



This guide is intended to assist fans, donors and boosters in following NCAA, SEC and institutional rules and regulations. If you have questions about the information covered in this guide or any other NCAA, SEC or Vanderbilt rules, please contact a member of the Vanderbilt Athletics Compliance staff (see contact information on back panel). Be proactive and ask questions before you act.

**Dear alumni, donors, fans and friends of Vanderbilt,**

Vanderbilt University is committed to excellence in academics and athletics. This includes a commitment to integrity and compliance with all NCAA, Southeastern Conference, and institutional rules. It is our responsibility to ensure that you—alumni, donors, fans or friends of Vanderbilt Athletics—have a basic understanding of the guidelines outlined in this material. We need your help in our commitment to integrity and are here to serve as a resource for you. We appreciate your continued support and commitment to our programs and student-athletes.

Anchor Down!

*Candice Lee*

**Candice Lee**  
Vice Chancellor for Athletics and  
University Affairs and Athletic Director

## POSSIBLE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF NCAA RULES

Violating any NCAA or SEC rule can pose serious issues for Vanderbilt University, Vanderbilt Athletics, and the individuals or teams involved. Penalties are levied by the NCAA Committee on Infractions or enforcement staff in an effort to eliminate any competitive advantage or benefit received by institutions, teams, staff or student-athletes. These penalties reflect the severity of the violation and may include actions such as:

- Complete dissociation from specific donors over a specified period of time;
- Discontinuing recruitment of a prospect;
- A reduction in recruiting activities for the sport involved (e.g., prohibition on communication with prospects during specific time frames, reduced number of official visits available, etc.);
- Loss of eligibility for student-athletes or prospects;
- Student-athlete repayment of the value of the extra benefit prior to regaining eligibility;
- Post-season competition ban;
- Coaching suspensions; or
- Institutional probation.



## QUESTIONS?

NCAA, SEC and Vanderbilt rules are extensive and complex, and, as such, they cannot all be covered here. If you have questions about these rules, or information regarding a potential violation of these rules, we encourage you to contact us using the methods below. It is our job to protect the interests of Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt Athletics, and we cannot do this without your help as part of our team.

**Vanderbilt Athletics Compliance**  
McGugin Center, 2nd Floor  
2601 Jess Neely Drive  
Nashville, TN 37212

615-322-2083

@VandyCompliance

# DONOR AND FAN COMPLIANCE GUIDE



 **VANDERBILT**

## PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETES

A prospective student-athlete (also referred to as a prospect, PSA or recruit) is any student who has started classes for the ninth grade, regardless of athletics participation. Also, a student who has not started high school classes could be considered a prospect if he or she received a benefit from Vanderbilt that is not otherwise provided to prospective students.

Students who make a verbal commitment to Vanderbilt or sign a National Letter of Intent are still considered prospects, and recruiting rules continue to apply until they begin their collegiate careers.

## RECRUITING

Recruiting draws the interest of many fans, but it should only be conducted by the small group of coaches working on behalf of Vanderbilt Athletics. Recruiting also may involve members of the Vanderbilt Athletics staff or campus faculty members, but may not be carried out by members of the general public, including donors and fans. Please see “Other Recruiting Rules for Donors and Fans” for permissible ways to interact with prospects.

## OFFERS AND INDUCEMENTS

Vanderbilt donors, fans and staff may not provide or arrange for any gifts, benefits or financial aid for a prospect or his/her family members. These rules apply regardless of whether similar financial aid or benefits are available to members of the general public or to other prospects who are not involved in athletics.

Specifically prohibited items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Funding a prospect’s visit to Vanderbilt;
- Arranging for employment for a prospect or a prospect’s relative;
- Giving a gift of clothing, equipment or any tangible item;
- Co-signing a loan;
- Sponsoring, or arranging for, an awards banquet for high school, prep school or two-year college student-athletes by Vanderbilt University, the National Commodore Club or any other booster group; or
- Free or reduced-cost services, housing, loans, rentals or purchases of any type.

## OTHER RECRUITING RULES FOR DONORS AND FANS

Do you know of a prospect who might be a fit for one of Vanderbilt’s teams? Fans are able to communicate names and information to our coaches but may not be involved in their recruiting process. Donors and fans may have general conversations with prospects as long as the content of the discussion does not involve recruiting the athlete to attend Vanderbilt and they are not directed to do so by Vanderbilt staff. This extends to interactions with prospects via social media for purposes of recruiting them to Vanderbilt (e.g., wall posts, “@” mentions involving recruiting-related messages).

Similarly, donors and fans are welcome to attend sporting events where prospects are competing as long as attendance is not directed by a member of Vanderbilt staff and no contact is made with a prospect to discuss any aspect of their athletic recruitment. This prohibition extends to contacts with the prospect’s coach and high school administrators, and evaluations of a prospect’s athletic or academic abilities.



## PERMISSIBLE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Donors are permitted to host an occasional meal in their home for a team or group of student-athletes. All meals must be pre-approved by Vanderbilt Athletics Compliance, and donors may also provide reasonable, local transportation to a pre-approved occasional meal.

## OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Donors also may provide employment opportunities for student-athletes as long as positions are filled using regular hiring procedures, and student-athletes are paid a rate similar to others in that position for work they actually perform. All student-athlete employment must be pre-approved by Vanderbilt’s Athletics Compliance Staff.

**Please review the "Donor and Fan Guidance for Name, Image, and Likeness Activities" page on [vucommodores.com](http://vucommodores.com) for more information about involvement with NIL activities.**

## FORMER AND CURRENT STUDENT-ATHLETES

### EXTRA BENEFITS AND PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR FORMER AND CURRENT STUDENT-ATHLETES

The NCAA permits current and former student-athletes to receive various benefits from Vanderbilt Athletics in addition to their scholarships, including academic counseling and tutors, apparel and equipment, transportation for practice and competition, medical services, and specific meals incidental to their participation. However, benefits provided by members of the public or supporters of Vanderbilt Athletics may be considered an “extra benefit,” which is impermissible under NCAA rules. Extra benefits are defined as any benefit, gift or service that is provided to a student-athlete but not otherwise generally available to other Vanderbilt students or members of the public.

Some specific benefits that are generally prohibited, regardless of whether similar arrangements are available for other Vanderbilt students or members of the Nashville community, include:

- Cash or loans of any amount;
- Co-signing or arranging a loan;
- Gifts or free services (e.g., airline tickets, restaurant meals, gift cards, concert tickets, etc.);
- Rent-free or reduced-cost housing;
- Employment of a student-athlete at a rate higher than the normal average for that position and type of work;
- Transportation (other than local transportation provided for an occasional meal – see “Permissible Ways to Get Involved”);
- Promise of employment or payment after college graduation; or
- Invitations to your home or property for purposes other than a pre-approved occasional meal.

**Note: Some exceptions are made for established relationships, but they must be reviewed by the compliance staff on a case-by-case basis.**

