



Payment from Sports Team

Prospective student-athletes may accept compensation from their club team *while in high school*, provided payments do not exceed costs for the individual to participate on the team. However, after full-time enrollment at a collegiate institution, student-athletes may not play on or accept compensation or expenses of any kind from a professional team.

What is a “professional team”?

The NCAA defines a professional team as a team that does at least one the following:

- Declares itself to be a professional team; or
- Pays at least one of its players above actual and necessary expenses.

Before accepting any payments from a sports team, check with the athletics compliance office at the NCAA school recruiting you. If payments are accepted, the Eligibility Center encourages you to keep receipts and records of all out-of-pocket expenses related to your participation on the team.

What are “actual and necessary expenses”?

The NCAA defines actual and necessary expenses as:

- Meals.
- Lodging.
- Apparel, equipment and supplies.
- Coaching and instruction.
- Health/medical insurance.
- Transportation.
- Medical treatment and physical therapy.
- Facility usage.
- Entry fees.
- Other reasonable expenses.

Important considerations

- Actual and necessary expenses may be provided only if such expenses are for competition on a team or in a specific event or for practice that is directly related to such competition.
- The value of such expenses must be commensurate with the fair market value of similar goods and services in the locale in which the expenses are provided and must not be excessive in nature.
- Actual and necessary expenses may not include the expenses or fees of anyone other than the individual who participates as a member of the team or in a specific event.

Certifying Professional Team Legislation Compliance

The Eligibility Center requires the following to certify compliance of professional team legislation:

- A copy of all documents you and/or your parents signed with the club or team regarding your participation;
- The amount you were paid (each month and total) in the currency in which it was received;
- A list of all expenses (e.g., lodging, meals) the club provided you at no cost; and
- A list of all out-of-pocket expenses tied to your participation on the team.



NCAA rules may be different based on division, sport and/or timing (pre- or post-enrollment). If you have questions regarding your amateur status or NCAA legislation, contact the athletics compliance office at the NCAA institution recruiting you or the NCAA’s public and legislative line at 877-262-1492.