

Proposal NO: 2021-01

IRA Eligibility Regulations and Operating Bylaws

Sponsor: Anita Brenner, Cornell IRA Steward and Todd Kennett, Cornell Varsity Heavyweight Coach

Intent: To provide a consistent date on which recruiting correspondence, including private electronic correspondence, text messages (incoming and outgoing), and phone calls (incoming and outgoing) can occur with a prospective student-athlete and his parents or legal guardians that better aligns with current unofficial visit and off-campus contact rules. The proposal continues to stem concerns with early recruitment while allowing flexibility needed to appropriately recruit prospects given current recruiting timelines.

Involved Bylaw: Article I of the Eligibility Regulations and Operating Bylaws

Current: Article I: AMATEURISM, RECRUITING, AWARDS AND BENEFITS

IRA institutions agree to abide by NCAA operating bylaws regarding AMATEURISM (Article 12), RECRUITING (Article 13), and AWARDS AND BENEFITS (Article 16). All NCAA regulations and NCAA Official interpretations related thereto shall apply unless specifically excluded by vote of the members of the Association. Standard waivers regarding Amateurism, Recruiting, Awards and Benefits, as permitted under NCAA Regulations, may be processed in accordance with NCAA precedent through the NCAA affiliated conference office (AAC, PAC-12, Ivy League, etc.) Notice of any such waiver that is granted must be reported to the IRA Commissioner.

A. Time Period for Telephone Calls – General Rule. Telephone calls or text messages to an individual (or his or her relatives or legal guardians) may not be made before July 1 following the completion of his or her junior year in high school, or the opening day of classes of his or her senior year of high school (as designated by the high school), whichever is earlier. (Revised June 1, 2014/Effective June 5, 2014)

B. Time Period for Expense Paid Visits (Official Visits) First Opportunity to Visit – General Rule. An individual may not be provided an expense paid visit earlier than the opening day of classes of his or her senior year of high school (as designated by the high school).

Proposed:

~~A. Time Period for Telephone Calls – General Rule. Telephone calls or text messages to an individual (or his or her relatives or legal guardians) may not be made before July 1 following the completion of his or her junior year in high school, or the opening day of classes of his or her senior year of high school (as designated by the high school), whichever is earlier. (Revised June 1, 2014/Effective June 5, 2014)~~

~~A.-B. Time Period for Expense Paid Visits (Official Visits) First Opportunity to Visit – General Rule. An individual may not be provided an expense paid visit earlier than the opening day of classes of his or her senior year of high school (as designated by the high school).~~

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Prospective college students as a whole tend to begin their college search process and pursue college visits during their junior year. The process and timeline is no different for prospective student-athletes. Consistent with this timeline, unofficial visits and off-campus contacts are currently allowed beginning 8/1 **prior to a prospect's junior year**. However, outgoing calls from coaches to prospects and text messages cannot occur before July 1 **following completion of a prospect's junior year**. The dissonance between these two rules (allowing in-person contact via unofficial visits and off-campus contact prior to allowing coaches to initiate communication via calls and text messaging) makes for impractical and un reasonable communication surrounding permissible in-person contact throughout a prospect's junior year and the summer prior to and following junior year. This rule change would provide for a tiered recruitment process that allows for reasonable and necessary communication between coaches and a prospect to best understand mutual interest and manage logistics prior to and during permissible unofficial and off-campus visits. Further, allowing coaches to call and send/receive text messages and all general recruiting correspondence on a singular date after sophomore year simplifies the process and better aligns with a prospect's college search process. The majority of coaches are in favor of this change. This change also will fall in line with the current NCAA rules regarding phone calls and general correspondence for Women's Rowing.