

# Sooner Fans, Friends, Alumni & Boosters

## Frequently Asked Questions



Sooner boosters, alumni and fans are some of the most devoted fans and often want to show their support for Oklahoma Athletics. However, there are limitations that preclude the type of support they may provide. By being educated and aware of the NCAA regulations controlling their conduct and such support, all Sooner boosters, alumni and fans can help to preserve our integrity and excellence at the University of Oklahoma. The Athletics Compliance Department is always available to answer any questions you may have, so to avoid a potential violation, remember to ASK BEFORE YOU ACT.

### **Is Oklahoma responsible for the actions of its boosters and booster groups?**

- Yes. Boosters are subject to the same NCAA and institutional rules that govern Oklahoma Department of Athletics staff members. If a violation of these rules occurs, even unintentionally, it may jeopardize a prospect's or current student-athlete's eligibility.

### **What action should an athletic representative (booster) take, if he/she becomes aware of a rules violation?**

- The athletic representative should contact the Athletics Compliance Department to discuss the information pertinent to the violation. If the athletic representative wishes to remain anonymous, he/she can contact the Athletics Compliance Department to provide information without giving a name. The Athletics Compliance Department will review the information and process it as necessary.

## **CURRENT STUDENT-ATHLETES**

### **May I provide a student-athlete with gifts?**

- No, a fan, booster or alumni may not provide a student-athlete or their relatives or friends with any gifts. A gift would be considered an extra-benefit which is impermissible, unless it is demonstrated that the same benefit is generally available to the institution's students or their relatives or friends determined on a basis unrelated to athletic ability.

### **May I provide discounted housing or rent to student-athletes?**

- Discounted housing or rent would be considered an extra-benefit and it would be impermissible to provide such a discount to a student-athlete, his/her relatives or friends.

### **Is it permissible for a booster to provide an enrolled student-athlete with professional services (for which a fee would normally be charged) for personal reasons?**

- No. Professional services provided at a fee less than the normal rate or at no expense to a student-athlete are considered extra benefits.

### **May I purchase a complimentary admission ticket from a student-athlete?**

- No, a student-athlete may not receive payment for his or her complimentary admissions and may not exchange them for any item of value.

### **Can boosters fundraise or donate money to send a student-athlete's parents to an athletic contest?**

- No. Under NCAA rules and regulations, such activity may jeopardize the student-athlete's eligibility.

### **May I allow a student-athlete to use my telephone to make long distance phone calls?**

- No, this would constitute an extra benefit and is impermissible.

### **I have an extra car that I don't use, is it ok to lend it to a student-athlete?**

- The provision of free transportation would constitute an extra-benefit. This includes loaning an automobile, free plane tickets home, or paying for transportation for the student-athlete's relatives to attend a competition.

### **May I provide a scholarship to a particular student-athlete?**

- No, a scholarship may not be provided to a particular student-athlete; however a booster or alumni may make an athletic scholarship contribution to the Athletics Department.

### **May I employ a student-athlete?**

- It is permissible for a booster or alumni to employ a current student-athlete. Compensation must be based upon work actually performed and at a rate commensurate with services of like character in that locality. Compensation may not be based upon the student-athlete's reputation, fame, publicity or athletic success. The student-athlete may not receive any benefits not provided to other employees and may not be used to advertise, promote or endorse the employer or product.

### **May a student-athlete make a public appearance at a business establishment for purposes of signing autographs?**

- No. It should be noted that student-athletes may make appearances at schools, hospitals or other non-profit charitable organizations, provided they do not receive compensation and such activities are authorized by the athletic department.

## **PROSPECTIVE STUDENT ATHLETES**

### **Who is considered to be a prospective student-athlete (prospect)?**

- A prospect is a student in the ninth grade or above regardless of their athletic talent. Prospects are also students in prep schools and junior colleges.

### **How long is a prospective student-athlete considered to be a prospect?**

- A prospective student-athlete remains a prospect even after committing to or signing a National Letter of Intent with the University of Oklahoma, or any institution, and both the institution and the prospect continue to be governed by NCAA recruiting legislation regarding prospects until the prospect reports for regular squad practice or the prospect attends his/her first day of classes in any regular semester.

### **Is there any way a booster can help identify prospects?**

- A booster can assist the coaching staff in the recruiting process by notifying them of any student they think would be a strong addition to the University and the athletics program. Boosters may also send Oklahoma's coaching staff any newspaper clippings or other information about prospects. The coach can then make the appropriate contact. Boosters are also permitted to attend high school or two year college athletic contests or other events where prospects may compete on their own. Boosters are not permitted to contact the prospect or the prospect's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) at these events.

**Is it permissible to contact a prospective student-athlete or his/her parents or legal guardians?**

- No. An athletic representative may not contact a prospect or his/her parents in person, by telephone or in writing. Contact may not be made with a prospect or his/her parents on or off the OU campus.

**May I go talk to a prospective student-athlete before, after or on the sidelines at the prospect's athletics contest?**

- An athletics representative is allowed to attend and observe a prospective student-athlete's athletic contest, but may not make contact with the prospective student-athlete, his or her parents or coaches during such occasion.

**Is this contact rule applicable to "established family friends" or neighbors?**

- No. However, it must be understood that such contacts cannot be made for recruiting purposes and cannot be initiated or arranged by OU coaching staff members. In addition, the established relationship between the booster and the prospect must have occurred prior to the friend or neighbor becoming a prospect.

**Is it permissible for an athletic representative to telephone a prospect once the prospect has committed to or signed a National Letter of Intent and congratulate them?**

- No. Even if the purpose of the call is only to congratulate the prospect, he/she is still a prospect and the same contact rules apply after committing or signing that applied before. Do not contact a prospect without first checking with the Compliance Department, unless the prospect is a relative.

**During recruitment, or prior to an individual's enrollment, can an athletic representative be involved directly or indirectly in making arrangements for a prospect, the prospect's relative, or friends to receive money, financial aid, or equivalent inducements?**

- No. Furthermore, it would not be permissible to make such arrangements for current student-athletes at OU.

**What are considered other types of inducements that are prohibited for prospects, their relatives or friends?**

- Other types of inducements that are prohibited include, but are not limited to the following: cash or loans; promise of employment after college education; special discounts or payment arrangements on loans; employment or relatives or friends of prospects; arrangement for free or reduced charges for professional or personal services, purchases or charges; use of an automobile; providing transportation to and from summer job or any other site; co-signing a loan; the loan or gift of money or other tangible items (clothes, cars, jewelry, electronic/stereo equipment); free or reduced cost housing arrangements; entertainment costs on or off campus; educational expenses (typing costs, course supplies, use of copy machine); or registration for summer sports camps.

**May I e-mail or post messages on a prospective student-athlete's MySpace, Facebook or similar web site and try to convince him or her to attend the University of Oklahoma?**

- An athletics representative may not e-mail or post messages on the webpage or website of any prospective student-athlete.

The information contained in this list of frequently asked questions does not represent every possible question or situation. If you have any questions regarding prospects, student-athletes, or NCAA rules and regulations, please contact the Athletics Compliance Department: by phone at (405) 325-7004 or by e-mail at [athleticscompliance@ou.edu](mailto:athleticscompliance@ou.edu).