



2025-26 NCAA Division I Softball Championship Preliminary-Round Information and Bid Checklist

Selections

Selections for the 2025-26 NCAA Division I Softball Championship will be announced at 7 p.m. Eastern time, May, 10 via ESPN2.

Preliminary-Round Schedule

Regional: Friday-Sunday, May 15-17 (May 14-16 if Sunday no-play policy)
Super Regionals: Thursday-Saturday May 21-23, or Friday-Sunday, May 22-24
WCWS: Thursday-Thursday/Friday, May 28-June 4/5

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, April 17.**

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 super regionals, you must complete a 2-day and a 3-day proposed budget. 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 Division I Softball 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.
- **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 18-19 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. More detailed information about facility requirements can be found in the [2025-26 Division I Softball Host Operations Manual - Preliminary Rounds](#).

NEW 2026: Schools are required to have a visible action clock and double first base to host regional or super regional competition.

- **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 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.

Notes:

- Team Allocations: **Hosts are required to secure a total of 30 rooms (a minimum of 25 doubles).** There is a preference that one king room be a suite for the head coach. Detailed information regarding the team hotel(s) shall be distributed by the host institution in the participant manual. Each participating institution is obligated to confirm the accommodations.
- Officials and teams may not be assigned to the same property.
- Game Officials/Site Representative: Hotel expenses (excluding incidentals) and hotel parking for the officials and site representative shall be paid by the host. When the officials (up to six per site for regionals, up to four per site for super re and site

representative(s) (two per site for regionals, one per site for super regionals) are determined, the tournament manager will provide the rooming list to the hotel.

In addition to the guest room needs outlined above, the following meeting space will need to be secured:

- Team Meeting Spaces (Team Hotel): One complimentary meeting room, per team, accessible 24-hours a day for the duration of the event.
- One complimentary suite or conference space that can accommodate five people, per team, per the duration of the event.
- Officials' Meeting Space (Officials/Site Rep Hotel): One complimentary meeting room accessible 24 hours a day for the duration of the event.

- **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.

- **Video Review Questionnaire.** All institutions interested in hosting a regional and/or super regional round of the 2026 NCAA Division I Softball Championship MUST complete the DVSPORT Replay survey online at <https://forms.gle/p5mf5Yjq48BPSY7C8>. This must be submitted by April 17.

Video Review Expense and Cabling Requirements. Host institutions must meet minimum replay requirements for video review for the regionals and super regionals. In addition, all expenses related to video review for the regional and/or super regional round will be the sole fiscal responsibility of the host institution. These expenses cannot be submitted with your proposed budget to host a regional and/or super regional round of competition. The institution will receive an invoice from DVSport, Inc. for the expenses for video review in conjunction with the regionals and/or super regionals. It is anticipated that this invoice will be approximately \$7,700 per regional and super regional site. If a host site does not have the necessary video cabling from the television truck location to the review system location, this would need to be provided at an approximate additional institutional expense of \$2,000. See Page Nos. 23-25 of the host operations manual for more details on the video review cabling requirements.

Video Review – Dugout Location (All Rounds). Hosts must provide space at the end of one of the dugouts (the end closest to home plate) for the video review headset assistant. This space should have access to a power outlet for the use of the video review headset assistant. It is the responsibility of the host institution to provide this space and accommodations for regionals and/or super regionals. There are no bid materials that need to be submitted for this item, but please plan accordingly.

- **Bat Testing.** Again for 2026, bat testing will occur at all regional and super regional sites. Host institutions will be responsible for securing the bat testing barrel compression fixture (bat testing unit) and bat ring. Refer to the [host operations manual](#) for complete bat testing details.

Additional Host Information/Resources

Host Operations Manual. The [2025-26 NCAA Division I Softball Championship Host Operations Manual](#) 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 [NCAA Championship 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 Kelly Whitaker at 317-476-6867 or kwhitaker@ncaa.org.