On February 25, 2016, the NCAA Division I Committee for Legislative Relief approved a blanket waiver in the sport of swimming and diving to permit the following:

1. Women's swimming and diving student-athletes who achieve a 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials qualifying time or qualifying score by March 20, 2016, to continue to be coached by their collegiate coach through the June 26 - July 3, 2016 Olympic Trials;

2. Men's swimming and diving student-athletes who achieve a 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials qualifying time or qualifying score by March 27, 2016, to continue to be coached by their collegiate coach through the June 26 - July 3, 2016 Olympic Trials;

3. Women's swimming student-athletes who have not achieved a U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying time by March 20, 2016, to be coached by their collegiate coach through events ending May 1, 2016, provided the student-athlete achieves a time within one percent (of either the long-course meters or short-course yards time standards for the 2015 Senior National Championships) for events that are 200 meters/yards or longer and two percent for events that are 100 meters/yards and shorter;

4. Women's diving student-athletes who have not achieved a U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying score by March 20, 2016, to be coached by their collegiate coach through events ending April 10, 2016 provided the student-athlete achieves a score within three percent of the minimum qualifying score in the relevant individual or synchronized diving event for the 2016 Olympic Trials;

5. Men's swimming student-athletes who have not achieved a U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying time by March 27, 2016, to be coached by their collegiate coach through events ending May 1, 2016 provided the student-athlete achieves a time within one percent (of either the long-course meters or short-course yards time standards for the 2015 Senior National Championships) for events that are 200 meters/yards or longer and two percent for events that are 100 meters/yards and shorter;

6. Men's diving student-athletes who have not achieved a U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying score by March 27, 2016, to be coached by their collegiate coach through events ending April 10, 2016 provided the student-athlete achieves a score within three percent of the minimum qualifying score in the relevant individual or synchronized diving event for the 2016 Olympic Trials; and

7. Once student-athletes have achieved a U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying time or score, institutions may provide actual and necessary expenses (e.g., housing, meals) for student-athletes to participate in training activities with their collegiate coach from the end of the 2016 spring term until the student-athlete departs for the Olympic Trials.
The following questions and answers have been developed to assist the Division I membership in understanding the application of the blanket waiver.

Question No. 1: Does the blanket waiver apply to an international student-athlete who achieves a 2016 U.S. Olympic Trial qualifying time or score based on his or her home country's standards?

Answer: If an international student-athlete meets the 2016 U.S. Olympic Committee qualifying time or score, then the student-athlete may engage in practice with his or her coach pursuant to the blanket waiver conditions. If the international student-athlete does not meet the 2016 U.S. Olympic Committee qualifying time or score and instead only meets their respective country's qualifying time or score, then the institution must file a legislative relief waiver.

Question No. 2: Do the countable-athletically-related activities limits for the playing season (i.e., 20-hours) and outside the playing season (i.e., eight-hours) apply to practice associated with the blanket waiver?

Answer: There is no countable athletically related activities limit for practice activities associated with the blanket waiver.

Question No. 3: Are there any limitations on countable athletically related activities for practice associated with the blanket waiver during the week prior to the institution's final exam period, the institution's final exam period or vacation periods?

Answer: If the student-athlete has achieved a 2016 U.S. Olympic Team trials qualifying time or score, he or she may continue to be coached by their collegiate coach at any time through the 2016 Olympic Trials. For a student-athlete who has not achieved a 2016 U.S. Olympic Team trials qualifying time or score but meets the conditions of the waiver, he or she may continue to be coached at any time by their collegiate coach through May 1.

Question No. 4: Does the blanket waiver allow a coaching staff member to engage in coaching activities associated with an event in which a student-athlete is competing unattached in attempt to achieve a 2016 U.S. Olympic Trials qualifying time or score?

Answer: The blanket waiver does not permit a coaching staff member to engage in coaching activities associated with an event in which a student-athlete is competing unattached.
Question No. 5: May an institution provide expenses to a student-athlete who is engaging in practice with his or her coach pursuant to the blanket waiver conditions?

Answer: The blanket waiver permits institutions to provide actual and necessary expenses related to a student-athlete’s participation in training activities from the end of the 2016 spring term until the student-athlete departs for the Olympic Trials.

See Case No. 823476 in Requests/Self-Reports Online (RSRO) via the search tab.

[References: NCAA Division I Bylaws 16.5.2 (permissible – housing and meals), 17.02.18 (voluntary athletically related activities), 17.1.7.2 (weekly hour limitations – outside the playing season), 17.21.7 (safety exception).

For further assistance regarding this blanket waiver, please reach out to Abbie Markey at amarkey@ncaa.org.