

FANS, FRIENDS, BOOSTERS, AND ALUMNI

Representative of Athletics Interest

A Representative of Athletics Interest (booster) is anyone who is known (or should be known) by a member of the institution's executive or athletic administration to:

- Participate in or have been a member of a sport support group or a booster club.
- Provide or have helped arrange employment for student-athletes or provided benefits to enrolled student-athletes.
- Have been involved, in any way promotion of his/her institution's athletics program.
- Have participated as a varsity athlete.
- Make or have made a donation to the institution's athletics booster organization.

Note: Once an individual is identified as a Representative of the Institution's Athletics Interest, the person retains that identity forever.

Institutional Control and Compliance

Institutional Control of athletics is a fundamental requirement of NCAA Legislation. Specifically, the NCAA Constitution provides that each institution shall be responsible for:

- Controlling its intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the NCAA.
- Monitoring its program to insure compliance, identifying and reporting to the NCAA instances in which compliance has not been achieved and taking appropriate corrective actions.
- Insuring that members of the institution's staff, student-athletes and other individuals or groups representing the institutions athletics interests comply with NCAA rules.

Rules Governing the Recruitment of Prospective Student-Athletes

- A prospective student-athlete is defined by the NCAA as any person who has begun classes for the ninth grade.
- A prospective student-athlete remains a prospect even after he or she has signed a National Letter of Intent or accepts an offer of financial aid to attend the respective institution.
- The prospect remains a prospect until they report for the first day of classes for a regular term (fall or spring).
- Only coaches and athletic department staff members can be involved in the recruiting process. A contact is defined as any face-to face encounter between a prospect or the prospect's parent or legal guardians during which time any dialogue in excess of an exchange of a greeting occurs.
- In general, all representatives of the institution's athletics interest who are not employed by the institution are prohibited from contacting a prospect or prospect's family to encourage the prospect to participate in intercollegiate athletics at the respective institution.

You are prohibited from:

- Contacting a prospect in person on or off our campus.
- Writing or telephoning a prospect or a member of the prospect's family.
- Making arrangements for a prospect or the prospect's relatives or friends, to receive money or financial aid of any kind.
- Providing transportation for a prospect or the prospect's relatives or friends to visit campus.
- Providing free tickets or tickets at a reduced cost for prospects or the prospects relatives or friends to attend an athletic event.
- Entertaining high school, prep school or community college coaches.

As a representative of the institution's athletics interest, you are permitted to:

- Notify coaches about prospects in your area that may be strong additions to an institution's team.
- Attend high school or two year college athletic contests or other events where prospects may compete, however, you may not contact the prospect or the prospect's relatives.
- Continue existing friendships with families of prospects, but you may not attempt to recruit the prospect.

Rules Governing Contacts and Benefits for Student-Athletes

In addition to regulating contact of our representatives of athletics interest with prospects, the NCAA also regulates contact with current intercollegiate student-athletes, as well as their relatives and friends.

An extra benefit is any special arrangement by an institutional employee or a representative of athletics interest to provide a student-athlete, prospect, or their relatives or friends a benefit not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation.

In general, you may not provide anything or make special arrangements for student-athletes and prospective student-athletes that are not available to the general student population.

Examples of prohibited extra benefits not allowed by NCAA rules, but are not limited to, are as follows:

- Providing cash or loans in any amount, or signing or co-signing for a loan.
- Providing gifts of any kind, including birthday cards and holiday gifts.
- Providing special discounts for goods and services (e.g., car repairs, legal services, meals).
- Providing free rent or reduced rent, housing.
- Purchasing complimentary admissions from a student-athlete.
- Providing an honorarium to a student-athlete for a speaking engagement.

As a representative of the institution's athletics interest, you are permitted to:

- Invite a student-athlete into your home for an occasional meal (once a semester), but please coordinate such activity with the Compliance Office and the respective Head Coach.
- Provide employment for enrolled student-athletes.

Consequences to Boosters for NCAA Violations

Institutions are required by the NCAA to notify boosters of consequences regarding rules violations. Boosters found in violation of NCAA rules are subject to losing benefits and privileges, including season tickets.

The NCAA Committee on Infractions has processed cases in which penalties have included both the disassociation of boosters with the institution and the loss of season ticket privileges.

Rules Governing Promotional Activities for Student-Athletes

All charitable, educational and nonprofit promotional activities involving student-athletes must have prior approval from the respective institution. Please contact your institution's compliance office for more information.

Student-Athletes are not permitted to be involved in the advertisement, recommendation or promotion of sales or use of a commercial product or service of any kind.

Rules Governing Agents and Amateurism

A student-athlete loses their amateur status and shall not be eligible for intercollegiate competition in a particular sport if:

- The student-athlete or family member negotiate, sign or enters into any written or oral agreement with an agent.
- The student-athlete or family member accepts or receives any extra benefits from an agent or anyone who wishes to represent the student-athlete.
- The student-athlete competes with a professional sports team or competes as a professional in an individual sport and receives any compensation for participation.
- The student-athlete uses his or her athletic skills for pay or promise of pay.

Rules Governing Gambling

A student-athlete, coach and/or employee of an intercollegiate athletic department may not provide information to individuals involved in any type of organized gambling concerning sporting events. In addition, student-athletes, coaches and athletic department staff may not solicit or accept any wager on any intercollegiate or professional athletics contest.

Most Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Can an athletics representative be involved in any way when a prospect is on an official or unofficial visit?

A: No. Athletics representatives are precluded from all recruiting activities.

Q: Is it permissible for an athletics representative to provide employment for student-athletes?

A: Yes. Please remember that compensation must be paid only for work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with the going rate in that locality for services of like character.

Q: May a student-athlete's name or picture be used to directly or indirectly advertise, recommend, or promote the sale or use of a commercial product or service?

A: No. Such activity would jeopardize the eligibility of the student-athlete. The NCAA membership has always maintained that student-athletes not be involved in the promotion of a commercial product.

Q: Is it permissible for a booster to reimburse the coach of a prospect for expenses incurred in transporting a prospect to visit the campus?

A: No.

Q: Is it permissible for a booster to pay in whole or in part registration fees associated with sport camps?

A: No.

Q: Is the contact rule applicable to established family, friends, and neighbors?

A: No. However, it must be understood that such contacts may not be made for recruiting purposes and are not initiated by a member of the institutions coaching staff.

Q: May a booster attend a public event (e.g., high school award banquet or dinner) at which prospects are in attendance?

A: Yes. Please remember that contact with a prospect may not be prearranged by an athletics department staff member, and no attempt may be made to recruit the prospect.

Q: Is it permissible for an athletics representative to provide enrolled student-athletes a home cooked meal?

A: Yes. Provided it is on an "occasional" basis and any such meal is not at a restaurant.

Please note: All requests must receive prior approval from the athletics department.

Q: Is my institution responsible for the acts of boosters and booster support groups?

A: Yes. Boosters are governed by the same NCAA and institutional rules and regulations as those placed upon all institutional athletics staff members.

Q: When does a prospect become considered a student-athlete?

A: A prospect becomes a student-athlete when he or she reports for regular squad practice or attends classes in any term.

Q: Is it permissible for a booster to provide an enrolled student-athlete with professional services (for which a fee would normally be charged) for personal reasons?

A: No. Professional services provided at a fee less than the normal rate or at no expense to a student-athlete are considered extra benefits.

Q: May a student-athlete make a public appearance at a business establishment for any purpose such as signing autographs etc.?

A: No. Such appearances can be construed as a direct or indirect endorsement of the commercial establishment, thus jeopardizing the eligibility of the student-athlete. It should be noted that student-athletes may make appearances at schools, hospitals, or other non-profit or charitable organizations provided they do not receive compensation (other than expenses) and such activities are authorized by the athletic department.

Q: Is it permissible for a booster to provide gifts or awards to a student-athlete for his or her athletics performance?

A: No. All awards must conform to NCAA awards legislation and must be approved by the athletic department.