

## Participant Approval for Operators and Coaches

In order to operate an NCAA-certified event or league, participate in coaching activities or sit on the team bench at an NCAA-certified event, the coach/operator must complete the required background check process and educational course. Both are completed online, but on **2 SEPARATE websites**.

**WHO:** All individuals involved in operating or managing an NCAA-certified event or league – OR - participate in coaching activities or sit on the team bench at an NCAA-certified event.

**NON-PROSPECT AGED TEAMS** - The participant approval requirement applies only to those teams participating within the certified event. Younger teams or adult divisions that will not be participating in facilities where NCAA coaches are present are not required to obtain a participant approval. If a younger team "plays up" and will be participating in activities viewable by NCAA coaches, then the coaches of those teams will have to obtain a participant approval prior to coaching in the event even though the team's athletes are not prospect aged.

**EXCEPTIONS:** NCAA coaches (although limited due to other legislative restrictions) are not required to complete the background check and educational course. The individual must actually be employed in a coaching capacity at an NCAA institution in order for the exception to apply.

**WHEN REQUIRED:** **PRIOR TO** operating an NCAA-certified event or league and/or **PRIOR TO** participating in coaching activities at an NCAA-certified event. [Note: If an activity has received both event and league certification, participating coaches are required to complete the educational course and clear the background check prior to participating in coaching activities during the July evaluation period.]

**NO WAIVER OF "PRIOR TO" REQUIREMENT:** NCAA staff cannot and will not waive the background check and educational requirements for operators and coaches. Participation prior to approval, without an approval or utilizing someone else's approval is subject to penalties outlined in the Adverse Actions guideline. It is in the applicant's best interest to not procrastinate in submitting their application.

### STRICT ENFORCEMENT

The participant approval requirement is strictly enforced.

#### 1. **EDUCATIONAL COURSE "NCAA ELIGIBILITY"** –

**COST:** The NFHS Learn NCAA Eligibility course is a **FREE** course. Applicants will be required to create an account, but will not be charged. The course can be started and stopped; so that the application can be completed at the individual's convenience, but **MUST** be finished within 10 days from date that the background check is completed.

#### **TO APPLY:**

**Go to:** <http://nfhslearn.com>

**Click:** Register at top of page

**Complete the registration.**

**Click:** Courses

**Enter "NCAA" in the search box.**

**Click:** Order Course and complete the checkout process. It will appear as though you are purchasing the course, but once you get to the checkout screen, you will see it is **FREE**.

**Complete:** The course.

**CONFIRMATION:** You will receive a certificate of approval once the course is completed. You **DO NOT** need to notify the NCAA that you have completed the course; the NCAA has the ability to pull a report and verify that all coaches/operators have done so.

**WHEN TO APPLY:** Unlike with the background check, the educational course will **NOT** have to be completed on an annual basis. Once the course has been completed, the applicant will not be required to complete the course again UNTIL there are changes in the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Standards. Applicants will be notified via e-mail when that occurs so that they can once again complete the required course. ECAG will not verify whether you have previously completed the course so if you are not sure, please take it again

2. **BACKGROUND CHECK** - Verified Volunteers (VV)

**COST:** Base fee = \$50. Background checks submitted in a non-event month (January, February, March, May, June, August) will have a base fee of \$50.00. Applications submitted during a month when NCAA-certified events occur (April, July, September) will also be charged a **\$50 penalty/late fee resulting in the total base cost being \$100.00**. Additionally, some states and/or counties charge a fee to access your records. You will be required to pay these pass-through fees when you complete your transaction with VV. These fees will be paid to the state/county and cannot be avoided.

- **Applicable counties:** Several counties in Arkansas, California, Florida, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wyoming.
- **Applicable states :** Colorado, Maine, Montana, New York, South Dakota, and Vermont.
- **To view applicable fees:** [County and State pass-through fees](#). County fees are on pages 1-3. State fees are on page 4.

**WHEN TO APPLY:** EVERY YEAR. The background check approval is only **good for the year that it is issued**, provided that no intervening arrests or convictions cause the individual to become ineligible under the ECAG approval guidelines during that time.

All approvals will expire on December 31 of the same year in which they were issued. For example, if approval is granted on July 3, 2016, that approval will be effective for the remainder of 2016 and will expire December 31, 2016. If you intend to operate an event/league or coach in an NCAA-certified event and have not completed a background check application in the same CALENDAR year, you will need to do so before participating.

**TO APPLY**

**Go to:** <http://verifiedvolunteers.com/NCAAScreening>

**Click:** the US or non-US link

**Complete:** Application questions.

**Submit:** Payment

**Wait:** For processing. Usually takes 3-5 business days.

**Confirmation:** You **WILL** receive an approval email from VV, but you can also log back in at any time to check the status of your application.

**Need Help?** For help with your background check application:

**Email:** [NCAASupport@verifiedvolunteers.com](mailto:NCAASupport@verifiedvolunteers.com)

**or Call:** 855-326-1860 - Client Code: 6024

**RESTRICTIONS**

Criminal backgrounds that include any of the following criteria are prohibited from receiving an approval number and will not be permitted to operate or coach at an NCAA-certified event/league:

1. Conviction of a felony.
2. Sex offenses, regardless of the charge level. This includes both those required to be listed on the sex offenders registry and those with criminal activity that is sexual in nature (ex. prostitution, etc.)
3. Criminal acts involving children/minors, regardless of the charge level.
4. Active criminal cases that could potentially result in a felony if the case is within the last seven years. [Note: Active cases that will never result in a felony (ex. traffic violations) will be permitted to obtain an approval.]

Additionally, the NCAA reserves the right to deny a participant approval to a coach/operator in the event the background check reveals a conviction for a crime that involves violence, regardless of the charge level.

If a felony conviction exists, please note that unless an error is found in the criminal background verification that negates the finding or the charges are expunged from the record, it **WILL NOT** be possible to obtain an approval. There is no process for appeal of this decision.

If an individual has been denied previously for the reason of an open felony case, the applicant is eligible to re-apply if the felony case is closed as the result of dismissal, acquittal, nolle pros, or if the charge level was assigned to a misdemeanor or lower. (There are other exceptions, but all must be reviewed by VV and the NCAA).

#### **DISPUTES**

If there is a criminal dispute cleared or the applicant believes that they were falsely denied an approval based on false information or a case of mistaken identity, the applicant should contact the Verified Volunteers (VV) at **855-326-1860 - Client Code: 6024**. Until VV has resolved the dispute and an applicant's background check remains in violation of the approval criteria, the applicant remains ineligible to operate an event/league or to participate in coaching activities at an NCAA-certified event.

#### **UNDISCOVERED VIOLATIONS**

If an operator or coach is granted an approval based on the conducted background check and information is later discovered that would have warranted a denial had the information appeared on the background check, the individual is subject to penalties outlined in the [Adverse Actions](#) guideline.

#### **OFFENSES COMMITTED SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF CREDENTIAL**

If a credential for participation was previously granted or is pending, and the applicant is subsequently indicted or charged for any crime not known at the time the previous application was submitted, the applicant must immediately notify the ECAG. The prior approval or pending application will automatically be suspended, pending resolution of the indictment or charge. Provided that the applicant has notified ECAG of the pending adjudication(s), a conviction, adjudication or term of probation imposed under any new indictment or charge, the amended application shall then be reviewed consistent with the criteria set forth.

#### **EVENT OPERATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN VERIFYING COACHES**

Event operators are responsible for ensuring that all coaches participating in their event(s) are in compliance with the participant approval requirement prior to their participation. This requirement applies to both team and individual events/camps.

**ED COURSE** – Operators do not have the ability to verify that a coach has completed the educational course; so ECAG will do that for you.

**BACKGROUND CHECK** – Operators are expected to confirm that each coach has cleared the background check prior to participating in coaching activities (including coaching from the stands) or sitting on the bench in your event.

**EXTRA EVENT STAFF WITH APPROVALS** - The same user name and password cannot be used by multiple people on multiple computers/devices at the same time. If an operator will need multiple people/computers logged in to the VV site at one time, it may be necessary to require staff to complete the background check application process themselves. Attempting to log in on multiple devices with the same login information will result in the account being locked out of the website completely to prevent fraudulent activity and it may take time to have the account reinstated. Operators will not be excused for violations that may occur because they could not access the list of approvals because they were locked out for this reason.

**REQUIRE IDS** - ECAG suggests that operators require coaches to show a State or US Government issued picture ID during their event check-in procedures to ensure that only approved coaches are granted the ability to participate. The list of background check approvals will identify the legal name, city, state and year of birth for all approved background checks. If the coach is known by another name, IDs may be necessary to be sure that the individual has been cleared for participation. Be sure that the name, ID photo and year of birth for the person checking in is consistent with the person on the list of approved coaches.

**BBCS NOTIFICATION** - The Approval Verified by NCAA field is not an indication as to whether or not an individual has been granted an approval by FADV; **instead, the BBCS Approved field is an indication that ECAG has verified the FADV approval of this individual**. This is not automatic and must be done manually by ECAG.

If the BBCS Approved field says:

**YES** = ECAG has already verified that the individual has an Eligible background check. If the NCAA has verified the coach, the Approval Verified by NCAA field on the team roster in the BBCS will be manually updated by ECAG.

ECAG will work to verify as many coaches as is possible prior to the certification period. This is done as a courtesy to event operators to eliminate some of the work involved in verifying coaches. Coach procrastination and volume does usually prevent ECAG from verifying all coaches prior to the certification period; in which case it then becomes the event operator's responsibility to do so using the approval list.

**NO** = If the NCAA has not verified the coach as approved within the BBCS, it is the operator's responsibility to ensure that the individual's name appears on the list of background check approvals posted on the VV website. Coaches that say NO may or may not have an approval and the operator will need to verify.

**NOTE:** A coach's ability to produce an approval e-mail OR a receipt is not a substitute for an actual approval. All participating coaches need to be verified by the NCAA OR appear on the FADV list of approved participants prior to participating.

**BBCS NOTIFICATION IS NOT AUTOMATED** - An individual could have an approved background check and still have an indication of NO in the BBCS. An ECAG staff member has to manually look up each individual coach and enter their number in order for there to be a YES indication.

**VV LIST IS AUTOMATED** - The list of approved background checks on the VV website, however, IS automated and once approved the individuals name will appear on the VV site immediately.

**ACCESS VV LIST OF APPROVED BACKGROUND CHECKS** – Once their background check has been approved, event operators and coaches will be given access to the list of approved background checks in order to determine the eligibility of the coaches associated with their event and/or team. Log back in to the VV website (<http://verifiedvolunteers.com/NCAAScreening>) and there is a link across the top to access the list.

**Related Legislation**

17.31.4.1-(l) Approval of League Operator or Manager.  
13.18-(j)

**Related Guidelines**

Check Coaches Approval - Individual Events  
Check Coaches Approval - Team Events  
Access the Approved Coaches  
Forgot your Log in Information for FADV  
Forgot your FADV Participant Approval Number  
Adverse Actions  
Access the Approved Coaches Link  
Apply for an NCAA Participant Approval for Operators and Coaches