2019-20 Signing Year
Overview

What is the NLI?

Who issues the NLI?

Who signs the NLI?

Satisfying the NLI

Two Year Transfers

Recruiting Ban

Processing the NLI

GET STARTED WITH NLI BASICS
The NCAA manages the daily operations of the National Letter of Intent (NLI) program while the Division I Collegiate Commissioners Association (CCA) provides governance oversight.

### Governance Structure

**NLI Policy and Review Committee** - policy setting and Division I appeals.

**Division I NLI Appeals Committee** - final appeals.

**Division II NLI Review Committee** - Division II appeals.

**Division II NLI Appeals Committee** - final appeals.
The NLI is an agreement between a prospective student-athlete (PSA) and an NLI member institution.

- The PSA agrees to attend an institution full time for one academic year (two semesters or three quarters).
- The institution agrees to provide athletics financial aid for one year (two semesters or three quarters).
- The basic penalty for not fulfilling the NLI agreement:
  
  Serve one academic year in residence at the next NLI member institution and loss of one season of competition in all sports.
**Overview**

Only participating member institutions may issue the NLI to PSAs.

Currently 655 NCAA Divisions I and II institutions are members.

**Not NLI members:**
Ivy League, Service Academies, Division III, NAIA, preparatory schools and junior colleges.

All members are required to offer athletics scholarships.

Institutions pay an annual fee for membership through their sponsoring conference office.
High school senior, prep school or two-year college PSAs enrolling in a four-year institution for the first time and 4-2-4 transfers are permitted to sign.

A PSA’s parent or legal guardian must cosign the NLI with the PSA if under the age of 21.

A parent or legal guardian may only be required to sign the athletics aid agreement if required per institutional policy for PSA’s under the age of 18.
One-Year Attendance

A PSA must attend the signing institution for at least one academic year as a full-time student to satisfy the terms of the NLI.

Two-Year College Graduation

A PSA who signs, enrolls in a two-year college instead of the signing four-year institution, and then graduates from the two-year college will satisfy the terms of the NLI.
If a PSA signs an NLI while a two-year college student, he or she would need to graduate from the two-year college under two conditions:

- If the PSA has to graduate to fulfill NCAA 2-4 transfer requirements; or
- If the PSA has a previously signed NLI that is still valid. In this case, the previous NLI is no longer binding if the PSA graduates from the two-year college.
Once a PSA signs an NLI, all NLI member institutions and conferences must cease contact with the NLI signee and his or her family members.

Any contact in excess of an exchange of a greeting would result in an NLI Recruiting Ban violation regardless of the conversation.

The conversation does not have to result in a recruiting discussion for a violation to occur.

The recruiting ban remains in effect until the PSA enrolls at the signing institution.

If the PSA does not enroll at the signing institution, the recruiting ban will be lifted after the signing institution’s next academic year has elapsed.

Once enrolled, the student-athlete is governed by NCAA recruiting regulations.
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<td><strong>Overview</strong></td>
<td>The institution issues an NLI and offer of athletics aid to the PSA. The NLI must be populated out of the NLI Portal.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is the NLI?</strong></td>
<td>The PSA signs (if under the age of 21, parent or legal guardian must also sign) and returns the NLI and athletics aid agreement to the institution.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Who issues the NLI?</strong></td>
<td>NLI must be signed within 7 days of issuance date.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Who signs the NLI?</strong></td>
<td>The institution verifies required information and uploads the NLI and athletics aid agreement through the NLI Portal for Conference Office validation.</td>
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<td><strong>Satisfying the NLI</strong></td>
<td>NLI must be filed with the Conference Office within 14 days of final signature.</td>
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Conference Office Validates NLIs
The NLI should be declared INVALID if on the signing page there is:

- No PSA’s first and last name;
- No PSA’s NCAA ID (includes two-year college transfers);
- No director of athletics or designee signature;
- No date issued to the PSA;
- No PSA and parent signature (if under the age of 21);
- No PSA and parent signing date; and
- No time of signing (including a.m. or p.m. circled) if the signing date is the first day of that signing period.
The NLI should be declared INVALID if on the athletics aid agreement there is:

- No financial aid authority’s signature prior to submitting the agreement to the PSA. The director of athletics signature does not satisfy this requirement (NCAA Rule).
- No athletics aid awarded.
- No amount of aid, conditions and terms of the award.
The conference office NLI administrator is permitted to request the following information if missing from the signing page in order to validate:

- No sport;
- No two-year college information (if needed);
- No name of institution;
- No check mark for parent or legal guardian;
- No parent/legal guardian printed name;
- No parent/legal guardian telephone number; or
- No parent/legal guardian email address.

The institution can either have the PSA update the NLI or the institution’s compliance staff can update the NLI with the missing information.

Once the institution provides the missing information to the Conference, the NLI can then be validated.
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence
- Discontinued Sport
- Recruiting Violation
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence
- Discontinued Sport
- Recruiting Violation

If the PSA has a written denial of admission, the NLI is declared null and void.
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence
- Discontinued Sport
- Recruiting Violation

If the PSA does not meet NCAA, institutional or conference eligibility requirements, the NLI is declared null and void.
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence

If the PSA does not enroll at an NLI institution for at least one academic year and the scholarship (in its same amount) is no longer available, the NLI becomes null and void. This one year absence would also apply to a signee who serves in the military or on a church mission for 12 months.
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence
- Discontinued Sport

If the sport is discontinued, including student-athletes already enrolled for one term, the NLI is declared null and void.
What would cause the NLI to no longer be binding?

- Denied Admission
- Ineligible
- One-Year Absence
- Discontinued Sport
- Recruiting Violation

If an NCAA rules violation occurred and results in the need for NCAA student-athlete reinstatement, the PSA has an option to have the NLI declared null and void.
How can a signee be released from the NLI?

NLI Release Request

NLI Appeal
NLI Release requests are initiated by the signee using the online NLI Release Request process located at www.national-letter.org.

Once an NLI signee submits an NLI release request, the signee is permitted to communicate with coaches at other NLI member institutions. This means the NLI Recruiting Ban no longer applies if a signee submits an NLI release request.

While the NLI release is pending, the signee’s record will show as Pending NLI Release / NLI Recruiting Ban Lifted.

The institution provides the following response to the release request:

- Complete Release
- No Release / NLI Recruiting Ban Lifted
The institution has a maximum of 30 days from the date the NLI office is notified of the release request to make a decision.

If there is no release decision by the 30-day deadline then the NLI office will provide a complete release after the institution has been notified about the 30-day deadline.
The NLI signee’s release status and the release form is visible to all member institutions in the member institution portal if added to an institution’s request list (IRL).

The NLI release is not the same as NCAA permission to contact (i.e., releases are not specific to schools) and cannot include conditions.

Tutorials on how to use the online system for the signee and the institution are available. The signee tutorial is located on the NLI website and the institution tutorial is located in the NLI Resources on the NLI Portal.
The NLI signee may appeal the institution’s no release decision to the NLI Committee.

The signee must present compelling extenuating circumstances and each case is reviewed on its own merits.

Once the appeal is received at the NLI office, the institution is notified to provide its reason(s) why the signee should not receive a complete release.

The signee’s facts and the institution’s response to those facts are all considered in the Committee’s deliberations.

If the Committee denies the release, the signee can appeal to another NLI Committee for a second and final opportunity. This appeal allows the signee to speak directly to the Committee.
One Valid NLI

Pending Initial Eligibility Waiver

Partial Qualifier

Failure to Complete Admissions or Eligibility Requirements

Release Agreements

Delivery of the NLI

Midyear Enrollee

Delayed Enrollment

Voluntarily Withdraw of Athletics Aid

Cosigner Request

Binding NLI
One Valid NLI

A PSA will have only one valid NLI.

- If NLI is rendered **invalid** (e.g., NLI not filed within 14 days), the PSA may sign a second NLI in the **same** signing year.

- If NLI is rendered **null and void** (e.g., denied admissions, nonqualifier), the PSA is permitted to sign another NLI the **following** signing year if not enrolled at a four-year institution.

- Since a PSA may sign only one valid NLI annually, if granted a **complete release**, the PSA may **not** sign another NLI during that **same** signing year.
NLI remains binding if an institution is filing a waiver.

NLI is rendered null and void if waiver decision is to prohibit athletics aid.

NLI will remain valid if the waiver is approved.

If the waiver is partially approved (permitting athletics aid), NLI remains valid unless otherwise stated on the institution’s athletics aid agreement that the PSA must be eligible for competition to receive athletics aid.
One Valid NLI

Pending Initial Eligibility Waiver

Division II Partial Qualifier

NLI remains binding if a PSA is a partial qualifier (athletics aid permitted) unless otherwise stated on the institution’s athletics aid agreement that the PSA must be eligible for competition to receive athletics aid.
One Valid NLI

Pending Initial Eligibility Waiver

Partial Qualifier

Failure to Complete Admissions or Eligibility Requirements

If a PSA fails to submit the necessary academic credentials and/or application to determine an admission decision or purposely did not complete necessary academic requirements (e.g., required class) or fails to submit the necessary documentation for an initial eligibility decision and has not attended classes at the signing institution, the NLI office per its review with the institution will determine the status of the NLI.
### Other Information

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<td><strong>Release Agreements</strong></td>
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NLI policy prohibits institutions from establishing any additional conditions associated with the NLI agreement in advance of a PSA signing the NLI.

Should an institution offer additional conditions, the PSA’s NLI is subject to being declared null and void along with possible institutional penalties as determined by the NLI Policy and Review Committee.
Coach or institutional representative may not hand deliver the NLI off campus or be present off campus at the time a PSA signs.

NLI may be delivered by express mail, courier service, regular mail, email or facsimile.

NLI transmitted to an institution by facsimile or electronically is considered permissible.
Midyear Enrollee

**Division I** – Since Division I is permitted to offer multiyear athletics aid, a PSA graduating at midyear from high school may sign an NLI with an athletics aid agreement which includes the upcoming spring term and the following academic year.

**Division II** - If a PSA signs an NLI in November then graduates from high school at midyear, the institution may not award athletics aid to that PSA for the spring term following the PSA’s high school graduation. Such an arrangement would constitute an impermissible award of an athletics grant-in-aid for a period in excess of one academic year per NCAA Bylaws.
Midyear Enrollee

Delayed Enrollment

If the institution’s admissions office or the coach determines the PSA should delay enrollment from fall to spring, then the NLI would be declared null and void. The NLI would remain binding if this is the PSA’s decision.

The intent when signing an NLI is for the PSA to enroll the upcoming academic year. Prior to signing an NLI, if the institution has knowledge that a PSA will not enroll until after one year has elapsed, the institution is not permitted to sign the PSA since the aid agreement is for the upcoming academic year and not the following year of enrollment.
If a PSA is awarded institutional financial aid, unrelated to athletics, of equal or greater value than his or her signed award of athletically related financial aid, the PSA may, on his or her initiative, release the institution of its obligation to provide the athletically related financial aid. When athletics aid is canceled the NLI becomes null and void.
If a PSA’s parent or legal guardian is not available to sign the NLI due to extenuating circumstances, it is permissible for another individual to sign the NLI with the PSA. This cosigner must be approved in advance by the NLI office.

In order to gain approval, the following information must be submitted in the NLI Portal: name of the PSA, explanation of why a parent or legal guardian is unable to sign the NLI and the name and relationship of the individual (not a coach or athletics administrator) who has agreed to sign with the PSA.
The NLI remains binding if the PSA:

- Is eligible and does not show up for preseason practice or fall enrollment.
- Is eligible and quits the team.
- Does not complete the admission or NCAA Eligibility Center process.
- Signs a professional contract. The PSA would have eligibility remaining in other sports which binds him/her to the institution, not a specific sport.
- Has no or limited amateurism. The PSA would be eligible for athletics aid unless otherwise stated on the institution’s athletics aid agreement that the PSA must be eligible for competition to receive the athletics aid.
NLI PROCESSES ON CAMPUS

- NLI Education
- IRL Activation
- Populating NLIss
- NLI and athletic aid agreement workflow
- NLI Upload
- NLI Reports
- NLI Violations
- NLI Questions
NLI Website
www.national-letter.org

NLI Portal

NLI Office
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www.national-letter.org

NLI Portal

NLI Office

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