

# NCAA Rules and Regulations Guide to the Do's and Don'ts for Representatives of Athletic Interests

<https://www.ncaa.org/enforcement/role-boosters>

## Role of Boosters

Boosters play a role in providing student-athletes with a positive experience through their enthusiastic efforts. They can support teams and athletics departments through donations of time and financial resources which help student-athletes succeed on and off the playing field.

**Boosters, referred to by the NCAA as “representatives of the institution’s athletic interests,” include anyone who has:**

- Provided a donation in order to obtain season tickets for any sport at the university.
- Participated in or has been a member of an organization promoting the university’s athletics programs.
- Made financial contributions to the athletic department or to a university booster organization.
- Arranged for or provided employment for enrolled student-athletes.
- Assisted or has been requested by university staff to assist in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes.
- Assisted in providing benefits to enrolled student athletes or their families.
- Been involved otherwise in promoting university athletics.

Once an individual is identified as a “representative of the institution’s athletics interests,” the person retains that identity forever.

Only institutional staff members are permitted to recruit prospective student-athletes. Generally, NCAA rules prohibit anyone else from contacting (calling, writing or in-person contact) prospects or the prospect’s relatives or guardian for recruiting purposes.

Students are still considered prospects even if they have signed a National Letter of Intent or any other financial aid agreement with a university.

Boosters are not precluded from continuing established friendships with families who have prospective student-athletes. However, boosters may not encourage a prospect’s participation in university athletics or provide benefits to prospects that were not previously provided.

If a violation occurs, it may jeopardize a student-athlete’s eligibility for intercollegiate competition, jeopardize a school’s membership status with the NCAA or cause a booster to lose access to all booster benefits.

---

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What are examples of impermissible recruiting activities?

As a booster, you may not:

- Contact a prospect in-person on-campus or off campus.
- Contact a prospect by telephone, email, Internet or letter.
- Provide gifts or free or reduced-cost services to a prospect or the prospect's relatives or guardian.
- Employ relatives, guardians or friends of a prospect as an inducement for the prospect's enrollment and athletics participation at a university.
- Become directly or indirectly involved in making arrangements for a prospect or the prospect's relatives or guardian to receive money or financial aid of any kind.
- Provide transportation for a prospect or the prospect's relatives or guardian.
- Provide free or reduced-cost tickets for a prospect or the prospect's relatives or guardian to attend an athletic event.
- Provide any material benefit (e.g., meals, cash) to the coach of a prospect, including high school, two-year college, AAU and summer team coaches.

### What are examples of permissible activities?

Even though there are many rules prohibiting your involvement with prospects and the recruiting process, as a booster, you may:

- Notify university coaching staff members about noteworthy prospects in the area.
- Attend high school or two-year college athletic contests or other events where prospects may compete, provided no contact occurs.
- Continue existing friendships.

### What are examples of impermissible extra benefits for enrolled student-athletes?

As a booster, you may not provide a student-athlete or a student-athlete's friends, relatives or guardians:

- Tickets to college or professional sporting events.
- A special discount, payment arrangement or credit on a purchase or service.
- Cash or loan or signing or co-signing of a loan.
- Transportation, payment of expense or loan of any automobile.
- Benefits or gifts based upon the student-athlete's athletic performance.
- Free or reduced rent or housing.

An honorarium to a student-athlete for a speaking engagement.

## **What are examples of permissible benefits for enrolled student-athletes?**

With the various NCAA rules and regulations regarding benefits to student-athletes, it may seem difficult to be a part of a university's athletic programs. However, you can show your support as a booster in other ways. Boosters may:

- Make contributions to university programs and other gift-in-kind arrangements.
- Attend university athletic events and show student athletes you support their hard work and dedication to the university.

## **What is institutional control?**

Institutional control of athletics is a fundamental requirement of NCAA legislation. Specifically, the NCAA constitution states that the university must:

- Control its intercollegiate athletic programs in compliance with the rules and regulations of the NCAA.
- Monitor its program to insure compliance.
- Identify and report to the NCAA instances in which compliance has not been achieved and take corrective actions.
- Insure those members of university staff, student-athletes and other individuals or groups representing the university's athletic interests comply with NCAA rules and regulations. As a member of the NCAA, the university is responsible for the actions of its alumni, supporters and fans.

## **Are there any rules for the employment of enrolled student-athletes by boosters?**

Student-athletes may only be compensated for work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with the going rate. Compensation may not include remuneration for the value that the student-athlete may have for the employer due to the student-athlete's athletics status. Transportation may not be provided to student athletes unless it is a benefit provided to all employees.