2026 NCAA Division II Football Championship
Preliminary-Round Information and Bid Checklist

Selections

Selections for the 2026 NCAA Division Division II Football Championship will be announced at 6 p.m. Eastern time, Sunday, November 15 via ncaa.com.

Preliminary-Round Schedule

First Round:	Saturday, November 21 (1 p.m. local time)
Second Round:	Saturday, November 28 (1 p.m. local time)
Quarterfinals:	Saturday, December 5 (1 p.m. local time)
Semifinals:	Saturday, December 12 (1 p.m. local time)

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 **5 p.m. Eastern time, Friday, November 6, 2026.**

Each of the online forms listed below may be accessed and submitted through the championships bid portal at https://championships.ncaa.org. The application is now part of My Apps and new users need to go through their SSO administrator to have it added to their My Apps account.

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.

- ☐ **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 in the system and will allow you to copy the budget or bid 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.

  Note: Due to budget system upgrades, budgets submitted before the 2023-24 academic year can no longer be copied. Any newly submitted budgets will again be available for copying for future years/additional rounds. Previous budgets may still be accessed via the Home tab.

  Free-form fields in the budget templates have been eliminated. Bidders will have to make their selections from a predetermined menu of options for each category. To assist with determining the appropriate option, bidders can hover over each option for examples/details.

Please carefully review page 18 of the 2026-27 NCAA Division II Football Prechampionship Manual *(linked here)*, before submitting a proposed budget, and make note of the following for all preliminary-round competition:

- All lodging expenses for officials and site representatives (if needed) 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 prechampionship manual for facility requirements and site selection procedures. Facility information must be reviewed for completeness and accuracy once a year. Instructions on the process are included in the bid portal.

☐ **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 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.

☐ **Critical Incident Response Team Contact Information**. The system automatically will generate a critical incident response team contact information form based on data entered into the key contacts form and the new Emergency Numbers tab in the facility profile. Individual points of contact from each agency are preferred, followed by LOCAL emergency numbers. The use of 911 should be avoided. If applicable, site representative information will be added by the championship manager once a site has been selected for hosting.

☐ **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 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. Your safety and security plan documents should be uploaded in the document section of the facility profile, under the Safety and Security tab. Safety and security plans should, at a minimum, be replaced if they were established five years ago or before.

☐ **Alcoholic Beverages**.

For Division I and Division II. Beer, wine, spirits and other alcoholic beverages (e.g. hard seltzers) may be sold and dispensed at NCAA Division I, II and National Collegiate championship and ancillary events, provided that the host, venue, and/or concessionaire:

- Comply with, and certifies in writing the compliance with, the NCAA Championship and Ancillary Event Alcohol Sales Policy, as amended by the NCAA from time to time, which addresses such matters as:

  - Permissible types of alcoholic beverages;
  - Eligibility for the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages;
  - Indemnity, warranty, and insurance obligations; and
  - Verification.

  Agree to (i) keep and maintain, or cause its designated vendor or concessionaire to keep and maintain, complete and accurate records of all (a) alcohol-related incidents (e.g., expulsions, arrests) and (b) sales transactions related to the sale of concessions at the NCAA Championship and related ancillary events, including gross revenue, cost of goods, allocable overhead, and applicable taxes; (ii) no later than sixty (60) days after the conclusion of the event, provide the NCAA with a report setting forth in reasonable detail such information, together with the corresponding dates of transaction, including (a) alcohol-related revenue generated on each day of the event, (b) the direct cost of selling alcohol at the event (including the cost of goods), and (c) the indirect cost of selling alcohol at the event (including overhead and increased security needs at the event venue site); and (iii) permit the books, records, and accounts of host, venue, and vendor/concessionaire pertaining to the sale of concessions at the event to be inspected, audited, and copied by NCAA or its agents at any time during normal business hours upon giving reasonable notice to host, venue, and vendor/concessionaire.

- Agree to pay the NCAA an amount of twenty percent (20%) of the gross revenue generated from the sale of alcohol during the event (and any approved ancillary events), less the pro rata applicable sales tax and credit card fees (without deduction of any operating, costs of goods, indirect, or other expenses, such as overhead, marketing, fulfillment, general &

administrative, interest, or other expenses), with such agreement to be reflected in a written agreement between the NCAA and the applicable parties (host, venue, and/or concessionaire) executed prior to, or simultaneously with, the NCAA's official selection of the host for the applicable championship.

- Following the championship conclusion, provide the NCAA with certain information regarding the concessions activity—including gross sales, direct costs, and applicable taxes—for food, non-alcoholic beverages, and alcoholic beverages sold during the event.

- Execute, as part of the bid submission, the applicable policy and agreement documents maintained in the NCAA Championships Bid Portal.

The NCAA shall determine in its sole discretion whether alcohol will be sold or distributed at the ancillary events.

The venue, LOC/host and/or caterer shall be responsible for any permits unless otherwise directed by the NCAA.

☐ **Promotional items**. Promotional items (e.g., cups, shakers, flags, signs, etc.) with commercial slogans or identification or other unauthorized markings are not permitted inside the practice, competition and/or ancillary event venue(s), inside surrounding areas/facilities that are to be used, or outside on practice, competition and/or ancillary event venue property unless expressly approved in advance by the NCAA. Items such as newspapers, handbills, flyers, memorabilia, t-shirts, caps, etc. (except products sold or authorized by the NCAA or its vendors) may not be distributed on these premises. Demographic or other studies may not be conducted unless approved in advance by the NCAA.

An economic impact study can be executed at an NCAA championship to examine the effect of the championship(s) on the local economy. In some cases, the NCAA will conduct an onsite study and will provide the data to the host once the study is completed. In other cases, the NCAA will support the hosts' efforts to execute a study. This can be done using the hosts' own approach/tools or the NCAA's Economic Impact Study "In-a-Box" tool."

☐ **Lodging**. The host institution/agency shall negotiate a courtesy hold for the participating institutions/student-athlete(s). The selected hotel properties are expected to be located within 30-45 minutes of travel time from the venue, with a preference for 30 minutes. Hotels beyond 45 minutes, but no more than 60 minutes, may be considered by the Division II Football Committee as part of an acceptable bid, but additional information and rationale is required with the bid. The selected hotel properties shall be priced at a fair and reasonable market room rate, while remaining sensitive to daily divisional per diem allowances. Full-service hotels are preferred. 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).

All prospective hosts for nonpredetermined sites will be required to identify the hotel properties they secured for the event via the Hotels tab, along with an upload of signed hotel agreement(s)/letter(s) of intent.

Additional information about lodging requirements can be found in the host operations manual.

- **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. The 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 general liability coverage. (This is the minimum requirement per NCAA bylaws).

  If applicable, off-campus venues 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. The 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 information must be provided via the Certificate of Insurance link in the bid portal. As this is a new feature in the portal, all prospective hosts must upload their documentation once. Depending on the coverage, users must subsequently verify their documentation is still valid, or upload a new certificate once the previous version has expired.

- **Television and Digital Rights**. The NCAA maintains exclusive rights to broadcast all rounds of NCAA championship competition. ESPN is the rights holder for all rounds of the Division II Football Championship. All host institutions for the first, second, and quarterfinal rounds of this championship event are required to produce a live internet video stream for distribution on ESPN+.

- **Personnel Costs**. Personnel costs can be included in the host budget in accordance with the Division II Preliminary - Round Streaming Policy.

- **Technical Requirements**. The technical requirements are noted on the sport landing page, as well as in the Host Operations Manual, which can be found here. Host institutions must meet those requirements to host preliminary round competition. The NCAA will host a broadcast specific call to discuss minimums and answer any questions hosts may have on this requirement.

  The NCAA, in partnership with ESPN, will coordinate with the host institution on the specifications for the video feed inclusive of equipment, staffing, graphics, music, transmission, etc. All questions related to video streaming should be directed to Jarom McLiver, NCAA Championships and Alliances – Broadcast (jmcliver@ncaa.org).

  Please complete the broadcast bid survey within the bid portal for hosting.

  Professional Lighting Survey of Playing Field (Semifinals Only). For television purposes the NCAA recommends that all potential sites that submit a bid to host the semifinal round have field lighting that measures an evenly distributed 100 horizontal foot-candles at midfield and 60 horizontal foot-candles in the end zones. In order for the NCAA and ESPN to be able to plan for the ordering of additional lighting where needed, each institution submitting a semifinal-round bid is required to provide a professional lighting survey, **completed in the last two 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.

  Sideline Instant Replay. In order to host a first-round, second-round, or quarterfinal-round game during the championship, it is a hosting requirement that your institution must provide sideline instant replay technology for use during these games. This expense is the sole financial responsibility of the host institution. DVSport, Inc. will provide instant replay for the semifinal-round games and the national championship game.

  Coach-to-Player Communication. There is a new permissive playing rule that now allows an institution to use coach-to-player communication. The host institution needs to provide a volunteer to administer the cut-off timing mechanism.

Additional Host Information/Resources

Host Operations Manual. The 2026-27 NCAA Division II Football Championship Host Operations Manual *(linked here)* will assist your institution in all stages of the bidding and hosting process.

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 drug testing site coordinator manual and note that Drug Free Sport AXIS 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 host institution/conference is required to confirm that each facility in which an NCAA championship or ancillary event occurs is in compliance with the Act by the various facilities hosting NCAA championship events. The host institution/conference is responsible for determining if the competition site will be in compliance as of the dates of the championship. If the host institution/conference becomes aware that a competition site hosting an NCAA championship event will not be in compliance, it shall immediately notify the NCAA national office staff member with responsibility for the event in order to discuss the issue.

Hosting Environment. The host institution/conference plays a central role in delivering and maintaining an environment that is safe, healthy and respects the dignity of all persons.

NCAA Bylaw 18. Please review Bylaw 18 of the NCAA Division II 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 Randy L. Buhr (rlbuhr@ncaa.org or 317-917-6716).