

The Ram Rules

Occasional Meals

All Tar Heel fans enjoy cheering for UNC's teams, whether on the field, court, or track. Some fans would even enjoy the company of student-athletes off the field as well, desiring to socialize with players to congratulate them on their efforts. This situation brings to mind a question boosters may be pondering. Are student-athletes allowed to visit the homes of boosters to share a social dinner? On a very limited basis, the answer to this question is yes. However, the circumstances surrounding the meal must meet specific criteria. In accordance with NCAA regulations, a student-athlete may receive an **occasional** family home meal from a representative of athletics interests (a booster), provided all of the following conditions are met.

- (1) The meal must be provided in the booster's home, on-campus, or at a facility regularly used for home competition. It may not be held at an off-campus restaurant. It may, however, be catered.
- (2) A booster may provide reasonable local transportation to student-athletes to attend the meal, but only if the meal is being held at the home of that booster.
- (3) Most importantly, the booster must obtain permission from both the head coach and the Compliance Office.

These requirements also apply to any end-of-year dinner (e.g., Graduation Reception) that may be hosted by a booster at the end of the spring semester. Please note that parents, friends, and relatives of players may not receive these meals free of charge. Rather, friends and relatives are required to pay for their own meals at these functions. Also, the NCAA has set a limit of **three occasional meals per team, per semester**. This limitation makes it critically important for boosters to consult with the head coach prior to hosting a function, regardless of its formality. The coach will contact the Compliance Office to document the function and ensure that it meets NCAA guidelines.

The UNC Department of Athletics appreciates your efforts to comply with NCAA legislation. Please contact the UNC Compliance Office (962-6000) if you have questions regarding the NCAA regulations for providing occasional meals.