



2026 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship Preliminary-Round Information and Bid Checklist

Selections

Selections for the 2026 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship will be announced at 11:30 a.m. Eastern time, Sunday, March 8 on ESPNU.

Preliminary-Round Schedule

Regional Semifinal Round: Hosts can select Thursday, March 12 or Friday, March 13.
Regional Final Round : Hosts can select Saturday, March 14 or Sunday, March 15 but
Dates must correspond with only having one day off after the regional semifinal (i.e. Thursday/Saturday or Friday/Sunday.)
Hosts must declare preferred game time for each round with bid materials.

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, Monday, March 2.**

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 the [2025-26 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey PreChampionship Manual](#) 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.
 - Ambulances are required for game days and should be included in your budget.
 - Practice and game pucks are provided by the NCAA.
 - All games will be on ESPN+. The NCAA provides a \$5,000 stipend per game to offset broadcast expenses. No additional broadcast expenses should be included in your host budget.
- ☐ **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 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.

- **Alcoholic Beverages.** All Division I, Division II and National Collegiate championships are eligible to engage in the sale of beer, wine and prepackaged/premixed beverages (the latter with alcohol by volume of not greater than 15%), provided certain criteria are met. After starting a bid in the NCAA Bid Portal, users will be prompted to answer a few questions that will determine their institution's eligibility to sell alcoholic beverages at a given venue. If a school is deemed eligible and is interested in selling permissible alcoholic beverages, it will be required to complete one of the 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. A host that indicates it plans to sell alcohol at its site will see a new "Concessions Reporting" section in the budget. This section will need to be completed AFTER the conclusion of competition and submitted along with the actual expenses.
- **Lodging.** The host institution/agency shall negotiate a courtesy hold for the participating institutions/student-athlete(s). The selected hotel properties shall be priced at a fair and reasonable market-room rate, while remaining sensitive to daily divisional per diem allowances. 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 non-predetermined 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.

Eleven rooms should be held for officials and the site rep. This hotel should be separate from the teams. Rooms should be held the night before the game with check-out the morning after the final game date for all eleven rooms.

The hotel lodging minimum for teams is 25 double/double or queen/queen rooms. It is recommended to hold the rooms the night before the first practice until the morning after the game(s.) Hotel managers should be aware that teams may only need them the night of practice and leave after the game. If 25 doubles cannot be sourced, please reach out to Caleb Kolby Ckolby@ncaa.org to discuss alternative routes to reach the room minimum.

Team hotels 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 may be considered by the sport committee as part of an acceptable bid, but additional information and rationale is required with the bid. Hosts should also ensure that the locations of the hotels for all visiting teams are equitable to the greatest extent possible. Hosts should indicate the quality of hotels in the bid submission on both the hotel letter of agreement and in the bid portal so committees have an additional understanding before awarding bids.

Room rates, as with hotel quality and location, should be comparable for all visiting teams. Hosts are expected to secure room rates that are in line with the per diem rate (i.e., \$215, or \$315 for a designated high-cost city).

Hotels with internal doors and beds (i.e., no pullouts) are the only permissible lodging options. Full-service properties are preferred while limited-service properties can be acceptable if they meet quality and amenity requirements as specified by the respective sport committee.

Hotel Release Policy

Participating institutions are expected to stay at the hotel assigned by the host and are responsible for confirming with the hotel the number of rooms they will require and the rooming lists. If an institution prefers to stay in another hotel, the institution must use the rooms for persons accompanying the official travel party or will be charged a financial penalty as follows:

1. If the event is one to three nights, the institution will be required to pay for one night
2. If the event is four or more nights, the institution will be required to pay for two nights.

The participating institution is expected to pay the penalty to the impacted hotel prior departing from the locale.

- **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.

- ☐ **Locker rooms.** A minimum of three (3) comparable locker rooms with shower facilities should be provided for the teams in the rink or an adjacent facility, and two (2) lockers rooms with shower facilities should be provided for the game officials. All locker room plans should be outlined in the bid documents.
- ☐ **Game times.** Please utilize the bid form to confirm preferred game times, and game time flexibility. The Women's Ice Hockey Committee will confirm all game times, with the goal of staggering the games, when possible.
- ☐ **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 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship. All host institutions for Regionals of this championship event are required to produce a live Internet video stream for distribution on ESPN+.
- ☐ **Production Stipend.** A production stipend of \$5000 per game will be provided to assist each host who meets the minimum streaming requirements, detailed within the manual and bid checklist. Broadcast production costs (staff, equipment, etc.) will not be submitted through the host budget system. The stipend will be provided to the hosts that meet all the requirements, post championship when finalizing the final championship financials.
- ☐ **Timeout coordinator.** The hosts are expected to secure a timeout coordinator to assist with the NCAA Ice Hockey postseason timeout policy.

- **Technical Requirements.** 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 Natalie Steger, NCAA Championships and Alliances – Broadcast (nsteger@ncaa.org).

Additional Host Information/Resources

Host Operations Manual. The [2026 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship Host Operations Manual \(linked\)](#) will assist your institution in all stages of the bidding and hosting process.

Potential Host Call. The 2026 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship will host a potential host and site representative call on Thursday, February 26 at 10 a.m. eastern. It is highly recommended for all potential hosts of preliminary rounds to attend the call. Information will be shared about the call as bids are submitted. To access the call, please reach out to ckolby@ncaa.org.

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 International 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.

Statement of Inclusion. The host institution/conference plays a central role in fostering, growing and preserving an inclusive culture on-site at NCAA championship events. Potential hosts should review the NCAA statement of inclusion [here](#) and prepare to deliver and maintain an environment that is safe, healthy, and free of discrimination and respects the dignity of all persons.

NCAA Bylaw 31. Please review Bylaw 31 of the NCAA Division (div) 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 Caleb Kolby at 317-917-6180 or Ckolby@ncaa.org

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