

## **LEGISLATIVE INTERPRETATIONS - RECRUITING UPDATE: FROM VISITS TO LODGING TO TRANSPORTATION**

### **Official and Unofficial Visit Guidelines**

With official visit season is in full swing, please remember NCAA Bylaw 13.6.1 states that not only must each institution have written departmental policies related to official visits, but those policies, as filed in the Conference office, must be followed to avoid an NCAA violation. The following specific areas and guidelines have been identified by the NCAA Board of Directors as important in developing institutional policies:

**Personalized Recruiting Aids:** NCAA Bylaws 13.6.6.9 and 13.7.3 prohibit personalized recruiting aids during an official or unofficial visit (e.g., personalized jerseys, personalized audio/video scoreboard presentations). Such aids would also include any decorative items and special additions to any location the prospect will visit (e.g., hotel room, locker room, coach's office, conference room, arena), regardless of whether or not the items include the prospect's name or picture. All facilities and locations the prospect will visit should be maintained in the same manner as they would normally. It is not permissible for a prospect to engage in game-day simulations (e.g., running onto the field with the team during pregame introductions) during an official visit.

**Hosting Duties:** Institutions should note that pursuant to NCAA Bylaws 13.6.6.5 and 13.7.2.1.7, a student host involved in an official or unofficial visit must be either a current student-athlete or a student designated in a manner consistent with the institution's policy for providing campus visits or tours to prospective students in general. In this regard, individuals are considered hosts if they are involved in traditional hosting duties such as tasks that require specific interaction with the prospect (e.g., entertaining, escorting, etc.). Individuals who are involved solely in administrative functions (e.g., stuffing envelopes, collecting unofficial visit money, handling complimentary admissions etc.) would not be considered student hosts.

Further, for purposes of this legislation, student-managers and other student-employees are considered to be students as opposed to athletics department employees and, therefore, would be restricted to engaging in general employment functions and would not be permitted to host prospective student-athletes unless they meet the criteria noted in the above-mentioned bylaws. Finally, inasmuch as student-hosting duties are considered incidental to athletics participation, and an individual must be either a student-athlete or a member of the official university host group, a student-athlete may not be paid to perform this function unless the university typically pays its host groups for their services.

**Athletics Department Involvement with Institutional Hosting Groups:**

As stated above, a student host involved in an official or unofficial visit must be either a current student-athlete or a student designated in a manner consistent with the institution's policy for providing campus visits or tours to prospective students in general.

Consistent with this legislation, athletics departments should remain completely uninvolved in the management and operation of these programs. Athletics departments may, however, contribute funds to the overall university host program, provided such funding does not result in the athletics department assuming control, or compromising university oversight, of such programs. Further, if permitted by institutional policy, athletics departments may request specific hosts from the institution's pool of hosts only if such opportunities are available to other institutional departments and again, the athletics department does not compromise the university's control or oversight of the host program.

**Standard Lodging:** Pursuant to NCAA Bylaw 13.6.5, a prospect on an official visit shall be provided lodging as "regular students normally do". Local commercial facilities may be used but at a scale comparable to that of normal student life and only within a 30-mile radius of the institution's campus. Lodging may not include special accessories (e.g., jacuzzis, suites) that are not available generally to all guests residing at the establishment.

Consistent with the overarching theme that prospective student-athletes should be housed in a similar manner as other prospective students generally, institutions should adhere to the following guidelines: Hotels selected to house prospective student-athletes should be similar to hotels in which prospective students are housed, hotels in which visiting teams are housed or lodging used by the institution for away from home contests.

**Standard Meals:** NCAA Bylaw 13.6.5 states that a prospect on an official visit shall take meals as "regular students normally do."

Additionally, meals must be comparable to those provided to student-athletes during the academic year. In this regard, meals provided during an official visit will be considered standard if they are similar in nature to campus meals, including training table meals. Additionally, institutions should note the training table meal standard is considered the upper limit for all sports regardless of whether a training table is typically provided in a particular sport, and also that providing multiple entrees to a prospect should be considered excessive.

Further, pursuant to Bylaw 13.6.6.1, a member institution may not arrange or permit excessive entertainment of a prospect on the campus or elsewhere. This restriction includes special arrangements for admittance to exclusive or elite

