



**NCAA Officiating Reform Initiative  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)  
Divisions II, III and Single-Sport Conferences  
Updated August 7, 2025**



**General Reform Initiative Questions**

**1. Why was this reform initiative implemented? How does it help conference offices and the officiating profession?**

The NCAA is committed to a long-term officiating reform strategy focusing on providing resources and tools to assist Divisions I, II and III conferences in addressing several officiating concerns. This initiative will assist NCAA officiating leadership by enhancing the centralized registration process, creating consistency in how officials are assigned, educated, paid, and provide the ability to harvest data to identify where resources should be deployed. The NCAA wants to play a critical role in ensuring timely payments to officials, easing the administrative burden on conferences and institutions, eliminate camp attendance mandates tied to regular season assignments and prohibit dues on the backs of officials connected with covering officiating platform costs. The NCAA has ensured officials will have access to education, opportunities, and protections.

**2. Are Division II, III or Single-Sport conferences mandated to participate in the officiating reform initiative?**

No. Divisions II, III and Single-Sport conferences will continue to have the autonomy to utilize any officiating platform and are not required to participate but will not realize the benefits associated with the initiative.

**3. What are the Officiating Reform Initiative Requirements for years 2-8 (2025-26 – 2031-32)?**

- Use RQ Assign for all Central Hub sports.
- Use RQ Pay for all payments to officials.
- Meet the registration threshold for each NCAA Central Hub sport (85% in 2025-26 and 90% 2026-2032).
- Pay officials at least once per month (using RQ Pay) (*Recommendation: officials paid directly by the conference office, but can be paid by institutions or coordinator*).
- Eliminate charging dues/fees to officials to cover officiating platform costs.
- Eliminate mandate that officials pay to attend camps to receive assignments.

**4. What RQ+ products are included in the license?**

RQ Assign, RQ Pay, RQ Resource, RQ Collaboration, Officiating Compliance Program (OCP).

**5. What are the NCAA Central Hub Sports?**

Baseball, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Bowling, Field Hockey, Football, Men's Ice Hockey, Women's Ice Hockey, Men's Lacrosse, Women's Lacrosse, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Softball, Women's Volleyball, Men's Water Polo, Women's Water Polo, and Men's Wrestling.

**6. Why is NCAA Central Hub registration required and how does that benefit officials who are required to pay the Central Hub registration fee?**

The NCAA is committed to the betterment of the officiating landscape and views NCAA Central Hub registration as a critical step in the process. Participation in the NCAA Central hub assists

in the recruitment, retention, and refinement of officials by providing access to the included educational resources, opportunities to work regular season and postseason assignments, as well as protection mechanisms like the included general liability, professional liability, and accident medical insurance. NCAA Central Hub registration allows the NCAA and other stakeholders to have access to relevant officiating data. This information will assist in assessing officiating needs based on a multitude of metrics and efficiently deploy the necessary resources.

**7. What if our conference meets all but one of the reform initiative requirements outlined in a given sport?**

In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), the conference must have all sponsored NCAA Central Hub sports on RQ+ and meet all reform initiative requirements for each sport to receive the benefits of the initiative. If all requirements are not met for every sport, the conference, or whoever is financially responsible for the account (e.g., institutions, coordinator of officials), will be billed for its use of RQ products and services. \*See question #10 about flexibility with the registration threshold requirement.

**8. What if one or more of our conference's schools are NOT paying via RQ Pay for regular-season and championships competition?**

In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), the conference office, or all institutions in the conference, must use RQ Pay for all regular-season and championship payments to officials. If one or more institutions don't meet this requirement, the conference will not realize the benefits of the initiative and will be invoiced for its usage of RQ products and services, even if all other initiative requirements are met for all sports.

**9. Are non-championship season contests (e.g., football spring game, fall competition for baseball and softball) included in the requirement for using RQ Assign and RQ Pay?**

Yes, RQ Assign and RQ Pay must be used for the officiating assignments and game officials payments for Central Hub sports during the non-championship season. Regardless of the type of competition, this initiative will assist in timely payment to officials.

**10. What flexibility is given for the registration threshold requirement?**

Compliance with the reform initiative for the registration threshold (requirement 3) will be monitored seasonally. This is the ONLY requirement with which conferences have flexibility. If the registration threshold requirement is not met for all Central Hub sports in a given season, the conference will be invoiced for its use of all RQ+ products and services (i.e., RQ Assign, RQ Pay and RQ Resource) for all NCAA Central Hub sports during that season. In this example, if a conference does not meet the registration threshold requirement in the spring (via Path 1 or Path 2), the conference, or whoever is financially responsible for the account (e.g., institutions, coordinator of officials), will be billed for its use of all RQ+ products for all spring sports.

**11. What are the two paths for meeting the registration threshold requirement?**

Conferences can meet the percentage threshold requirement by either having each sponsored Central Hub sport meet or exceed the requirement threshold; or by calculating the aggregate percentage by season (fall, winter, spring), as detailed below.

- **Path 1:** By season, a minimum of 85% (2025-26) of each sponsored sport's officials register for their respective Central Hub (e.g., three sponsored fall sports all at a minimum of 85%).
- **Path 2:** By season, an aggregate percentage of 85% (2025-26) of all sponsored sports' officials register for their respective Central Hub. This will be calculated by taking the aggregate total of all rosters in the given season (i.e., the total number of registered officials for the season will be divided by the total number of officials on the rosters for the season to get the overall percentage for all sports in that season).

**12. Will flexibility by season be considered for the RQ Assign and RQ Pay requirements?**

No. Requirements 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 must be met in all NCAA Central Hub sports for conferences to realize the benefits of the NCAA Officiating Reform Initiative (i.e., if a conference uses another platform to assign or pay officials in a Central Hub sport, it is ineligible to realize the benefits of the reform initiative in ANY sport, in any season (fall, winter, spring) – see #10 above for the only exception). Season-by-season flexibility is in regard to requirement number 3 (registration threshold) only.

**13. How will RQ+ know when my roster is final?**

Conferences and their coordinators will be given a date (see below) by which they must finalize their rosters for each respective season. Officials may be added after these dates, however, any roster deletions after these dates will still be figured into the final percentages for the purposes of compliance with the NCAA Officiating Reform Initiative requirements. It is important to note that these calculations will be made using the conference roster identified by the coordinator of officials. The “self-declaration” process by officials during the NCAA Central Hub registration is NOT factored into any calculations for the purposes of compliance with the reform initiative requirements.

- Fall – August 15
- Winter – October 1
- Spring – January 1

**14. How will I know if my conference is meeting the registration threshold in each sport?**

Conferences will be notified by RQ+ of their compliance status on the 15th of each month during the respective season. A final status report will be generated and shared with the conference office for the purposes of compliance at the end of each season on the following dates:

- Fall – November 15
- Winter – March 15
- Spring – May 15

Further, conferences participating in the Officiating Compliance Program (OCP) will receive weekly reports which include the registration percentage for a given roster. The OCP begins

approximately six weeks prior to the start of the season and concludes approximately three weeks after the start of the season. As a reminder, the OCP is provided at no cost to any conference using RQ Assign for a given sport.

### **Costs and Invoicing**

#### **15. Will participating in this initiative result in financial responsibility for our conference?**

In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), the conference must use RQ+ for all its sponsored NCAA Central Hub sports and meet all initiative requirements. If all sports (see exception below) don't use RQ+, the conference will be invoiced for its use of RQ products and services (exception below):

- *Exception: A Division II or Division III conference may have up to **one** sport not using RQ Assign and/or RQ Pay if that sport has a verifiable agreement with a Division I conference and/or consortium that is not utilizing RQ Assign and RQ Pay. All other initiative requirements must be met for that sport.*

#### **16. Will our conference or any of our member institutions receive invoices from RQ+?**

In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), if all initiative requirements are met for all NCAA Central Hub sports in the conference, neither the conference office nor its member institutions will be invoiced for the platform costs listed above (RQ Assign, RQ Pay, RQ Resource, RQ Collaboration). Invoices may still be sent for non-Central Hub sports and for payments to non-game officials (e.g., announcers, scoreboard operators). If the conference or any member institution does not meet all initiative requirements in any NCAA Central Hub sport, the conference, or whoever is financially responsible for the account (e.g., institutions, coordinator of officials), will be invoiced for its usage of RQ products and services for all NCAA Central Hub sports. \*See question #10 about flexibility with the registration threshold requirement.

#### **17. If our conference does not meet all reform initiative requirements outlined in one or multiple sports, what will the cost be for our conference?**

- In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), conferences must meet all requirements for all Central Hub sports to receive the full benefits of the initiative. If a conference does not meet all of the listed initiative requirements for one or more of its Central Hub sports, the conference, or whoever is financially responsible for the account (e.g., institutions, coordinator of officials), will be invoiced for its usage of RQ products and services (e.g., RQ Assign, RQ Pay, RQ Resource, RQ Collaboration) \*See question #10 about flexibility with the registration threshold requirement.
- The cost for traditional Division II and Division III conferences is \$250 for each sport within a conference using the RQ Assign portal. This cost includes access to the Officiating Compliance Program (OCP) and RQ Collaboration. This cost does NOT include access to RQ Pay or RQ Resource). For Single-Sport conferences, please contact [info@refquest.com](mailto:info@refquest.com) for more information.

#### **18. Are transaction fees eliminated as a part of this initiative?**

In years 2-8 (2025-26 – 20231-32), there are no transaction fees to pay officials in NCAA Central Hub sports if all initiative requirements are met. Vendor payments (e.g., payments to

scorekeepers, announcers) are not a part of the initiative and the normal fees will be incurred for those transactions. Additionally, transaction fees will be incurred for any payments to officials in non-Central Hub sports. If a conference does not meet all the listed initiative requirements for one or more of its Central Hub sports, the conference, or whoever is financially responsible for the account (e.g., institutions, coordinator of officials), will be invoiced for its usage of RQ products and services, including RQ Pay transaction fees.

**19. If observers, evaluators, scorekeepers (volleyball), replay evaluators (football), etc. are assigned by the coordinator to specific contests via the RQ Assign platform, will the transaction fee be covered as a part of the NCAA license?**

If these individuals are assigned to the contest via the RQ Assign system, the transaction fees are covered by this initiative. If these individuals are scheduled outside of the RQ Assign system and are paid using the Vendor Payments feature in RQ+, transaction fees will be assessed upon payment to these individuals.

**20. If there are institutions in a conference that are not permitted to pay officials via third parties, will the requirement to use RQ Pay be waived in those situations?**

No, the requirement to use RQ Pay will not be waived in those situations. It is recommended payments be made from the conference office (for any institution limited in their ability to use RQ Pay or for all institutions in the conference). The RQ Finance team will conduct meetings/demos with any conference, university or entity who is interested in learning more about RQ Pay.

**Officiating Compliance Program (OCP)**

**21. What is the Officiating Compliance Program (OCP)?**

The Officiating Compliance Program (OCP) was designed to ease the administrative burden on conference offices. It is a conference-specific report prepared by RQ+ summarizing officials' NCAA Central Hub registration status, background check consent status, and background check outcome (flag vs. no flag). The report is sent to the Commissioner, or sport-specific designees, on a weekly basis leading into, and during the early part of, the season. The conference office, not RQ+ representatives, will review the background check on Sterling Volunteers for any official with a "flag" and determine any action. The program also includes notification emails from RQ+ (on behalf of the conference) to officials regarding the requirements and their status.

**22. Will our conference get the OCP at no cost for our Central Hub sports on RQ+?**

In all years of the initiative, the Officiating Compliance Program (OCP) will be included, at no cost, for any conference/sport using RQ Assign.

**23. What does our conference need to do, if anything, to confirm participation in the OCP?**

Each conference commissioner will receive a "Declaration Form" document via DocuSign from Emily Parkins, staff member at RQ+. This form will declare a conference's participation in the OCP for the 2025-26 academic year.

**24. Is the OCP available for NCAA Central Hub sports not utilizing RQ Assign?**

No, the OCP is not available for sports not assigned using the RQ+ platform, as RQ+ won't have access to the appropriate information to complete the report.

**25. Is the OCP available for non-Central Hub sports assigned through RQ+ (e.g., swimming and diving, golf, tennis, etc.)?**

No, the OCP is not available for non-Central Hub sports as there is no registration process for these sports.

**26. How do I access NCAA Central Hub registration and background check information if my conference is not participating in the Officiating Reform Initiative, or the OCP?**

Coordinators and conference office staff members have access to eligibility information via the RQ+ system, which illustrates whether an official has registered and whether they have consented to the background check, among other things. Below are the steps on how to access eligibility information. It is important to note that the officials that populate on this screen are those that have self-selected the conference during the registration process. Officials who have not registered or did not self-select your conference will not appear. The benefit of the OCP is that the report pulls directly from your roster of officials in the system, so it's only showing the officials that actually work for the conference, and it shows their registration status, background check consent status, whether or not they've selected the conference, and background check outcome (flag vs. no flag).

- Sign into RefQuest (RQ+); Click your Avatar; Click Eligibility; Under Select Consortium, select Sport; Click Monitor Eligibility; Under Filter by Role, select Official to see all officials who selected your conference during registration; or Click Filter by Conference to select your conference (only applicable for coordinators that have more than one conference); Click the green checkmark or red X next to each official's name to view completed and incomplete eligibility requirements.

The results of the background check can only be viewed by going to the Sterling Volunteers webpage. The background checks of officials who have shared this information with the conference will appear within the conference's Sterling Volunteers portal.

**27. Can the OCP report be sent directly to the coordinator of officials?**

RQ+ will send OCP reports to the coordinator of officials only with explicit, written permission from the Conference Commissioner.

**Miscellaneous Questions**

**28. If our conference has questions, who is the best person to contact?**

Please contact Ben Brownlee ([bbrownlee@ncaa.org](mailto:bbrownlee@ncaa.org)) at the NCAA with any initiative related questions or Emily Parkins ([emily@refquest.com](mailto:emily@refquest.com)) at RQ+ with any questions specific to the RQ+ platform.

**29. What does our conference need to do to initiate the process of moving additional sports to RQ+?**

Please contact Emily Parkins ([emily@refquest.com](mailto:emily@refquest.com)) or email [support@refquest.com](mailto:support@refquest.com).

**30. Will training be provided to conference staff, coordinators of officials and institutions as a part of a transition to RQ+?**

Yes. Training sessions will be provided to conference staff, coordinators, and institutions by RQ+ staff members upon request.

**31. What if our conference has signed a contract with another officiating services provider and it does not expire for a few years?**

Participation in this initiative is optional and at the discretion of each Division II, Division III or Single-Sport conference. Initiative requirements will not be waived due to a conference's contractual commitment with another provider.

- *Exception: A Division II or Division III conference may have up to **one** sport not using RQ Assign and/or RQ Pay if that sport has a verifiable agreement with a Division I conference and/or consortium that is not utilizing RQ Assign and RQ Pay. All other initiative requirements must be met for that sport.*

**32. Our conference has a sport(s) that is a member of a Division I-led consortium that does not use RQ+. How will this impact our ability to participate in this initiative?**

A Division II or Division III conference may have up to **one** sport not using RQ Assign and/or RQ Pay if that sport has a verifiable agreement with a Division I conference and/or consortium that is not utilizing RQ Assign and RQ Pay. All other initiative requirements must be met for that sport.

**33. What if one of our conference coordinators refuses to switch to RQ+?**

Initiative requirements will not be waived if a coordinator chooses to stay on a different officiating services platform against the direction of the conference office. Conference office leadership will convey to RQ+ which sports will use the RQ+ platform.

- *Exception: A Division II or Division III conference may have up to **one** sport not using RQ Assign and/or RQ Pay if that sport has a verifiable agreement with a Division I conference and/or consortium that is not utilizing RQ Assign and RQ Pay. All other initiative requirements must be met for that sport.*

**34. Is it permitted if a sport in a conference has never used an assigning platform and makes assignments from another medium (e.g., spreadsheet, email, etc.)?**

No, this would not be permitted to meet the requirements of the initiative. All officiating assignments for all NCAA Central Hub sports sponsored by the conference must be made via RQ Assign.

**35. What if officials self-declare they work in a conference when they do not? How does this work toward the registration threshold requirement?**

The percentage of officials registered is calculated solely from the conference's actual roster of officials in RQ Assign, as inputted by the coordinator or the conference.

**36. Are there any officiating organizations that include NCAA central hub registration?**

Yes. RQ+ has agreements with the following organizations that include NCAA central hub access. In these sports, officials who register with the following organizations will automatically be added to the NCAA Central Hub:

- Professional Association of Volleyball Officials (PAVO)
- National Intercollegiate Soccer Official Association (NISOA)
- Collegiate Women's Lacrosse Officiating Association (CWLOA)

**37. If some officials are NAIA officials and register with the NAIA Central Hub, do they also need to register for the NCAA Central Hub?**

Yes, officials are required to register with the NCAA Central Hub for their respective sport. NAIA central hubs have no bearing and play no role for the NCAA Officiating Reform Initiative.

**38. Is the Central Hub registration fee going away as a part of this initiative?**

No, the Central Hub registration fees remain in place. As a part of this initiative, officials who declare the Division II or Division III level as the highest level they officiate, a \$125 registration fee has been locked in place through 2032. NCAA Central Hub registration fees can be found by visiting [PR SummaryNCAACentral Hubs.pdf](#).

**39. Are observers required to register for the NCAA Central Hub?**

No, observers are not required to register for the NCAA Central Hub as a part of this initiative. However, there is an option for observers to register so they have access to the education posted by NCAA sport leadership.

**40. Our conference is interested in using RQ Insight (foul reporting/game grading) in the future. Will this be covered by the license?**

No, the license does not cover the use of RQ Insight. Conferences will be billed for their usage of this product. The license only covers the use of RQ Assign, RQ Pay, RQ Resource, RQ Collaboration and the OCP.

**41. Does this initiative prohibit our conference coordinators from running camps?**

No. The spirit and intent is to prevent coordinators from requiring officials pay to attend their camp in order to receive assignments from a coordinator.

**42. Can our coordinator require officials to attend their camp(s)?**

As a part of the Officiating Reform Initiative...

- Coordinators cannot require officials to pay to attend their camp(s) in order to receive assignments.
- Coordinators may require camp attendance at no cost to receive assignments.
- Coordinators may charge a registration fee to attend their camp(s) as long as camp attendance is not mandated.

**43. Providing training via camps is integral for continuous improvement of the officiating staff. The camps are expensive to conduct. How will coordinators cover the costs associated with running these camps?**

Coordinators are permitted to hold camps for their officials and charge a fee to attend the camp. However, coordinators cannot require that the officials pay and attend the camp in order to receive assignments.



**44. Does this initiative prohibit our conference or coordinators from charging dues/fees?**

No. The spirit and intent is to prevent coordinators from charging dues or fees to "cover officiating platform or related costs". Approval by the Commissioner will assist in ensuring dues are being used to cover legitimate officiating expenses incurred by the conference and/or coordinator of officials.

**45. Does this initiative prohibit our conference or coordinators from deducting a few dollars from an official's game fee to cover administrative costs and supplement the annual stipend for the coordinator of officials?**

Deduction of game fees and other forms of game payment must be done with the Commissioner's knowledge and approval.

**46. In some sports, there are officiating organizations charging their officials an annual fee to be a part of an association in order to be on their officiating roster/receive assignments. Is this permissible for coordinators who work for conferences that are participating in this initiative?**

Similar to camps, the spirit and intent is to prevent the charging of dues or fees in order to receive assignments. Any fees charged by coordinators and/or on behalf of an officiating organization must be done with the Commissioner's knowledge and approval.

**47. Does this initiative cover single-sport conferences that sponsor non-Central Hub Sports (e.g., men's volleyball, beach volleyball, women's golf)?**

No, this initiative is for NCAA Central Hub sports only (Baseball, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Bowling, Field Hockey, Football, Men's Ice Hockey, Women's Ice Hockey, Men's Lacrosse, Women's Lacrosse, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Softball, Women's Volleyball, Men's Water Polo, Women's Water Polo, and Men's Wrestling). As sport offerings expand, additional sports may become NCAA Central Hub sports (e.g. women's wrestling, flag football, etc.). Any sports that are added as NCAA Central Hub sports will be subject to the Officiating Reform Initiative requirements and benefits.