



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY COMMITTEE
JANUARY 21, 2026, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative Items.

- **Women's Ice Hockey – Notification of Transfer – Undergraduate Student-Athletes – Head Coach Departure Exception.**
 - (1) **Recommendation.** The NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Committee recommends the NCAA Division I Cabinet adopt emergency legislation for women's ice hockey to amend the recruiting legislation as follows:
 - (a) Modify the notification-of-transfer legislation to require all undergraduate transfer student-athletes to initiate the notification-of-transfer process during a single, 15-day period beginning the Monday following the conclusion of the NCAA championship.
 - (b) Modify the head coach departure exception to establish a 15-consecutive day notification-of-transfer period beginning five calendar days after the hire or the public announcement of a new head ice hockey coach. If a new head coach is not hired or announced within 30 calendar days after the departure of the previous head coach, the 15-consecutive day window begins on the 31st day, provided the 31st day occurs after the Monday following the conclusion of the NCAA championship. The head coach exception may not occur prior to the notification-of-transfer period. The 15-consecutive day window may not extend beyond January 1.
 - (2) **Effective date.** Immediate.
 - (3) **Rationale.** The move to a 15-day notification-of-transfer window that opens after the conclusion of the women's ice hockey season allows institutions to focus on supporting student-athlete academic and athletics success by eliminating disruptions to the NCAA championship and academics at the conclusion of the academic year, while retaining the opportunity for interested student-athletes to transfer for the next academic year. The modification of the head coach departure exception provides institutions and student-athletes clarity on the opening of the notification-of-transfer period. Aligning the exception with the hire of a new head coach instead of the departure of a head coach provides student-athletes an opportunity to evaluate their options and future with the new head coach before deciding whether to initiate the notification-of-transfer process.
 - (4) **Estimated budget impact.** Varies by institution.

(5) **Student-athlete impact.** This proposal to open the notification-of-transfer window after the conclusion of the women's ice hockey season eliminates disruption to the NCAA championship and provides more certainty around roster stability and the likelihood of future participation opportunities. The modification also provides student-athletes with an opportunity to evaluate options with the institution's new head coach before deciding whether to initiate the notification-of-transfer process.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Update on Division I Championship Status.** The committee discussed NCAA staff attendance at the American Hockey Coaches Association to provide education to the women's ice hockey coaches on the legislative process for becoming an NCAA Division I Championship.
2. **Division I Women's Ice Hockey Rules Subcommittee.** The committee received an update from NCAA Staff on the staff transition and meeting cadence of the Division I Women's Ice Hockey Rules Subcommittee.
3. **ESPN Update.** The committee received several updates from ESPN regarding ESPN plans for the Women's Ice Hockey Championship and specifically with the Women's Frozen Four. The committee had no concerns with the ESPN updates, including additional exposure and understanding of the rules and video replay for the viewing audience during the Women's Frozen Four
4. **Women's Frozen Four schedule.** The committee reviewed the Women's Frozen Four schedule of events and provided input around each day's timing. The committee affirmed the practice schedule options for Thursday and Saturday, as well as reviewed the process of determining the semifinal game order with ESPN.
5. **Women's Frozen Four Replay Operations** The committee directed staff to continue researching how to provide the best experience for video replay during the Women's Frozen Four, including additional access to camera angles for the teams during each game.
6. **Selection information and NPI rankings.** The committee reviewed the current NPI rankings and the plans for future meetings to review the rankings and draft brackets. The committee was provided updates around regional bid deadline and bracketing principles.

7. **Penn State Operational Agreement update.** The committee reviewed the operational document that outlined the logistical plans surrounding Women's Frozen Four weekend if there is also a men's ice hockey game. The committee was pleased with the current plans and appreciated the responsiveness of the Penn State athletics administration and the Big Ten Conference.
8. **Championship film exchange.** The committee affirmed the current film exchange policy in place during the championship, which replicates the regular-season film exchange policy. NCAA staff will communicate this to the commissioners and will note that the committee would continue to follow the regular-season policy, so if there is any change to the regular-season policy, the committee would implement that change during the championship in future years.
9. **Approval of the NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Committee reports.** The committee approved the November 11 and January 5 reports as presented.
10. **Future meetings.**
 - Wednesday, February 18, 12-1 p.m. Eastern time (videoconference).

Committee Chair: Janine Oman, Ohio State University

Staff Liaisons: Travis Johnston, NCAA Division I Governance and Membership Services.

Caleb Kolby, NCAA Championships and Alliances.

NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Committee January 21, 2026, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Brittany Kane, Boston University, Hockey East Association.	
Dean O'Keefe, Stonehill College, New England Women's Hockey Alliance.	
Janine Oman, Ohio State University, Western Collegiate Hockey Association.	
Melanie Ruzzi, Brown University, ECAC Hockey.	
Britni Smith, Syracuse University, Atlantic Hockey America.	
Absentees:	
None.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Paden Alie, Ty Halpin, Travis Johnston, and Caleb Kolby.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Markell Staton.	