



# Quick Reference Guide to the NLI

This reference guide is intended to be a resource. Additional NLI regulations and procedures are located at [www.national-letter.org](http://www.national-letter.org).

## Signing Dates for 2012-13 Enrollment

Basketball (Early Period)  
November 9, 2011 -  
November 16, 2011

Basketball (Regular Period)  
April 11, 2012 -  
May 16, 2012

Football (Midyear JC Transfer)  
December 21, 2011 - January 15,  
2012

Football (Regular Period)  
February 1, 2012 -  
April 1, 2012

Field Hockey, Soccer, Track and Field/  
Cross Country, Men's Water Polo  
February 1, 2012 -  
August 1, 2012

All Other Sports (Early Period)  
November 9, 2011 -  
November 16, 2011

All Other Sports  
(Regular Period)  
April 11, 2012 -  
August 1, 2012

## What is the National Letter of Intent (NLI)?

The NLI is a binding agreement between a prospective student-athlete and an NLI member institution.

- Prospective student-athlete agrees to attend the institution full-time for one academic year (two semesters or three quarters).
- Institution agrees to provide athletics financial aid for one academic year (two semesters or three quarters).

*Basic Penalty for not fulfilling the NLI agreement: Serve one year in residence (full-time two semesters or three quarters) at the next NLI member institution and lose one season of competition in all sports.*

## Valid NLI

Must be accompanied by an athletics financial aid agreement (aid from an athletics source).

Must include the NCAA ID. The NCAA ID will be available to the prospective student-athlete once registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center and will be available to the institution once the prospective student-athlete is placed on the Institutional Request List (IRL). All junior college prospective student-athletes must also have an NCAA ID included on the NLI.

May not be signed prior to the signing dates for the applicable sport.

Must include a parent or legal guardian signature if the prospective student-athlete is under the age of 21, regardless of marital status.

The Conference Office validates the NLI to ensure the NLI and athletics aid agreement are complete and meet all NLI and NCAA requirements.

## How does the institution process the NLI?

Institution issues an NLI and offer of athletics aid to the prospective student-athlete.

Prospective student-athlete signs two copies; returns one to institution and keeps one.

- Must be signed within 14 days of issue date (unless early signing period - deadline on final signing date).

Institution verifies required information and sends to its Conference Office for validation.

- Must be filed with the Conference within 21 days of final signature.

**Approximately 38,000 prospective student-athletes sign NLIs to attend NCAA Division I or II institutions. Less than one percent request a release.**

## Coaching Change

A prospective student-athlete signs an NLI with an institution, not with a coach. If the coach leaves, the prospect is still bound by the provisions of the NLI.

**What is the Recruiting Ban?** Other institutions must respect the prospective student-athlete's NLI signing by ceasing all recruitment.

The recruiting ban remains in effect until the prospective student-athlete enrolls at the signing institution. Once enrolled, the student-athlete is governed by NCAA recruiting regulations.

If the prospective student-athlete does not enroll at the signing institution, the recruiting ban will be lifted after the institution's academic year has elapsed (e.g., prospective student-athlete signs during the 2011-12 academic year, recruiting ban applies through the end of the 2012-13 academic year).

## Contact the NLI Office:

317-223-0706 (phone)  
317-968-5105 (fax)  
[www.national-letter.org](http://www.national-letter.org)



## How is the NLI declared null and void?

- Denied admission.
- Does not meet NCAA, institutional or conference eligibility requirements.
- One-Year Absence.
  - Signee does not enroll at an institution (two-year or four-year) for at least one academic year and the scholarship (in its same amount) is no longer available.
- Service in the U.S. Armed Forces, Church Mission.
  - Signee serves in the military or on a church
- Discontinued Sport.
  - Sport is no longer offered, includes student-athletes who are already enrolled.
- Recruiting Rules Violation.
  - NLI may be declared null and void if the violation is substantiated and prompts the need for reinstatement by the NCAA staff. It is the prospective student-athlete's choice to null and void the NLI under these circumstances.

### How can a signee be released from the NLI?

#### Release Request:

A request for release must be initiated by the student-athlete by submitting the NLI Release Request.

An institution may release a student from his or her NLI obligation by selecting the "Complete Release" option on the NLI Release Request.

It is the institution's discretion to grant a release or not.

The NLI release is not the same as NCAA permission to contact (e.g., releases cannot include conditions to be released to specific institutions).

#### Appeal Process:

For consideration of an appeal, the signee must present extenuating circumstances to the NLI Committee.

Completing a playing season does not fulfill the NLI obligation. The entire academic year at the signing institution must be completed.

4-4 transfers are no longer prospective student-athletes. A four-year transfer shall not sign an NLI, including international transfers.

The NCAA Eligibility Center manages the daily operations of the NLI program while the Division I Collegiate Commissioners Association provides governance oversight.

#### NLI Membership...

620 NCAA Division I and II institutions are members.

Not NLI members:

Ivy League, Service Academies, Division III institutions, NAIA institutions, preparatory schools and junior colleges.

All members of the NLI program are required to offer athletics scholarships.

### Coaching Contact Prohibited at Time of Signing

A coach or institutional representative may not hand deliver the NLI off campus or be present off campus at the time of signing. The NLI may be delivered by express mail, courier service, regular mail, e-mail or fax. An NLI submitted to an institution by fax or electronic means is permissible.

An institution is not permitted to provide any release agreements to the prospective student-athlete prior to signing.

The NLI penalty does not preclude a student-athlete from receiving athletics aid or practicing while serving the one academic year of residence for the NLI penalty.

### Early Signing Period Penalties

Prospective student-athletes who will participate in football are prohibited from signing an NLI during the early signing period. A student who signs an NLI during the early period in a sport other than football will be ineligible for practice and competition in the sport of football during the student's first year of enrollment at an NLI member institution, and shall forfeit one season of competition in the sport of football.

In circumstances where a student's primary sport is not football, but anticipates participating in football, the student should delay signing an NLI until either the football signing period or during the regular signing period for all other sports.

### Enrollment in a Junior College - After Signing an NLI

If a prospective student-athlete signs an NLI and later attends a junior college, the prospective student-athlete would have to graduate from the junior college under the following conditions:

- To satisfy NCAA 2-4 or 4-2-4 transfer rules, if necessary to meet NCAA, conference or institutional regulations.
- To null and void a previously signed NLI. In this case, the previous NLI is declared null and void if the prospective student-athlete graduates from the junior college.

### Enrollment in a Junior College - No Previously Signed NLI

If a prospective student-athlete did not sign an NLI prior to enrolling at a junior college, he or she is permitted to sign while attending a junior college. The following rule applies for Division I.

#### Division I

2-4 transfer may sign an NLI in the first year of junior college enrollment if a qualifier. A nonqualifier in the first year of enrollment does not meet the NCAA requirement to receive athletics aid for the following term.

### Athletics Aid Agreement

An NLI must be accompanied by an athletics aid agreement. A prospective student-athlete not receiving athletics aid is not permitted to sign an NLI. If the prospective student-athlete declines the athletics aid in order to receive other institutional aid, the NLI must be declared null and void. The athletics aid agreement is subject to NCAA rules.

If NLI is declared **null and void** or a **complete release** granted, a prospective student-athlete is **not permitted** to sign another NLI until the next signing year.

If NLI is declared **invalid**, a prospective student-athlete **is permitted** to sign another NLI during the same signing period or year.

Prospective student-athletes enrolling mid-year shall not sign an NLI except for a junior college transfer in the sport of football.