

VIRGINIA TECH
ATHLETICS COMPLIANCE
GUIDELINES & NCAA RULES



Guide for
HOKIES
Supporters





THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF **VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS**

Virginia Tech Athletics is proud to have your loyal support, dedication and enthusiasm for the Hokies. As we strive for continued excellence, we always seek the highest standard of ethical conduct. You may not be aware, but all season ticket holders are considered a representative of athletics interests (boosters).

Please visit our Compliance page on our website, hokiesports.com, in order to learn more about NCAA rules and how they affect the Virginia Tech Athletics mission.

Adhering to NCAA rules and legislation is the responsibility of everyone associated with, or supportive of, the university. In helping Virginia Tech Athletics achieve its goal of a “higher purpose,” we are asking for your assistance in continuing to build compliance awareness.

If you have any questions or become aware of any potential violations, please contact the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office at:

Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance
356 Jamerson Athletic Center
21 Beamer Way
Blacksburg, VA 24061
(540) 231-2696
VTCCompliance@vt.edu

 [@VT_Compliance](https://twitter.com/VT_Compliance)

A LETTER FROM **COMPLIANCE**

Dear Hokie Supporters,

You can help the Hokies by being knowledgeable about NCAA rules. As a booster at VT, NCAA rules place you under the responsibility of Virginia Tech Athletics. Please review this brochure containing some of the rules that must be followed to avoid jeopardizing the eligibility of our current and prospective student-athletes.

Thank you for your support and cooperation. Please contact the Compliance Office if you have a question or wish to receive further information. Let's Go Hokies!

Regards,



Derek Gwinn

Senior Associate Athletic Director for Compliance



THE BASICS

Booster Defined

A booster is an individual, independent agency, corporate entity (e.g., apparel or equipment manufacturer, NIL Collective), or other organization that is known to:

- Hold, or have ever held, season tickets for any sport with Virginia Tech Athletics;
- Have participated in or been a member of an agency or organization promoting any Virginia Tech Athletics program (e.g., Virginia Tech Alumni Association, Hokie Club, Monogram Club, etc.);
- Have made financial contributions to the athletics department or to an athletics booster organization of that institution (e.g. Hokie Club, Inside Backers, Roundball Club etc.);
- Be assisting or to have assisted in providing benefits to enrolled student-athletes or their families, which would trigger booster status under NCAA rules. These benefits include, but are not limited to, financial assistance, use of a car, use of a cell phone, etc.;
- Provide allowable benefits (e.g., employment or NIL opportunities, occasional meals, etc.) to enrolled student-athletes; or
- Promote Virginia Tech Athletics in any way.

This list is not exhaustive. Please contact the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office if you have any questions about your possible status as a booster.



PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETES

As a booster, the NCAA restricts the involvement that you may have with prospective student-athletes. Only coaches and authorized employees may be involved in the recruiting process. NCAA rules prohibit boosters from engaging in recruiting activities designed to secure a prospect's enrollment at Virginia Tech.

Permissible Booster Activities

- Continuing to have contact with an established family friend or neighbor who is a prospect (contact Compliance for pre-existing relationship guidelines)
- Viewing a prospect's game on your own initiative
- Receiving a call from a prospect only if the prospect initiates the call and it is not for recruiting purposes
- Notifying the Virginia Tech Athletics coaching staff of prospects

As a Booster you may NOT:

- Contact or call a prospect that you do not have a longstanding relationship with (the relationship must pre-date the ninth grade)
- Contact or call a prospect's parent, coach, principal or counselor
- Assist with the actual evaluation of talent at the direction of a coaching staff member
- Promote Virginia Tech Athletics in any way to encourage a prospect to attend Virginia Tech (e.g. fan page for prospect)





As a Booster you may NOT give/provide a prospect (this list is not exhaustive):

- Use of an automobile or transportation
- Admission to an event (e.g., movies, athletic events, banquets, clubs, special events/parties, concerts, etc.)
- Cash or loans in any amount
- Gifts of any kind, including those on special occasions such as birthdays, religious holidays, finals week, graduation, etc.
- Free or reduced-cost services, rentals, or purchases of any type (e.g., meals, drinks, clothing, laundry, haircuts, legal fees, tattoos, rounds of golf, car repairs, etc.)
- Free or reduced-cost housing for any length of time
- Entertainment
- Payment of bills (e.g., cell phone, gas money, rent, etc.)
- Loans (including co-signing)
- Use of your telephone or credit card
- Academic assistance of any kind (e.g., tutoring, editing papers/ projects, assistance in completing class work, use of computer, etc.)
- Create an NIL opportunity for the purpose of soliciting a prospect's enrollment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

May a prospect call a booster?

Yes. A prospect may call a booster at their own expense. A booster may speak to the prospect **ONLY** if the prospect initiates the call and the call is not prearranged by a Virginia Tech staff member. Discussion must be limited to general Virginia Tech topics. All athletically related questions must be deferred to the athletics department.

May a booster call a prospect or send a congratulatory letter once the prospect has committed to or signed a National Letter of Intent with VT?

No. They remain a prospect until the first day of enrollment during summer, fall or spring semester or their first official day of practice. Until that time, they remain a prospect and the same rules apply even after signing the NLI.

May a booster pay for a prospect's expenses or fees to attend camp?

No, unless the prospect is an immediate family member of the booster (must register with the Compliance Office).

May a booster speak to a prospect who is accompanied by a Virginia Tech Athletics coach?

No. If a Virginia Tech Athletics coach is with a prospect during their visit to Virginia Tech, do not approach the coach until the prospect and their family are completely off-campus.

Is it permissible for a booster to accompany a Virginia Tech Athletics coach when they visit a local high school or prospect's home?

No. A booster may not accompany a coach during any recruiting activities.



ENROLLED STUDENT-ATHLETES

As a booster, the NCAA restricts the involvement that you may have with student-athletes. NCAA rules prohibit boosters from providing a student-athlete with an extra benefit and doing so may result in the student-athlete being declared ineligible to compete on behalf of Virginia Tech Athletics. Extra benefit violations include any special gift or arrangement provided to a student-athlete, or a student-athlete's friend or family member that is not available to the general public or the Virginia Tech student body

Permissible Booster Activities:

- Employ student-athletes (see employment section of brochure)
- Provide or arrange Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) activities consistent with the VT Athletics Department NIL Protocol (see NIL section of this brochure)
- Host a meal at your home or at Virginia Tech Athletics facilities on an occasional basis that has been approved by the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office prior to the meal occurring
- Speak with student-athletes at athletic events, banquets, etc.

As a Booster you may NOT give/provide a student-athlete:

- Use of an automobile or transportation
- Admission to an event (e.g., movies, athletic events, banquets, clubs, special events/parties, concerts, etc.)
- Cash or loans in any amount
- Gifts of any kind, including those on special occasions such as birthdays, religious holidays, finals week, graduation, etc.
- Free or reduced-cost services, rentals, or purchases of any type (e.g., meals, drinks, clothing, laundry, haircuts, legal fees, tattoos, rounds of golf, car repairs, etc.)
- Free or reduced-cost housing for any length of time
- Entertainment
- Assistance with paying bills (e.g., cell phone, gas money, rent, etc.)
- Awards
- Loans (including co-signing)
- Use of your telephone or credit card
- Provide a meal outside your home or Virginia Tech Athletics facility
- Academic assistance of any kind (e.g., tutoring, editing papers/ projects, assistance in completing class work, use of computer, etc.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

May a booster receive a ticket to an athletic event from a current student-athlete?

No. At Virginia Tech, boosters are not permitted to receive a complimentary admission or to purchase a ticket from a current student-athlete or their family members.

May a booster purchase a photo or item that belongs to a current student-athlete or is signed by a current student-athlete?

Yes with conditions. Boosters may purchase autographed photos of student-athletes at fair market value. Any VT equipment or apparel is state property and is not permissible for the student-athlete to sell unless they have exhausted their eligibility and retained ownership of the item. Autographed equipment or apparel not issued by VT may be purchased from the student-athlete at fair market value.

May a booster speak with a student-athlete at an athletic event or banquet?

Yes. Communication with current student-athletes at an athletic event or banquet is not restricted under NCAA rules.

May a booster provide a student-athlete with a nominal gift for a special event (e.g., birthday, religious holiday, weddings, finals week, graduation, etc.)?

No. Provision of any gift, including a gift of nominal value, is considered an extra benefit under NCAA rules and receipt of such benefits will jeopardize the eligibility of the student-athlete.

May a booster host a meal for current student-athletes?

Yes. A booster may host a meal on an occasional basis for any number of current student-athletes provided the meal is approved by the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office prior to occurring. Meals may only be hosted in the booster's home or in a Virginia Tech Athletics facility regularly used for team meals.

EMPLOYMENT OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE

Employment of a student-athlete is permissible, provided all five (5) of the following conditions are met:

- 1.** The student-athlete is only paid for the work actually performed;
- 2.** The student-athlete is paid at the rate commensurate with the going rate in that locale for similar services;
- 3.** The student-athlete may not be provided compensation in exchange for their enrollment and participation in athletics at Virginia Tech or for specific athletic achievements (e.g. touchdowns, goals scored, homeruns, etc.);
- 4.** Student-athletes must register all jobs during the academic year and the summer by completing the Student-Athlete Employment Form and returning it to the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office prior to beginning work; and
- 5.** Employers **MUST** confirm the employment of Virginia Tech Athletics student-athletes prior to their employment beginning.

Gambling Activities

NCAA rules prohibit student-athletes and athletic department staff members from participating in any sports gambling activity or providing information concerning competitions to individuals involved in organized gambling activities. Additionally, it is a violation of federal law for boosters, student-athletes, or staff members to affect or attempt to affect the outcome of a collegiate contest. Virginia Tech Athletics asks that you do not contact student-athletes or Virginia Tech Athletics staff members regarding medical, academic, or personal issues of any student-athletes at VT.



NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS (NIL)

On July 1, 2021, the NCAA changed its regulations to allow student-athletes to earn compensation for name, image and likeness (NIL) activities which are used for promotional purposes by a non-institutional entity, including a commercial entity, or a non-institutional nonprofit or charitable entity. In conjunction with NCAA policies and anticipated Virginia state law, Virginia Tech and the Department of Athletics have developed specific policies* to address NIL activities of student-athletes. If an individual or business wishes to enter into an NIL agreement with a student-athlete, they must register on the Hokies Exchange platform at HokieSports.com/Exchange. Once approved, it will be put into a database where student-athletes and the entity can connect for potential NIL deals. When engaging with student-athletes regarding NIL opportunities, please remember the following:

- All NIL activities **MUST** be reported to the Compliance Office as soon as possible. NIL deals completed through Hokies Exchange are automatically logged.
- Virginia Tech staff members may not be involved in the arrangement of any NIL activity for prospective student-athletes (incoming freshmen and transfers).
- NIL activities must occur outside of participation in academic, athletic, or Virginia Tech sponsored activities.
- All NIL related compensation must be fair market value and only for work actually performed.
- Compensation may not be provided in exchange for athletic performance or attendance at Virginia Tech.
- Any agent/attorney that represents a student-athlete must be cleared by the Compliance Office.
- A student-athlete may not participate in NIL activities that involve a prohibited item or substance listed in the Virginia Tech NIL protocol.

**Please check with the Compliance Office to ensure all guidelines are the most recent version.*

NIL Q&A

Q: May a booster or fan enter into an agreement with a VT student-athlete (“SA”) for the use of their name, image, or likeness in exchange for money, goods or services?

Yes. Before entering such a contract, the SA is required to disclose any proposed agreement or activity to the Compliance Office. It is possible, and likely, that federal laws and NCAA legislation will ultimately provide a nationwide, uniform approach to NIL governance, at which point restrictions on these agreements are subject to change.

Q: May VT employees assist me with arranging for student athletes to utilize their NIL for compensation with my business, etc.?

Any VT employee must consult the Compliance Office before providing any assistance to a student-athlete related to an NIL activity.

Q: Will VT assist SAs with other NIL-related issues?

Yes. VT will have resources and programming to educate student athletes in how to maximize the use of their NIL for compensation, as well as understanding associated issues (e.g., financial literacy, debt management, time management, budgeting, academic resources, taxation).

Q: May an SA receive NIL-compensation based on the SA's athletic performance at VT?

No.

Q: May a booster or fan compensate an SA for the SA's NIL when the SA is engaged in official team activities?

No. For example, if a SA is at a fan event that has been organized by VT (e.g. Fan-Day), or at an away-from-home competition, you may not compensate the SA for the SA's autograph or photo because the SA is engaged in official team activities. If the SA is participating in an activity that was organized by VT, then it is an official team activity.

Q: Are there limitations on the compensation or opportunities that can be provided to a SA for use of their NIL?

Yes. Compensation for NIL use shall be commensurate with the market value. Additionally, SAs are not permitted to enter into an endorsement contract, or otherwise receive compensation, from any of the following categories or brands:

- Casinos or gambling, including sports betting;
- Alcohol products;
- Adult entertainment;
- Cannabis, cannabinoids, cannabidiol, or other derivatives;
- Dangerous or controlled substances;
- Performance enhancing drugs or substances;
- Drug paraphernalia;
- Tobacco and electronic smoking products and devices; and
- Weapons, including firearms and ammunition;
- Any substances not listed above that appear on the NCAA banned substances list.

Q: Can VT's marks, logos or other intellectual property be used in a proposed NIL-contract with a VT SA (e.g., SA filming endorsement ad while wearing VT hat or jersey)?

No.

Q: May a booster, fan or VT employee provide NIL compensation to a prospective student-athlete ("PSA")?

No. Generally, PSAs participate in competition governed by state athletics associations that have amateurism rules which prohibit a PSA from using his/her NIL for compensation.

Q: May a contract for NIL compensation stipulate that an SA must compete for, or attend, VT (or any other NCAA member school)?

No. This type of arrangement could impact a student-athlete's eligibility. WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK!

EVALUATION

Any activity designed to assess the academic qualifications or athletic ability of a prospect, including any visit to a prospect's school or the observation of a prospect participating in any practice or competition.

Student-Athlete

A student who presently is participating in intercollegiate athletics or has participated in intercollegiate athletics and is still receiving athletics aid.

Extra Benefit

An extra benefit is any special gift or arrangement provided to a student-athlete, or student-athlete's friend or family member, which is not available to the general VT student body or the general population.

EXAMPLES OF EXTRA BENEFITS

**Example of Extra Benefits
(this is NOT an exhaustive list):**

Prospective Student-Athletes and Enrolled Student-Athletes

- Use of an automobile or transportation
- Admission to an event (e.g., movies, athletic events, banquets, clubs, special events/parties, concerts, etc.)
- Cash or loans in any amount
- Gifts of any kind, including those on special occasions such as birthdays, religious holidays, finals week, graduation, etc.

- Free or reduced-cost services, rentals, or purchases of any type (e.g., meals, drinks, clothing, laundry, haircuts, legal fees, tattoos, rounds of golf, car repairs, etc.)
- Free or reduced-cost housing for any length of time
- Entertainment
- Assistance with paying bills (e.g., cell phone, gas money, rent, etc.)
- Awards
- Loans (including co-signing)
- Use of your telephone or credit card
- Providing a meal outside of your home or Virginia Tech Athletics facilities
- Academic assistance of any kind (e.g., tutoring, editing papers/ projects, assistance in completing class work, use of computer, etc.)



Recruiting Inducement:

A recruiting inducement under NCAA rules is any special gift or arrangement provided to a prospective student-athlete that is not available to the general population. The arrangement of such a benefit would be considered an improper inducement to encourage the eventual enrollment of a prospective student-athlete at Virginia Tech.

Representatives of Athletics Interests:

Remember, once you are identified as a “Representative of Athletics Interests” (“Booster”), you retain that identity forever. Boosters are bound by NCAA, ACC and VT rules, policies, and guidelines. As a result, boosters are responsible for notifying the Virginia Tech Athletics Compliance Office of any potential rules violations. Even if a violation is unintentional, the eligibility of a prospect (recruit) or enrolled student-athlete could be in jeopardy.

NCAA RULES

Top 10 things fans & friends of Virginia Tech Athletics should know about NCAA Rules

1. The NCAA holds Virginia Tech accountable for the actions of its fans and friends. This means that if you are involved with NCAA violations (known or unknown), Virginia Tech may have to forfeit games, entire seasons, scholarships, recruiting opportunities, or may be prohibited from participating in post-season competition.
2. You may send information about prospects to Virginia Tech Athletics coaching staff members.
3. You may continue established relationships with friends and neighbors whose children are prospects or current student-athletes, provided the relationship pre-dates high school and is not based on their status as an athlete.
4. You may not be involved in recruiting prospective student-athletes on behalf of Virginia Tech. A prospective student-athlete is defined as a student who has started classes for the ninth grade or above.
5. You may not become involved in arranging for a prospect, a Virginia Tech student-athlete, or a Virginia Tech student-athlete's friends or family to receive money or financial assistance of any kind.
6. You may not provide transportation to a prospect, student-athlete, or their friends and family.
7. You may not spend funds to entertain prospects, student-athletes, or their friends and family.
8. All employment and NIL activities of student-athletes must be disclosed to the Compliance Office.
9. Breaking NCAA rules can render prospects and student-athletes ineligible to compete on behalf of Virginia Tech Athletics.
10. **ALWAYS ASK BEFORE YOU ACT!**



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