

Application of the Adjoining State Rule

Current NCAA legislation requires participants on all nonscholastic basketball teams to reside:

1. within the same state as the team's official address; or
2. within a geographically adjoining state to the team's official address, with not more than three prospects from adjoining states participating on any one team.

This standard was established to deter nonscholastic teams from "renting" elite prospects from around the country for brief periods of time to compete in NCAA-certified basketball events.

The adjoining-state rule should be applied using the official mailing address of the nonscholastic team compared to the legal address of the prospect, the prospect's parent(s) or legal guardian. [Note: A legal guardianship must be established in a court of law and cannot be done for the purposes of participation.]

If parents are divorced and live in separate states and the prospect can document a history of staying with the noncustodial parent, then the address of either parent can be utilized even though the prospect may have attended school in a different state while living with the other parent. The address of relatives that are not parents **CANNOT be utilized** for any reason even if the athlete has a history of spending summers with that individual.

As a condition of the certification, event operators are required to verify **prior to participation** that all teams are compliant with the adjoining-state rule. Participation of a team in violation of this legislation may result in the denial of future certification of that event. If an activity receives both event and league certification; all participants must comply with both the league 100-mile rule and the event adjoining-state rule.

Change of Guardianship:

It is not permissible for a coach, family member or other individual to obtain guardianship of an athlete in order for the athlete to participate on a team in a different state in an effort to circumvent the intent of the adjoining state rule. Again, a prospect is required to establish and maintain a legal residence for a **minimum of three months** prior to participating on a team in that location in an NCAA-certified event.

US Athletes Establishing Residency:

- A prospect who is not an international prospect or a student at a boarding school should be required to establish and maintain a legal residence for a **minimum of three months** prior to participating in an NCAA-certified event.
- Although the states of Alaska and Hawaii are not geographically adjoined by any other state, no states should be "designated" as adjoining states for Alaska and Hawaii and athletes from those states are required to play on a team from that state.

International Athletes:

International athletes must play on a team **from their own country** and the adjoining-state rule would apply provincially within that country. Athletes cannot participate on a team outside their country's borders. Therefore, athletes from Mexico or Canada cannot cross the border and play with a U.S. team for participation at an NCAA-certified summer event even though the team may be geographically located within the same locale of their residence.

Prospects from Canada and Mexico must comply with the same guidelines as other international prospects.

International Athletes Establishing Residency in the US:

- An international prospect may use the legal address of the prospect's host family, provided the prospect is part of an official educational exchange program and has resided with the family for a minimum of one academic year.
- An international prospect who is not part of an official educational exchange program may use the host family's address if the prospect attended high school in the locale for a minimum of one academic year.

Boarding School Prospects:

A prospect who has attended a boarding school and lives on campus may use the address of the educational institution to meet the adjoining-state requirements if the prospect has attended the educational institution for a minimum of one academic year. The athlete could also utilize their home/legal address.

However, the athlete needs to utilize the same address for the duration of the summer. In other words, the athlete cannot utilize the school address to play for a team in one state and the home address to play for a team in a different state during the same summer. The address being utilized to fulfill this requirement is the one that should be entered in the Basketball Certification System (BBCS). Incoming freshmen and transfer students may not utilize their school address because they have not completed a full academic year at the educational institution and will be forced to utilize their home/legal address.

Exceptions to the Rule:

- In situations in which a team includes prospects from a metropolitan area located on a state border, the team may include more than three team members from adjoining states as long as each additional participant resides within the metropolitan area. See: [Application of the Metro Area Rule](#) for additional information and [Metro Area Maps](#) utilized by the NCAA to determine compliance.
- It has been determined that because the intent of the adjoining-state legislation would not be violated, and that based on the restrictions imposed by the tribal membership itself, it is permissible to view a Native American tribe in its entirety as analogous to a state, regardless of the fact that its geographic location may encompass several states. Therefore, Native American athletes can participate on their tribal team regardless of their state of residence.
- Additional legislated exceptions are outlined here: [13.18.1 Adjoining State Exceptions](#)

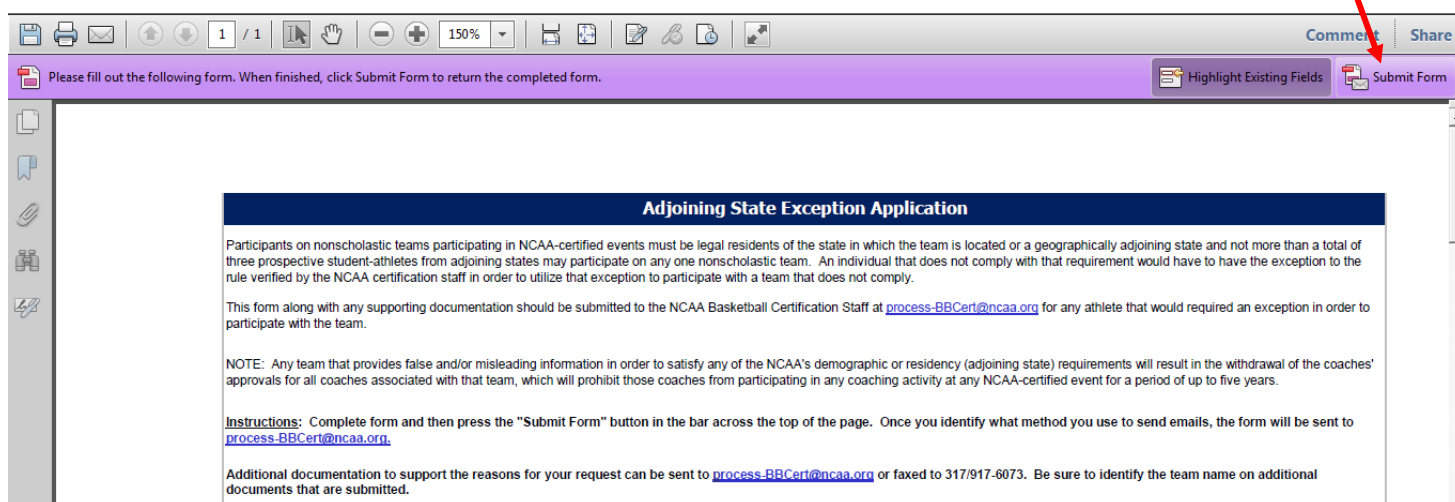
Strict Enforcement:

The adjoining-state rule is strictly enforced. Any event that allows the participation of a team that violates the adjoining-state rule will be ineligible for certification the following year. Similarly, any team that participates with an athlete that is not compliant with the adjoining-state rule will render all coaches that participated ineligible to coach the following year. Additionally, any team that provides false and/or misleading information in the BBCS, to the NCAA or to any certified event operators in order to satisfy any of the NCAA's demographic, residency (adjoining state), coaches approval or other legislated requirements will result in the withdrawal of the coaches' approvals for all coaches associated with that team (listed on the team roster), which will prohibit those coaches from participating in any coaching activity at any NCAA-certified event for a period of up to five years.

Waivers

If an athlete meets one of the legislated exceptions outlined in NCAA Bylaw No. [13.18.1 Adjoining State Exceptions](#), the team coach or prospect's parent/guardian can submit an Exceptions Request by completing the [Adjoining State Waiver/Exception Application](#) to have the exception to the rule verified by the NCAA Enforcement Certification and Approval Group (ECAG) in order to utilize that exception to participate with a team that does not comply.

To submit the form, you will need to TYPE the information into the application and then hit the "Submit Form" button in the bar across the top of the page.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the "Adjoining State Exception Application" form. The browser's address bar shows the URL "1 / 1". The form's title bar is purple and contains the text "Please fill out the following form. When finished, click Submit Form to return the completed form." and a "Submit Form" button. The form content includes instructions, a note, and a submission deadline. A red arrow points to the "Submit Form" button in the top right corner of the form area.

Adjoining State Exception Application

Participants on nonscholastic teams participating in NCAA-certified events must be legal residents of the state in which the team is located or a geographically adjoining state and not more than a total of three prospective student-athletes from adjoining states may participate on any one nonscholastic team. An individual that does not comply with that requirement would have to have the exception to the rule verified by the NCAA certification staff in order to utilize that exception to participate with a team that does not comply.

This form along with any supporting documentation should be submitted to the NCAA Basketball Certification Staff at process-BBCert@ncaa.org for any athlete that would require an exception in order to participate with the team.

NOTE: Any team that provides false and/or misleading information in order to satisfy any of the NCAA's demographic or residency (adjoining state) requirements will result in the withdrawal of the coaches' approvals for all coaches associated with that team, which will prohibit those coaches from participating in any coaching activity at any NCAA-certified event for a period of up to five years.

Instructions: Complete form and then press the "Submit Form" button in the bar across the top of the page. Once you identify what method you use to send emails, the form will be sent to process-BBCert@ncaa.org.

Additional documentation to support the reasons for your request can be sent to process-BBCert@ncaa.org or faxed to 317/917-6073. Be sure to identify the team name on additional documents that are submitted.

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If the athlete DOES meet one of the legislated exceptions of which ECAG has the authority to grant approval, the ECAG will return the application with the approval decision documented that the team can provide to event operators as an indication that the prospect can participate with the team.

If the athlete DOES NOT meet one of the legislated exceptions; the athlete is from a state that does not adjoin the team's address; or if the team is desiring to have more than three out-of-state athletes, the ECAG will return the application with the denial decision ECAG does not have the authority to grant an exception and it will not be possible for the identified prospect(s) to participate with the team.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WAIVER - An NCAA Division I institution/conference can submit a (Sub)Committee for Legislative Relief (SLR) Waiver on your behalf. It is a more complicated process and you will have to find a compliance office in the NCAA membership willing to do so and will require more information from you, but is the only additional opportunity for a waiver.

Institutions and conferences should have some familiarity with the waiver application process, but in most cases, they will not think of it in context of a prospective student-athlete. However, it would apply to the certification legislation that restricts the prospect's participation. Just be aware that when you approach the institution/conference, they may initially be confused as to why someone associated with a prospective student-athlete would be contacting them about an SLR waiver.

Historically, the NCAA membership has indicated to the NCAA Division I Legislative Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief that relief from the strict application of the legislation should be granted only in situations in which no permissible team exists that will allow a prospect the opportunity to participate in any NCAA-certified event. A waiver is usually not granted to allow an athlete to play with the team that they prefer to play with or to allow the athlete to attend specific NCAA-certified events, but to provide those who have no opportunity to participate in any NCAA-certified event a chance to participate. You will have to document in detail what extenuating circumstances that you believe justifies the need for a waiver.

REMINDER: Any team that provides false and/or misleading information faces penalties described in the ECAG [Adverse Actions](#).

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