**An Athlete and Parent’s Guide to Current NCAA Rules on Eligibility and**

**the Transfer Portal**

**Introduction**

Navigating NCAA eligibility rules and the transfer portal can be complex for student-athletes and their families. This guide breaks down the latest NCAA policies (as of 2024) to help you make informed decisions about college sports participation, academic requirements, and transfers.

**Part 1: NCAA Eligibility Requirements**

**1. Academic Eligibility (Division I & II)**

To compete in NCAA sports, athletes must meet academic standards set by the NCAA Eligibility Center:

**Division I Requirements (2024)**

- Core Coursework: 16 NCAA-approved core courses (4 English, 3 Math, 2 Science, 2 Social Science, 5 additional).

- GPA & Test Scores: Minimum 2.3 GPA in core courses with a corresponding SAT/ACT score (sliding scale applies).

- Full Qualifier: Must meet all academic benchmarks to compete as a freshman.

**Division II Requirements (2024)**

- Core Coursework: 16 NCAA-approved core courses (same distribution as D1).

- GPA & Test Scores: Minimum 2.2 GPA in core courses with a corresponding SAT/ACT score.

**Division III**

- No NCAA-wide eligibility standards (schools set their own academic requirements).

**2. Amateurism Rules**

- Athletes cannot receive payment for playing their sport (except under NIL rules—see below).

- They cannot sign with an agent or professional team without losing eligibility.

**3. Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Rules**

- Athletes can earn money from endorsements, sponsorships, and appearances.

- Restrictions:

- No pay-for-play (compensation must be for NIL, not athletic performance).

- Schools cannot directly pay athletes but may facilitate NIL deals.

- State laws and school policies may impose additional rules.

**Part 2: NCAA Transfer Portal Rules (2024 Updates)**

**1. How the Transfer Portal Works**

- The NCAA Transfer Portal is an online database where athletes notify schools of their intent to transfer.

**- Process:**

1. Athlete informs current school of transfer intent.

2. School enters athlete’s name into the portal within 48 hours.

3. Other coaches can then contact the athlete.

**2. Transfer Eligibility Rules**

One-Time Transfer Rule (D1 & D2)

- First-time transfers: Eligible immediately if they:

- Enter the portal before sport-specific deadlines.

- Meet academic progress requirements (GPA benchmarks).

- Second-time transfers: Typically must sit out a year unless granted a waiver (e.g., for mental health, coaching changes, or extenuating circumstances).

Sport-Specific Deadlines (2024)

- Football: 30-day windows (spring & fall).

- Basketball: 60-day window after season ends.

- Other sports: Varies—check NCAA guidelines.

**Graduate Transfers**

- Athletes with remaining eligibility who earn a degree can transfer without restrictions (if the new school offers a graduate program not available at their current school).

**3. Exceptions & Waivers**

- Hardship Waivers: For medical/family emergencies.

- Mental Health Waivers: Increasingly accepted by NCAA.

- Coaching Changes/Unfulfilled Promises: May justify immediate eligibility.

**Part 3: Key Considerations for Athletes & Parents**

**Before Entering the Transfer Portal**

✅ Understand scholarship implications – Current school may revoke aid.

✅ Check academic eligibility – Will credits transfer?

✅ Research NIL opportunities – Some schools have better NIL collectives.

**Protecting Eligibility**

⚠️ Avoid “tampering” – Coaches cannot contact athletes before they enter the portal.

⚠️ Maintain amateurism – NIL deals must comply with NCAA/school policies.

**Conclusion**

NCAA rules on eligibility and transfers are constantly evolving. Staying informed ensures athletes maximize opportunities while avoiding eligibility pitfalls.

**Need Legal Guidance?**

If you have questions about NCAA compliance, NIL contracts, or transfer disputes, consult an attorney specializing in sports law.

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**Disclaimer: This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Rules may change—always verify with the NCAA or a legal professional.**