

2021 NCAA Division I Football Championship
Preliminary-Round Information and Bid Checklist
Updated Version – Friday, March 25

Introduction

Given current health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 it has been determined **that all preliminary-round competition will now be conducted at predetermined sites**, rather than at traditional non-predetermined sites.

The information below outlines details related to the conduct of the championship. Please pay particular attention to the Return to Championship Guidelines document found in the Bid Checklist section below. This document highlights all additional measures that must be taken to ensure a healthy and safe environment for championship competition and information contained in this addendum will take precedence over that found in the Host Operations Manual, should differences exist. In order to be considered for hosting opportunities, it is required that a site be able to meet these obligations.

Up to 16 potential preliminary-round host sites will be identified on Tuesday, April 6. In an attempt to limit (as much as possible) the risk of selecting a host site that may not be participating in the championship, the Division I Football Committee will use a combination of team evaluation, resume strength and information included in bid materials to determine the potential regional sites).

The 16 identified potential sites will work with NCAA national office and Diamond Health staff to begin preparations for COVID-19 testing and hosting. The host sites for all preliminary-round games would then be selected from those 16 preapproved sites.

Bids for predetermined preliminary-round bid materials will now be due **by 3 p.m. Eastern time on Monday, April 5**.

Should national health and safety conditions necessitate changes to this plan, the NCAA reserves the right to adjust accordingly. Hosting guidelines and timelines will be updated and communicated as quickly as possible, should adjustments be necessary.

Selections

Selections for the 2021 NCAA Division I Football Championship will be announced at 11:30 a.m. Eastern time, Sunday, April 18 on ESPNU.

Any institution submitting a bid MUST be prepared/committed to host a preliminary-round game, or games, in which their institution may not be participating. All efforts will be made to avoid this possibility but there may be scenarios where it may be unavoidable.

Preliminary-Round Schedule

First Round:	Saturday, April 24 – time TBD
Quarterfinals:	Saturday, May 1 – Sunday, May 2 – time TBD
Semifinals:	Saturday, May 8 – time TBD

Bid Checklist

The following materials must be submitted by institutions that wish to be considered as hosts for preliminary-round competition. All materials are due by **3 p.m. Eastern time, Monday, April 5.**

Aside from the submission of your institution's certificate of insurance, each of the online forms listed below may be accessed and submitted through the championships host portal, at: <https://championships.ncaa.org>.

To begin the process of submitting a bid, you will need to locate the specific divisional sport and round in the Championships Available for Bidding section and click on Start Bid.

— **Return to Championships COVID-19 Hosting Guidelines.** A Return to Championships document featuring all health and safety measures related to hosting in the currently COVID-19 environment, can be found [HERE](#). This document must be reviewed in full and hosts must be able to follow all designated protocols bid in order to be considered for a hosting opportunity. Please pay particular attention to Section E, which outlines the sport-specific requirements for hosting.

— **Proposed Budget(s).** An online proposed budget must be completed for **each** round of competition you wish to host. For those institutions submitting bids for multiple rounds, a 'copy' function is available via the Budget System tab and will allow you to copy the budget for another round. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each budget. Please be sure to include projected ticket sales in the Receipts section.

Any necessary COVID-19-related expenses should be included in the proposed budget. These expenses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must receive approval from NCAA staff in order to be included in the final host budget.

Please note that all COVID-19 testing expenses, including staffing, will be covered directly by the NCAA and should not be included in the host budget. Adequate testing space will need to be made available in order to serve as a host. Please be prepared to give details on available testing space(s) when completing the facility questionnaire in the bid portal.

Please carefully the [2020-21 NCAA Division I Football Pre-Championship Manual](#), prior to submitting a proposed budget, and make note of the following for all preliminary-round games:

- All lodging expenses for on-field officials (seven), the instant replay official (one) and site representative (one) must be included in your budget.
- Officials' fees, per diem and travel expenses do not need to be included, nor do per diem and travel expenses for site representatives – the NCAA will pay those expenses directly.

Facility Profile. An online facility profile must be completed and/or maintained as necessary by each institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition. Information regarding video board, LED board and/or ribbon boards should be entered via the “Boards/Control Room” tab of the applicable venue profile.

A facility profile can be maintained and updated on a regular basis. If a facility can host multiple sports, check the appropriate box(es) under the Sports tab of the facility profile to provide the information for that facility. Refer to page 18 of the pre-championship manual for facility requirements and site selection procedures.

Key Contacts. The key contacts for your institution should be entered and/or maintained as necessary within your profile. Please enter the information for the key personnel associated with running a championship at your site.

When starting a bid, you will be prompted to enter new key personnel, or edit or confirm your existing key personnel. In addition, you will be asked to designate individuals who should receive the various host shipments (e.g., sport equipment, merchandise, awards, etc.).

Please include the proper mailing address for overnight deliveries. P.O. box addresses will not be accepted.

Personnel who will administer the competition also will be listed and can be edited within the Profile section of the Championships Bid and Host portal. When entering individuals in this manner, information must be entered on both the General tab and the Role/Titles by Sport or Facility tab.

Lodging. The host institution/agency shall negotiate a courtesy hold for the participating institutions/student-athlete(s). The selected hotel properties shall be within no more than 30 miles of the competition site and be priced at a fair and reasonable market room rate. The selection of a competition site may be dependent on availability and quality of rooms for participating institutions/student-athletes. A [letter of intent template](#) is provided by the NCAA for the host to use to confirm the hold with the hotel(s).

Visiting Team Accommodations Form. Please complete the Visiting Team Accommodations Questionnaire pertaining to the lodging and locker room facilities available for the visiting team.

Safety and Security Plan. Based on a review of current and future championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and their own expertise and knowledge, the NCAA has established a Safety and Security Advisory Group (SSAG) to develop a compilation of *Best Practices* for NCAA Championships, which can be found [here](#). We urge each competition venue to take these *Best Practices* into account when developing its safety and security program.

As part of your bid, **please submit a safety and security plan** for your venue. You must **also submit the NCAA Championships Safety and Security Team contact information form**, located in Appendix A of the *Best Practices* document. These documents should be uploaded in the document section of the facility profile. Both documents can be uploaded under the Safety and Security tab.

Safety and Security – Key Contacts. You must **also submit the NCAA Championships Safety and Security Team contact information form**, located in [Appendix A](#) of the *Best Practices* document. This document should be submitted using the document upload in the championships bid and host portal under the Safety and Security tab.

Alcoholic Beverages. All Division I and National Collegiate championships are eligible to engage in the sale of alcohol, provided certain criteria are met. After starting a bid in the Championships Bid and Profile System, users will be prompted to answer a few questions that will determine their institution's eligibility to sell alcohol at a given venue. If a school is deemed eligible and is interested in selling alcohol, it will be required to complete one of several agreement options that must be signed and uploaded into the bid portal. Please thoroughly review the Championships Alcohol Sales Policy before determining and completing the appropriate agreement.

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Liability Insurance. Host institutions must maintain and provide proof of at least \$1 million of general liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol, or food-borne illness. Certificate must be submitted to NCAA prior to competition. State institutions subject to state governing tort laws are permitted to provide proof of limited liability under state laws instead of GL coverage. (This is the minimum requirement per NCAA bylaws).

If applicable, off-campus venue must also maintain and provide a minimum of \$1 million in general liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol, or food-borne illness. NCAA must be named as an additional insured.

All insurance must be provided by an insurance company with an A.M. Best Rating of A-, VII or higher.

Host institutions must provide the national office with the appropriate certificates of insurance or documentation of self-insurance. This can be sent to the championships staff at ctolliver@ncaa.org.

Photos of Television Announce Position and Camera Location. Photographs of your designated television announce position and all designated camera locations must be submitted by each institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition. These photos should be uploaded to the Championship Bid and Host Portal.

First, Second and Quarterfinal-Round Preferred Starting Times Form. For first, second and quarterfinal-round games the prospective hosts should note their preferred starting times. Please note the listed preferred game start times will be referenced and considered but the final determination of game time will be decided by ESPN in consultation with the NCAA Division I Football Committee.

Games being broadcast on ESPN3 may start no earlier than 1 p.m. local time and shall ultimately be determined by ESPN in consultation with the NCAA Division I Football Committee.

Please use this form to provide your preferred game times should you be selected to host a first or second-round game. Once completed the first, second and quarterfinal-round preferred starting times form should be uploaded to the Championship Bid and Host Portal.

The date and time of all quarterfinal and semifinal round games broadcast on over-the air ESPN networks (e.g., ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU) will be determined by ESPN in consultation with the NCAA.

Instant Replay Questionnaire. Instant replay will be used for all games during all rounds of the championship. In order for the instant replay technology provider to begin their planning for these games, all institutions wishing to host a preliminary round game during any round must submit the *instant replay questionnaire*. The survey and photos are available and should be completed/submitted online at: <https://forms.gle/h2vjhHEL8vaaHNQbA>.

If you use DVSPORT Replay during the regular season or you have hosted a FCS playoff game since 2018 then you don't need to complete a survey. Instead, email Andy Deering (adeering@dvSPORT.com) and Kim Jackson (kjackson@dvSPORT.com) the contact information (email and phone) for a point person DVSPORT can work with regarding replay details for the championship.

Instant Replay Cabling Requirements. The host institution shall be responsible for providing the cabling needed to provide instant replay during all preliminary-rounds of the Division I Football Championship.

It will be a host institution expense to provide single mode tactical fiber with ST to ST connections and a minimum of six strands of fiber with dust caps. This cabling needs to be long enough to reach from the location of the television production truck to the location of the instant replay booth (which typically is adjacent to the television talent booth). Please note that DVSPORT will provide the needed converters to turn that fiber into BNC and back from BNC to fiber for this need.

Host institutions can use single-mode fiber in the building or single-mode tactical fiber with other fiber connections (SC or LC) , but will need to have patches in place to bring it back over to ST for the converters DVSPORT is supplying. If your institution wants to provide converters and just hand DVSPORT the HD/SDI feeds with BNC connectors, that would satisfy this requirement as well.

The length of this cable run will vary for each institution depending on your venue configuration. You will need to work on your respective campus to determine how much cabling you need to obtain to meet this requirement. If your venue does not have this cabling in place, contact Andy Deering (adeering@dvsport.com) and Kim Jackson (kjackson@dvsport.com) at DVSPORT and they can discuss cable rental options with you.

Failure to agree to provide the necessary instant replay cabling will likely remove an institution from consideration for hosting.

The host institution will also be responsible for reserving three hotel rooms for instant replay personnel during those rounds. All three rooms for instant replay personnel should be paid and budgeted for by the host institution.

If you have any questions about any of the requirements listed in this Instant Replay section, please feel free to reach out to Natalie Steger, NCAA Associate Director, Championships and Alliances (who is also the broadcasting liaison for this championship). Natalie can be reached at 317-917-6690 or nsteger@ncaa.org. You can also feel free to contact Andy Deering with DVSPORT, Inc. at 412-377-1339 or adeering@dvsport.com.

Professional Lighting Survey of Playing Field. For television purposes the NCAA recommends that all preliminary round hosts have field lighting that measures an evenly distributed 100 horizontal foot-candles at midfield and 70 horizontal foot-candles in the end zones. So that the NCAA and ESPN can plan for the ordering of additional lighting where needed, each institution submitting a bid is required to provide a professional lighting survey, **completed in the last 2 years.** For more information on NCAA lighting standards please review the [NCAA best lighting practices document](#). The professional lighting survey should be uploaded onto the Championship Bid and Host Portal.

Power Verification Document. Specific power requirements are needed for broadcast purposes at all sites hosting preliminary rounds of the championship. It is required that each institutions submitting a bid to host a preliminary round game submit the Power Verification Document from which states whether or not the required power specifications can be met. Once completed the power verification form should be uploaded onto Championship Bid and Host Portal.

Additional Host Information/Resources

Host Operations Manual. The [2020-21 NCAA Division I Football Championship Host Operations Manual](#) will assist your institution in all stages of the bidding and hosting process.

Media Coordinators Manual. The [2020-21 NCAA Media Coordinators Manual](#) will assist your Sports Information Director in all aspects of media coordination for preliminary rounds of the Division I Football Championship.

Drug Testing. Drug testing may occur at any round of the championship and the assistance of the host institution will be a vital part of the testing. You will be notified in advance if the round you

are hosting has been selected for drug testing. Please review the [site coordinator manual](#) and note that The National Center for Drug-Free Sport will provide materials to assist in the program.

Americans with Disabilities Act. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that public establishments offer equal access and services to people who are physically and mentally challenged. The NCAA will rely on the host institution/conference to confirm compliance with the Act by the various facilities hosting NCAA championship events. The host institution/conference is responsible for determining if the facility will be in compliance as of the dates of the championship. If the host institution/conference becomes aware that a facility hosting an NCAA championship event will not be in compliance, the host institution/conference shall immediately notify the NCAA national office staff member with responsibility for the event in order to discuss the issue.

NCAA Bylaw 31. Please review Bylaw 31 of the NCAA Division I Manual as it contains policies regarding the administration of an NCAA event.

Contact Information. If you have any questions regarding the bid process, please contact the Chad Tolliver at 317-917-6706 or ctolliver@ncaa.org.