Local Sports Clubs

Policy Type: Local
Responsible Office: VCU Athletics Compliance Office, VCU Athletics
Initial Policy Approved: Unknown
Current Revision Approved: 04/11/2018

Policy Statement and Purpose

Virginia Commonwealth University Athletics is committed to maintaining its position as one of the nation's premier collegiate athletics programs. Although on-the-field success is an important component of this goal, VCU's status as a premier collegiate athletics program depends on its ability to find continued success on the field while maintaining an environment that promotes the highest levels of integrity. Accordingly, VCU Athletics is committed ensuring that its athletics programs operate in a manner that is consistent with NCAA, Atlantic 10, and Virginia Commonwealth University rules and regulations.

NCAA rules and regulations exist regarding coaching staff’s involvement in local sports clubs – whether it involves administrative and/or coaching duties. It is permissible for all sports except for basketball to have coaching staff members involved as long as certain rules and regulations are met.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

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Who Should Know This Policy

Athletics administrators, coaches, representatives of athletics interest.

Definitions

Local Sports Club
An organized local sports club is defined by the following requirements: (i) it must be an established club that is operated independent of VCU Athletics; (ii) it must have a name; (iii) it must be incorporated and operated according to appropriate business guidelines; (iv) it must have rules; (v) it must have insurance or require such of its participants; and (vi) it must participate.

Prospective Student-Athlete
A student who has started classes for the ninth grade. In addition, a student who has not started classes for the ninth grade becomes a prospective student-athlete if the institution provides such an individual (or the individual's relatives or friends) any financial assistance or other benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally. An individual remains a prospective student-athlete until one of the following occurs (whichever is earlier):

1. The individual officially registers and enrolls in a minimum full-time program of student and attends classes in any term of a four-year collegiate institution’s regular academic year (excluding summer);
2. The individual participates in a regular squad practice or competition at a four-year collegiate institution that occurs before the beginning of any term;
3. The individual officially registers, enrolls and attends classes during the certifying institution’s summer term prior to the individual's initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution; or
4. The individual reports to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term.

Contacts

The Athletics Department officially interprets this policy. The Athletics Compliance Office is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by the policy Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct policy questions to the Assistant Athletics Director for Compliance and Student Services.

Policy Specifics and Procedures

In sports other than basketball, an institution’s coach may be involved in any capacity (e.g., as a participant, administrator or in instructional or coaching activities) in the same sport for a local sports club or organization located in the institution’s home community, provided all prospective student-athletes participating in said activities are legal residents of the area (within a 50-mile radius of the institution). In all sports, an institution’s coach may be involved in any capacity (e.g., as a participant, administrator or in instructional or coaching activities) in a sport other than the coach’s sport for a local sports club or organization located in the
institution's home community, provided all prospective student-athletes participating in said activities are legal residents of the area (within a 50-mile radius of the institution). Further, in clubs or organizations involving multiple teams or multiple sports, the 50-mile radius is applicable only to the team with which the institution's coach is involved; however, it is not permissible for the coach to assign a prospective student-athlete who lives outside the 50-mile area to another coach of the club. A coach also may be involved in activities with individuals who are not of a prospective student-athlete age, regardless of where such individuals reside.

Coaching staff members are permitted to be involved the same sport for a local sports clubs provided that all prospective student-athletes involved reside within a 50-mile radius of the institution (unless the local sports club is the closest opportunity for the student-athlete). In order to ensure compliance with this rule, the VCU Athletics Compliance Office requires all coaches requesting to be involved with a local sports club to submit paperwork about the club – including, in particular, a list of all individuals involved, their ages, and their place of residence. If the local sports club is the only local sports club for that sport beyond a 50-mile radius, the coaching staff member must submit paperwork demonstrating the lack of additional local sports clubs.

Additional paperwork that must be submitted includes the local sports club’s written bylaws and executive officers, membership qualifications, dues/fees, and a schedule of events. This is to ensure that that the local sports club is a bona fide organization with an actual mission and structured organization.

Regarding institutional sponsorship of a local sports club, neither an institution’s athletics department nor an institution’s athletics booster group may sponsor a local sports club that includes prospective student-athletes. It is permissible for a department of the institution that operates independent of the athletics department (e.g., physical education department, recreation department) to sponsor a local sports club that includes prospective student-athletes, provided no athletics department staff member is involved with the club team.

It is permissible for an institution's coaching staff member who owns or operates a local sports club or organization to employ a student-athlete, who is a member of the staff member’s team, in the club or organization outside the institution’s playing season, provided no countable athletically related activities occur as a result of the employment.

**Forms**

1. Local Sports Clubs
2. Local Sports Club Membership Information Form

**Related Documents**

There are no related documents associated with this policy and procedures.
Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

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FAQ

There are no FAQ associated with this policy and procedures.