



NCAA OFFICIATING BACKGROUND CHECK PROGRAM - OVERVIEW

Updated August 2019

PILOT PROGRAM

- During the 2015-16 academic year, the NCAA implemented the pilot program to conduct background checks on officials under consideration to officiate in NCAA championships.
- The dual purpose of the pilot program was to promote student-athlete safety and the integrity of NCAA championships.
- The pilot program was originally planned as a three-year pilot. The program extended for a fourth year for the 2018-19 academic year.
- The cost of the background check is included in the registration fee on the NCAA Central Hubs located on the ArbiterSports website.
- ArbiterSports contracts with a company named Peopletrail to conduct the background checks.
- The pilot program searches national database sources, including county and state jurisdictions for offenses and hits on the National or State Sex Offender registry.
- Officials convicted of a felony in the last seven years and those who are listed on the National or State Sex Offender's Registry are ineligible to officiate any of the championships sponsored by the NCAA.
- At the discretion of the NCAA, other findings through a background check may also render an official ineligible to officiate NCAA championships.
- If an official's background check report has one or more "hits" that might result in the NCAA making an adverse decision, the official will receive a pre-adverse letter providing the official the opportunity to correct information in the report.
- Officials who register on the NCAA Central Hubs are requested to grant consent for the NCAA to conduct the background check.
- Officials are given the opportunity to designate one or more NCAA Division I, II or III conferences access to their background check report when granting consent to the NCAA.
- The NCAA has no role in determining whether or how a conference uses the background check report/information.
- Only officials who consent to and pass the background check are eligible to officiate NCAA championships.
- Over the four academic years of the pilot program (2015-16 through 2018-19), background checks have been conducted on officials in the following sports:
 - Divisions I, II and III baseball
 - Divisions I, II III men's basketball
 - Divisions I, II III women's basketball
 - National Collegiate women's bowling
 - Divisions I, II and III field hockey
 - Divisions I, II and III football
 - Divisions I and III men's ice hockey
 - National Collegiate and Divisions III women's ice hockey
 - Divisions I, II and III softball
 - National Collegiate and Division III men's volleyball
 - Divisions I, II and III women's volleyball
 - National Collegiate men's water polo
 - National Collegiate women's water polo
 - Division I, II and III wrestling
- During this timeframe, background checks have been conducted on approximately 40,000 officials, of which approximately 2% have been flagged for review.
- For the 2018-19 academic year, the sports of men's lacrosse, women's lacrosse, men's soccer and women's soccer were added to the program.

DIVISION I ONLY PROGRAM

- The NCAA also has a background check program specific to regular season background checks conducted for Division I conferences for FBS football, Division I men's basketball and Division I women's basketball officials. These checks include a check for criminal and financial reports.
- The NCAA has no involvement in the review of these regular season background checks conducted on behalf of Division I conference.
- The NCAA also conducts separate postseason background check program for Division I men's basketball, women's basketball, men's ice hockey and baseball are conducted by Verified Volunteers. These two programs include a credit report.
- The following "disqualifiers" have been developed for the review of the Division I background check program:
 - a. An individual will be **automatically ineligible** to officiate in any NCAA championship if a background check search reveals that the individual:
 1. Has been convicted of a felony within the last seven (7) years; or
 2. Is listed on a national or state sex offender registry.
 - b. An individual **may be ineligible** to officiate in any NCAA championship if a background check search reveals that such individual has been convicted of or a pending charge for:
 1. A non-felony within the last seven (7) years.
 2. Any felony, regardless of the date.
 3. A misdemeanor, regardless of the date, which includes:
 - a. Physical contact with another person or another person's property (e.g. assault, battery, theft);
 - b. Elements of deception (e.g. identity theft, fraud, forgery, uttering, embezzlement); and/or
 - c. Involving gambling or sports wagering.
 4. More than one alcohol and/or drug offenses.
 5. More than one felony and/or misdemeanor offenses.
 - c. At the discretion of the NCAA any other criminal record may be reviewed by the internal review team.
 - d. An individual **may be ineligible** to officiate in any NCAA championship if a credit report check reveals that such an individual has a history of the following:
 1. A total amount greater than \$1,500 listed as past due, charge-off or in collections;
 2. Currently active bankruptcy, or no discharge date listed for bankruptcy on file;
 3. Currently active state or federal tax lien, or no discharge date listed for tax lien on file;
 4. Listed as defendant in cases, excluding divorce, in state civil judgements; or
 5. Listed as defendant in cases, in federal civil judgements.
 - e. An individual under consideration with a potential financial disqualifier will be contacted by NCAA staff to gather a greater understanding of the situation. Documentation regarding established payment program, account status or discharge will be requested by staff.
 - f. An individual under consideration, that has been reviewed for financial potential disqualifiers the previous year, will be contacted regarding the status of the matter regardless of whether it appears on credit report for the current year's championships.