



AACCA Certification Review Process

The AACCA Certification Review Process was approved by the AACCA Board on December 12, 2007. The approval gives AACCA the authority to remove or revoke a certification previously given to an individual. At this time and until further notice, the pilot program will be administered for college cheerleading coaches.

AACCA Certification Review Process

Step 1: Notification of Potential Violation

The first step in the process will be the notification to AACCA of a potential violation. This will be via a form on the AACCA website requesting the details and any corroborating evidence. Receipt of this form will initiate the process, with a file to be started on this school/coach.

The allegation may be made anonymously and does not require photographic or video evidence. However, a preponderance of evidence will be needed in order to move the allegation to the Review Board. For example: a an anonymous allegation that includes a dated newspaper article with a photograph of a violation has merit. An allegation by several credible sources that attest to a violation but that do not have a photograph to offer still has merit. An anonymous report that a team was “breaking the rules” without any other information to offer (date, location, rule violated) would not likely merit any further action.

Step 2: Background Research

An AACCA staff member will be designated by the Executive Director to gather as much information as possible from any relevant parties in an informal inquiry. This staff member will contact the coach via telephone, email or letter to inform them of the inquiry. No university personnel will be contacted at this time.

Step 3: Decision by AACCA Staff

The AACCA staff may: 1) take no action; 2) absolve the coach of any wrongdoing, 3) clarify a rule or 4) escalate the matter to the AACCA Review Board. The AACCA staff member can not give a coach an official violation. The most they can do is give the matter to the Review Board. Any letters of communication or notes of discussions will be filed with the AACCA.

1) No Action:

The staff may take no action if the inquiry does not find enough evidence to support further action. A letter from the Executive Director will go to the coach summarizing any discussions about safety rules that may have come up.

2) Absolve the Coach:

In the event that it is demonstrated that the alleged violation did not take place, the coach can be absolved of any wrongdoing. This is similar to a finding of innocence as opposed to just being “not guilty”. An example of this would be where a coach was accused of doing basket tosses during a game, and in fact it was proven that this was during a halftime performance on a mat. A letter from the Executive Director will go to the coach clarifying that they had been cleared of any wrongdoing.

3) Clarify a Rule:

The inquiry may find that the violation was a misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule. A warning letter from the Executive Director will go to the coach clarifying the rule.

AACCA Certification Review Process

4) Escalation to the AACCA Review Board:

Submission to the AACCA Review Board will begin an official inquiry. It will also trigger a letter to the coach informing them of the specific violations that are being investigated, including the date/location of the violation and any evidence that has been collected. It will also include the procedures for them to have due process and to rebut any of the information, as well as provide any relevant information to the review board that would exonerate them. There will be a reasonable deadline for this procedure. There is no communication with any administration personnel regarding this investigation at this time unless it is relevant to the investigation. *This action in and of itself will not count as an "infraction", but further action by the Review Board may result in an "infraction".*

Step 4: Inquiry by the AACCA Review Board

The AACCA Review Board will be an ad hoc committee appointed by the Executive Director that will consist of 3 to 5 persons. Upon submission of an inquiry from the AACCA staff to the AACCA Review Board, the review board will take up the inquiry and review all relevant information provided by the AACCA Staff and the coach/institution. The Review Board may request further information and conduct their own investigation as needed.

Step 5: Decision by the AACCA Review Board

The Review Board may: 1) take no action, 2) absolve the coach, 3) provide a warning or clarification of a rule, or 4) rule that there is an "infraction". Any communications and correspondence will be kept on file with AACCA.

1 – 3) The same options as above.

4) Ruling of an Infraction

If the review board returns a ruling that an infraction occurred, the following actions will be taken depending upon the number of previous infractions by this coach/program.

Action to be Taken:

1st infraction:

"Letter of Infraction" stating that this is the first infraction and that subsequent infractions may result in loss of certification for the coach/program. The letter will include all of the relevant information of the violation, a copy of the NCAA policy on safety certification, and this AACCA Certification Review Process. This letter will be sent to the following parties:

- The coach receiving the infraction
- The institution's NCAA Compliance Officer

2nd infraction:

"Letter of Infraction" stating that a second infraction has occurred and a third infraction will result in loss of the coach's safety certification. The letter will include all of the relevant information of the violation as well as a copy of the NCAA policy on safety certification and the AACCA policy on maintaining certification and will be filed with AACCA. This letter will be sent to the following parties:

AACCA Certification Review Process

- The coach receiving the infraction
- The institution's NCAA Compliance Officer
- The NCAA
- The Mutual of Omaha

3rd infraction:

"Letter of Infraction" stating that a third infraction has occurred, the coach's safety certification has been removed, and unless their program is being supervised by another safety certified person, they are no longer in compliance with the NCAA policy on catastrophic insurance coverage. The letter will include all of the relevant information of the violation as well as a copy of the NCAA policy on safety certification and the AACCA policy on maintaining certification and will be filed with AACCA. The letter will also explain that the coach may have their certification reinstated after one year by going through the certification process again, and that they will be in a probation period* for two years following their recertification. Steps will be put into place to flag their information should they try to recertify prior to the one year ban. This letter will be sent to the following parties:

- The coach receiving the infraction
- The institution's NCAA Compliance Officer
- The NCAA
- The Mutual of Omaha

Note that the Review Board has the right and responsibility to escalate the infraction level to the second (last warning) if warranted or to the third level (immediate removal of certification) should they deem that the infraction involved egregious and willful violation of the rules that places team members in imminent danger.

* Probation period: Following a one year ban and subsequent recertification, a two year probationary period will automatically be in place for this coach. If there is an infraction during this period, the coach will immediately lose their certification. If there are no infractions during the two year probationary period the coach will return to a status of "good standing".

The loss of certification two times for any reason will result in a lifetime ban on any association with AACCA.

Step 6: Appealing the decision of the Review Board

Following an infraction notice, a coach/institution may appeal the decision of the Review Board if there is any new information not provided during the investigation process. This appeal must be filed within two weeks of the date of the infraction notice. The Review Board will take up the appeal and determine whether to uphold or reverse the original decision.