



2020-21 NCAA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP PROPOSAL FOR TEAM REPLACEMENT POLICY

The NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee developed the team replacement policy in light of the possibility of championship field impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following tenets are fundamental to the committee decision:

- Once the bracket is finalized and released, the championship will not be re-seeded nor the bracket changed. The integrity of the bracket is paramount.
- Reasonable effort should be made to ensure a full field and bracket before the start of the championship. No replacement teams will be introduced after the championship begins.
- Every eligible and participating conference should have the opportunity for at least one team in the championship field.
- Replacement teams beyond the goal of a minimum of one team per eligible and participating conference must be among the best available 33 teams.

Due to the necessary time needed to coordinate travel and successfully follow NCAA championships medical protocols, including COVID-19 testing requirements before departure from campus and upon arrival at the competition location, the following is the replacement team policy for the Division I Women's Basketball Championship.

1. Before the announcement of the championship field and bracket:
 - a. Should an automatic qualifier, as determined by each conference, be unable to meet the medical protocols and participate in its first game of the championship (March 21 or 22), the conference may designate a replacement team, as determined by its automatic qualifier policy submitted by the Feb. 26 deadline.
 - b. The replacement automatic qualifier team shall be appropriately seeded and placed into the bracket before the announcement of the championship field and bracket.
 - c. Any potential at-large team that is determined by the institution to be unable to meet the medical protocols and participate in its first game of the championship (March 21 or 22) must notify the Division I Women's Basketball Committee by 5 p.m. Eastern time, Sunday, March 14.
2. After the announcement of the championship field and bracket:
 - a. For any single-bid conference, the league may replace its automatic qualifier, if it is unable to participate due to COVID-19, with the league's preapproved contingency replacement team if that team can produce seven consecutive daily

negative tests prior to arrival. The replacement team from the conference will take the place of its fellow conference member in the same place on the bracket.

- b. For any multibid conference that has a team, at-large or automatic qualifier, unable to participate due to COVID-19, the policy for replacing that team is as follows:
- (1) The last four teams not selected as at-large teams for the original field shall be designated as replacement teams, if they choose to be considered as such and members can produce seven consecutive daily negative tests prior to arrival.
 - (2) The four replacement teams will be ranked 1-4. The first team in the ranking will be the first replacement team, second-ranked team will be the second replacement team, etc.
 - (3) The replacement team shall be placed in the bracket in the position left vacant by the withdrawing team.
 - (4) Since all four replacement teams would have been seeded as the last four teams had they initially been selected as an at-large team, it is assured that their first-round opponent will not be put at a competitive disadvantage because the replacement team would be either a comparable or lower-seeded team.
 - (5) The four replacement teams will remain on their campuses and continue the COVID-19 testing protocol until such time as needed to travel to San Antonio as a replacement team.

The deadline for consideration of replacing a team unable to participate due to COVID-19 is Tuesday, March 16, at 6 p.m. Eastern time. No replacement teams will be introduced into the NCAA championship bracket after the deadline.

Once the tournament has begun, no team will replace a team that has a COVID-19 issue and can no longer participate in the championship. Its opponent would advance to the next round via the no-contest rule.