives of the University's athletic interests."

This brochure is presented as a quick reference to the many NCAA rules which apply to "Athletic Representatives." Since it does not include all applicable situations, please call the Sacred Heart University's Athletics Department if you have any questions before having any contact with a prospective or enrolled student-athlete. We appreciate your interest and support, but remind you that an inappropriate contact or an inadvertent action on your part can jeopardize the eligibility of student-athletes and prospects and the compliance of Sacred Heart with NCAA and NEC regulations.

Sacred Heart University is proud to have the loyal support and continued interest in our athletic programs by our alumni and friends. As we strive for excellence, we must always seek the highest standard of ethical conduct. With your assistance and cooperation, we believe we can accomplish both goals.

Am I a Representative of Athletic Interests? Yes, If you:

Have ever been a member of the University's "booster" organization or any of the sport specific groups under the athletic department. Have ever made a donation to any of the NEC or MAAC member schools' men's or women's athletic programs.

Have ever helped to arrange or have provided summer employment for enrolled student-athletes.

Have ever contacted (by letter, telephone or in person) a high school student, grades 9-12, for the purpose of encouraging the student to participate in the Sacred Heart's Athletics programs. Have ever assisted in providing any benefit to enrolled student-athletes or their families.

Have ever been involved in any way with the Sacred Heart's Athletics programs.

The NCAA stipulates that once you have become an "athletic representative" you retain that identification forever, even if you no longer contribute to the athletic program.

Four Important Rules You Should Know

Rule #1: Only coaches and athletics department staff members can be involved in the recruiting process. All "athletic representatives" who are not employed by the school are prohibited from contacting a prospect or members of the prospect's family by telephone, letter or in person on or off campus for the purpose of encouraging participation in Sacred Heart's athletic programs.

Rule #2: Sacred Heart representatives cannot provide an "extra benefit" or special arrangement to a prospect OR an enrolled student-athlete. Specific applications as they apply to the NCAA extra benefit rule to prospects and enrolled student-athletes, their relatives or friends state that you:

- May not give them cash or loans in any amount.
- May not sign or co-sign a note with an outside agency to arrange a loan.
- May not employ relatives or friends of a prospect as an inducement for the enrollment of the prospect.
- May not give them gifts of any kind (e.g. birthday, Christmas, Valentine's Day) or free services (e.g. clothing, airline tickets, laundry, car repair, hair cuts, meals in restaurants).
- May not provide special discounts for goods or services.
- May not provide them hospitality in your home other than for special occasions (e.g. Thanksgiving, birthday).
- May not provide them transportation within or outside of the campus area (e.g., from campus to your home, from the airport to campus, to summer job, etc.).

- May not entertain or contact a prospect or prospect's family on or off campus.
- May not provide rent free or reduced rent housing.
- May not provide promise to a prospect of employment after college graduation.

Rule #3: PLEASE assist the coaching staff in the recruiting process by notifying them of any student you think would be a strong addition to Sacred Heart's athletics program. The coach can then make the appropriate contact with the prospect.

Rule #4: As an athletic representative, you are not precluded from continuing friendships with families who have prospective or enrolled student-athletes (e.g., backyard barbecues, picnics). You simply cannot encourage a prospect's participation in Sacred Heart's athletic programs or provide benefits to the student-athlete that you were not providing before he or she became a prospect or enrolled student-athlete.

Who is a Prospective Student-Athlete?

A prospective student-athlete is a person who has begun classes for the ninth grade. However, it is possible for a younger student to be a prospect, so it is prudent to treat ALL athletes as prospects.

Can "I" be involved with High School and Community College Student-Athletes (Prospects)

PLEASE feel free to attend high school and community college athletic events. You simply cannot have any contact with the prospective student-athletes or relatives. Should you find yourself seated next to parents of a prospect,

DO NOT initiate conversation with the relatives. If conversation is initiated with you, respond in a civil manner but DO NOT discuss Sacred Heart's athletics program with them. If they raise questions about the program, remind them that the NCAA prohibits you from discussing the program with them. Direct their questions to Sacred Heart's Athletics Department.

CONTINUE established family relationships with friends and neighbors. Contacts with sons or daughters of these families certainly are permitted as long as they are not made for recruiting purposes and are not initiated by Sacred Heart's coaching staff members. You are permitted to play "pick-up" basketball or softball games, continue neighborhood picnics or backyard barbecues and engage in your normal activities with prospects and their parents who are family friends. Again, you simply cannot attempt to recruit the prospect.

PLEASE feel free to attend a public event (e.g. an awards banquet or dinner) at which prospects are in attendance. No attempt should be made to recruit the prospect.

PLEASE send to Sacred Heart's coaching staff any information about prospects that you think would be of interest. Your assistance in this manner is very helpful. The coaching staff will then make contact with the prospect.

PLEASE feel free to offer assistance to members of Sacred Heart's coaching staff who are recruiting in your community.

HOWEVER ...

AVOID providing ANYTHING to or for a prospect, relatives or friends, without first

checking with the Athletics Department administration.

AVOID making any contact with a prospect or the prospect's family on or off campus. If a coach has a recruit at an athletic event, you should not approach the coach until the prospect and family have gone elsewhere. If the prospect approaches you off campus regarding the athletic program, explain that NCAA rules do not allow you to discuss the program. Suggest that the prospect contact the head coach of the sport for more information.

AVOID transporting, paying for or arranging for payment of transportation costs for a prospect, relatives or friends to visit campus or elsewhere. While it is permissible for a friend or neighbor to transport a high school or community college student who is NOT an athlete to the campus, NCAA regulations prohibit that activity for a prospective student-athlete.

AVOID providing room and/or board, transportation of any kind or any other benefit to a recruited student-athlete during the summer prior to enrollment for fall classes at SHU. AVOID entertaining high school, prep school or community college COACHES at ANY location.

AVOID contacting an enrolled student-athlete at another institution for the purpose of encouraging transfer to Sacred Heart and for participation in its athletic programs.

AVOID paying for or offering to pay the registration fees for summer sports camps for a prospect.

AVOID contacting the prospect's coach, principal or counselor for the purpose of

evaluating the prospect. You are not permitted to pick up films or transcripts from the prospect's educational institution.

Can "I" be involved with Currently Enrolled Student-Athletes

PLEASE feel free to invite a student-athlete to your home for a home cooked meal but only for a special occasion (e.g. Thanksgiving, birthday). Remember, the student-athlete must provide his/her own transportation.

PLEASE feel free to invite a team for dinner or to meet with a group of alumni in a city where they are competing. The NCAA permits student-athletes AS A TEAM to receive special benefits not permitted as individuals. Arrangements for such events must be made in advance with the head coach or the Athletic Department.

HOWEVER ...

AVOID providing room and/or board or any type of transportation during the summer for a student athlete with eligibility remaining.

AVOID providing room, board or transportation costs incurred by friends or family of an enrolled student-athlete to visit campus or attend any away contest.

AVOID expending funds to entertain student-athletes, their friends or relatives. You are not even permitted to buy a soft drink or cup of coffee for them.

AVOID providing awards or gifts to a student-athlete for his or her athletic performance. All awards must conform to NCAA regulations and must be approved by SHU and the Northeast Conference.

AVOID providing an honorarium to a student-athlete for a speaking engagement. Only necessary travel expenses can be given when speaking to educational or charitable groups. All speaking engagements must be approved in advance by the Sacred Heart University Athletics Department.

AVOID allowing a student-athlete, his or her friends or relatives to use your telephone to make free long distance calls.

What can "I" do regarding Employment of Prospective and Enrolled Student Athletes?

PLEASE pay student-athletes employed by you only for work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with the going rate for similar services in the community and your own business.

PLEASE notify the head coaches of job possibilities for student-athletes.

HOWEVER ...

AVOID employing or arranging for the employment of a prospective or enrolled student-athlete without checking first with the Sacred Heart University's Athletics Department. The department is permitted to make arrangements for summer employment for prospects prior to enrollment as freshmen and to enrolled student-athletes during the summer and semester breaks. Stringent rules apply in these instances and written records must be kept regarding employment.

AVOID providing transportation for prospects or student-athletes in your employ unless transportation is provided for all other employees.