



# The University of South Carolina Office of Compliance Services Presents...

# **BOOSTER BULLETIN**

## Information for Boosters and Representatives of Athletics Interests

Last month our newsletter focused on social media activities in which boosters could and could not engage under NCAA rules. For February 2016, our topic is the following:

5. You may employ student-athletes, provided they are compensated for work actually performed. You may also employ prospective student-athletes under the same rules, provided USC is not involved in finding the job and the job is available to all qualified applicants.

### Employing Current Student-Athletes

It is permissible for boosters to employ current USC student-athletes provided a few requirements are met. As you will recall, individuals, companies, and organizations can be considered boosters of USC Athletics.

Know that the same regulations apply to student-athletes asked to help with tasks such as babysitting, yard work, or moving furniture.

- A. Student-athletes are required to register their employment with the Office of Compliance Services. If you employ a student-athlete, please ensure that they have received approval to work from Compliance Services.
- B. Student-athletes may only be paid for work they actually perform. It is not permissible to allow a student-athlete to clock-in and clock-out without performing the required job duties.
- C. Student-athletes must be compensated at the same rate as a worker with the same level experience who performs similar services. For example, if a student-athlete's equally-qualified coworker performs the same duties for \$10/hour, both should be paid a similar rate and receive equal employment benefits.
- D. The student-athlete may not be compensated based on the publicity, fame, or reputation that he or she has obtained due to his or her athletics ability. Therefore, student-athletes may not be compensated more simply because they may increase sales due to status as a USC student-athlete.

Violations of any of the above requirements could cause the student-athlete to become ineligible to represent the institution in competition.

## What About Employing Prospects and Former Student-Athletes?

**PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETES:** It is permissible for boosters to employ prospects, provided USC does not arrange the employment and the opportunity for employment is available on an equal basis for all applicants who qualify for the position (e.g., classified ad, “jobs available” window poster). USC may not recommend a particular prospect for an available job at a booster’s business, nor may the booster show the prospect any preferential treatment in the hiring process. In all situations, prospects may only be compensated for work they actually perform and must be paid a comparable rate.

**FORMER STUDENT-ATHLETES:** Former student-athletes are held to the same extra benefits legislation as current student-athletes and a booster may enter into a legitimate business agreement (e.g., employment) with a former student-athlete. Under these circumstances, a booster still may not provide a former student-athlete with cash or other gifts.



## What is “Cost of Attendance”

In 2014, the NCAA took steps towards permitting schools in the “Big 5” conferences (SEC, ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, and Pac -12) to create new legislation aimed at enhanced student-athlete welfare outside of the NCAA’s normal legislative process. Of the newly passed pieces of “autonomy legislation,” one of the most noteworthy involved the increase of a full grant-in-aid (FGIA) from tuition and fees, room, board, books to include other expenses known as Cost of Attendance (COA).

COA is intended to cover the real costs of attending college, such as academic-related supplies, transportation and other personal expenses. Each school’s financial aid authority is in charge of setting the amount of COA in accordance with federal guidelines, as the number is based on school specific factors such as location and local cost of living. Further, each school is permitted to provide this money in whatever fashion they’d like (ex: monthly installments).

USC is committed to promoting student-athlete welfare, and is currently in its first year of providing COA for scholarship student-athletes.

### University of South Carolina Office of Compliance Services

The University of South Carolina is committed to the principle of institutional control in the operation of its athletics department. The Office of Compliance Services (OCS) has the goal of creating a “compliance conscience” within the institution and throughout the community by developing a comprehensive compliance program that educates its constituents about the importance of following the letter and spirit of the rules and regulations set forth by the NCAA, Southeastern Conference (SEC) and South Carolina administration.

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