

GOPHER Guardian

Gopher Athletics Compliance News



Did You Know?

That a PROSPECT is an individual who has either started classes for the ninth grade OR who has received any benefit from the U of M or a booster.

Actions taken by athletic staff that cause an individual to become a recruited prospective student-athlete include:

- providing a prospect an expense-paid official visit to a collegiate institution;
- having an arranged in-person off-campus encounter with the individual;
- initiating or arranging telephone contact with the individual or a member of his/her family on more than one occasion;
- providing an individual (or his/her relatives or friends) any financial assistance or other benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally.

A prospect is a student who has started the ninth grade.

BOOSTER EDITION - VOL 1

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Who is a Booster?

NCAA rules specify that all alumni, friends, and employees of the U of M are categorized as representatives of athletics interests or "boosters". The NCAA stipulates that once an individual has been identified as a booster of the U of M's athletics programs, he or she retains this status **indefinitely** even if the individual is no longer associated with the athletics program. Furthermore, the NCAA states that it is possible to be a booster at more than one university at the same time.

A booster is anyone who has ever:

- Made any type of contribution to the athletics department or to a booster club.
- Joined the institution's booster club or any sport specific support group.
- Provided or helped arrange employment for a student-athlete.
- Provided benefits to enrolled student-athletes or their families.
- Assisted in any manner in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes.
- Promoted the institution's athletics program in any manner.
- Purchased season tickets from the U of M.

As a booster, you may not:

- Contact a prospect's coach, principal or counselor in an effort to evaluate a prospect.
- Visit the prospect's institution to pick up film or transcripts pertaining to the evaluation of the prospect's academic eligibility or athletic ability.
- Contact a prospect, his/her parents, legal guardians or spouse on or off campus.
- Contact a prospect by telephone or by letter.
- Make special arrangements for entertainment for recruiting purposes.
- Provide extra benefits to a prospect, enrolled student-athlete at the U of M or to their parents, family or friends.

Recruiting is...



Any solicitation of a prospect or a prospect's relatives for the purpose of securing the prospect's enrollment and ultimate participation in the U of M's athletic program.

General Rule: Only coaches and authorized athletic staff members may participate in recruiting activities.

Remember: Ask Before You Act!

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Check Your Knowledge

Potential compliance issues are in bolded *italicized* font below. Determine if the actions highlighted are permissible or impermissible according to NCAA regulations. The answers will be sent via email in two weeks. (Please note: the names and events used in this hypothetical situation are entirely fictional.*)**

Shooter Jones is a former student-athlete from the University of Minnesota and is a current member of an athletics booster club for the University. His son, Andy, is a high school senior basketball player and his son's teammate, "Swift", also a senior is new to the high school this year. Shooter is also a big fan of his son's high school basketball team and attends all of his son's games.

Because of Shooter's involvement with the booster club, he attends many of the Gophers' home games. Due to his unwavering support for the Gophers and his status as a former student-athlete, he is often approached by high school prospects, including prospects that attend his son's high school. Swift calls Shooter at home wishing to speak about the basketball program at the U. Shooter answers all of his recruiting and general questions regarding the program and the University.

Throughout the spring, both Andy and Swift were recruited and both signed a National Letter of Intent with the Gophers. To show his gratitude to his son's high school coach, he offers the coach a free university booster club membership, however the coach declines the offer. In addition, he contacts Swift's parents that summer to join the booster club but offers the normal fee. Swift's parents become members of the booster club and start attending booster club's events, however Swift does not attend.

Shooter also owns a business and often hires high school and college students during the summer. He wants to hire Swift because of his commitment to play at the U and wants him to employ him for the summer at an hourly rate higher than what he pays his other student employees. He invites Swift and his parents for dinner at his house because "Mrs. Jones is a great cook!" and he wants to talk about their athletic futures at the U.

While at their house having dinner, Shooter offers to pay for Swift's parents' airfare to one away game this upcoming basketball season. He wants to show how much he cares for Swift and his family and wants to do everything he can to help out his friends.

Once Andy and Swift start the fall semester at the University of Minnesota, Shooter invites the Gopher's team over to his house for a meal during the fall term. He also invites the players and their parents to attend a booster club event that is strictly for booster club members only. "The event is taking place in September during Parents Weekend. Just come on by and bring your parents who are always welcomed as 'honorary members' of the booster club!" Shooter wishes the team good luck and promises to attend all home games that season.

"He wants to specifically hire Swift because of his commitment to play at the U and wants to employ him for the summer for an hourly rate higher than what he pays his other student employees."

**Find out the answers to
"Check Your Knowledge"
in a few weeks!**

What is an EXTRA BENEFIT?

An extra benefit is defined as any special arrangement by an institutional employee or representative of athletics interest (i.e. booster) to provide a student-athlete or the student's family with a benefit not authorized by the NCAA.

Examples of extra benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Cash or loans of any amount.
- Signing or cosigning a loan.
- Gifts of any kind.
- Discounts not offered to other students.
- Services at no or reduced cost.
- Use of an automobile.
- Free/reduced housing or rent.
- Tickets to an event.
- Special seating at an event.
- Payment arrangement or credit on a purchase or service.
- Use of a telephone, pager or credit card for personal reasons without charge or at a reduced rate.
- Preferential treatment, benefits or services based on his/her athletics reputation or skill or pay-back potential as a future professional.
- Payment or other compensation for work not performed.
- Employment arrangements for a student-athlete or prospect's relatives or friends.