



Student-Athlete Availability Reporting Policy **(Effective August 29, 2024)**

To promote the integrity of competition, the wellbeing of student-athletes and institutional staff, and public transparency, beginning with the 2024-25 academic year, the Southeastern Conference implemented a policy applicable to football, men's and women's basketball, and baseball, that requires SEC institutions to accurately disclose to the public—via a standardized availability report ("Availability Report")—when a student-athlete's ability to participate in an upcoming game involving two SEC institutions is uncertain for any reason, subject to the terms and conditions set forth below.

1. Timing of Initial Disclosure

The deadline for an institution to release an initial Availability Report ("Initial Report") prior to a game is set forth below by sport:

- **Football**: Wednesday by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time for a Saturday game (or, for any non-Saturday game, three nights before the game by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time).
- **Basketball**: The night before a game by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time (or, for an institution that played a game the day before, by 11:00 am local time the day of the game, or two hours before the game starts, whichever is earlier).
- **Baseball**: The night before a game by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time (or, for an institution that played a game the day before, by 11:00 am local time the day of the game, or two hours before the game starts, whichever is earlier).

2. Designated Participation Statuses

If an institution has knowledge that a student-athlete may not be able to participate in the upcoming game for any reason (including, but not limited to, injury, illness, suspension, ineligibility, or personal matter), the institution must accurately designate the student-athlete's participation status on the Initial Report as follows:

- Out (i.e., will not play/0% chance to play);
- Doubtful (i.e., unlikely to play/25% chance to play);
- Questionable (i.e., uncertain to play/50% chance to play); or
- Probable (i.e., probable to play/75% chance to play).



Additionally, an institution must affirmatively designate a student-athlete as Available (i.e., will play/100% chance to play) when a student-athlete previously appeared on any Availability Report for the upcoming game and, due to a change in circumstances, is expected to participate in the upcoming game.

The status of “Out” is a broad catch-all that covers any reason why a student-athlete is not available to participate in the upcoming game including, but not limited to, (1) an injury or illness, (2) a suspension imposed by the head coach, institution, conference, or NCAA, (3) an eligibility or legal matter, or (4) a personal or family matter. Except for exempt student-athletes (see Section 3), any student-athlete who does not appear on an institution’s Availability Report shall be regarded as Available for the upcoming game.

The Availability Report shall not contain any information other than the student-athlete’s name and designated participation status. An institution may exercise its own discretion to provide additional information regarding a student-athlete’s status, if appropriate, via a press release, social media post, or coach’s comments, provided this information is consistent with information shared via the Availability Report.

An institution with a football student-athlete suspended for the first half of the upcoming game due to the NCAA targeting rule must contact the conference office to ensure the student-athlete is listed on the Availability Report as “Out (1st Half).”

3. Exempt Student-Athletes

Any student-athlete who regularly participates in games (even on a limited basis) is subject to mandatory disclosure pursuant to this policy. In football, this includes any student-athlete regularly on the travel roster for an SEC road game.

An institution is not required to include a student-athlete on the Availability Report if the student-athlete (1) is not expected to participate in games (e.g., a redshirt student-athlete who does not dress for games) or (2) at most, infrequently participates in a de minimis portion of games (e.g., the final minutes of a game when the outcome is no longer in doubt).

When in doubt regarding whether a student-athlete is exempt from this policy, an institution shall err on the side of transparency by including the student-athlete on the Availability Report.

4. Duty to Update

A. Football

In football, prior to a Saturday football game, an institution must issue the Initial Report on Wednesday by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time and update the Availability Report once per day on Thursday and Friday (after the conclusion of practice and before 7 pm Central time / 8 pm Eastern time). These updated reports will be referred to as the “Thursday Update” and “Friday Update”.



On game day, an institution must provide one Game Day Update no later than 90 minutes before game time. On the Game Day Update, the only permissible designation statuses are:

- Available (i.e., will dress for the game and be available to play);
- Game Time Decision (i.e., coaches and/or medical personnel need to evaluate the student-athlete in pre-game warmups before deciding whether he can participate in the game); or
- Out (i.e., not dressing or available for the game).

B. Men's/Women's Basketball and Baseball

For basketball and baseball, an institution must issue the Initial Report the day before the game by 7:00 pm Central time / 8:00 pm Eastern time.

On game day, an institution must provide one Game Day Update no later than 90 minutes before game time. On the Game Day Update, the only permissible designation statuses are:

- Available (i.e., will dress for the game and be available to play);
- Game Time Decision (i.e., coaches and/or medical personnel need to evaluate the student-athlete in pre-game warmups before deciding whether he can participate in the game); or
- Out (i.e., not dressing or available for the game).

If an institution played a game the day before, its only obligation is to release one Availability Report by 11:00 am local time the day of the game, or two hours before the game starts, whichever is earlier (i.e., the institution does not need to issue a Game Day Update 90 minutes before game time). In this scenario, the only permissible designation statuses on the Availability Report are (1) Available, (2) Game Time Decision, or (3) Out.

C. Additional Guidance for All Sports

It would constitute an automatic violation of this policy if a student-athlete participates in a game after being listed as Out on the Game Day Update (or, in basketball or baseball, after being listed as Out on the lone Availability Report in any instance when the institution played a game the day before).

"Game Time Decision" is a permissible designation status *only* on the Game Day Update (or, in basketball or baseball, on the lone Availability Report in any instance when the institution played a game the day before). Instances of a student-athlete being listed on the Game Day Update as a "Game Time Decision" shall be kept to a minimum and must not violate the duty to act in good faith (see Section 5). Excessive or unreasonable instances of an institution listing a student-athlete as a "Game Time Decision" will trigger review by the conference office and may result in penalties (see Section 11).



5. Duty to Act in Good Faith

Institutional personnel have a duty to act in good faith to comply with this policy. Acts of gamesmanship intended to hide a student-athlete's true participation status for competitive or strategic reasons are prohibited. Any other conduct that reasonably could be construed as misleading or creating unnecessary confusion regarding a student-athlete's participation status is likewise prohibited. An institution must take extra precautions to act in good faith to accurately disclose the status of a high-profile student-athlete (e.g., starting quarterback, leading scorer on the basketball team, or best hitter on the baseball team).

Examples of conduct that would violate the duty to act in good faith include, but are not limited to, (1) an institution listed a high-profile student-athlete as Doubtful on the Initial Report (and, in football, listed list him as Doubtful on the Thursday Update and Friday Update and as a Game Time Decision on the Game Day Update) leading up to several consecutive games notwithstanding that the student-athlete continued to play his/her normal role in each game and there was no credible explanation for why the student-athlete was repeatedly listed as Doubtful and a Game Time Decision, (2) an institution listed an unusually large number of student-athletes as a Game Time Decision on the Game Day Update, all such student-athletes played their normal role in the game, and there was no credible explanation for why an unusually large number of student-athletes were listed as a Game Time Decision (instead of Available) on the Game Day Update, and (3) a high-profile student-athlete was listed as Available on every Availability Report leading up to the game and, despite dressing for the game, did not play in the game, and the conference office's post-game review revealed that the student-athlete's participation in practices leading up to the game had been severely limited and the coaching staff knew the student-athlete could not participate in the game.

6. Duty to Avoid a Surprise

An institution must avoid a surprise (i.e., a sudden and drastic change in a student-athlete's participation status) absent extenuating circumstances (e.g., an unexpected illness or injury). An institution must take extra precautions to avoid a surprise in respect to a high-profile student-athlete's status.

An institution must make every reasonable effort to progress a student-athlete through the designated participation statuses in a gradual manner leading up to the game such that, for example, a student-athlete is not updated from Out directly to Available. If a student-athlete has any chance to play in the upcoming game, he/she shall not be listed as Out and, at a minimum, must be listed as Doubtful on the Initial Report (and, in football, on the Thursday Update and Friday Update).

Example of situations that (absent extenuating circumstances) would violate the duty to avoid a surprise include, but are not limited to, (1) a student-athlete was listed as Out on the Initial Report (and, in football, listed as Out on the Thursday Update and Friday Update) and moved directly from Out to Available on the Game Day Update, and (2) a student-athlete was listed as Available on the Initial Report (and, in football, listed as Available on the Thursday Update and Friday Update) and moved directly from Available to Out on the Game Day Update, and there was no credible explanation for the student-athlete's sudden and drastic change in status.



7. Duty to Avoid Inconsistent Public Comments

Institutional personnel (e.g., a head or assistant coach) shall not make public comments (including on social media) regarding a student-athlete's availability that are inconsistent with the student-athlete's status on the Availability Report.

8. Non-Conference Games

An institution may (but are not required to) release an Availability Report in advance of a game against a non-SEC institution.

9. Submission of Availability Report

The Availability Report must be uploaded via an online hub available on the conference's official website (referred to as the "Reporting Hub"). The Availability Report for both teams playing against each other will be available for public viewing on the conference's official website at the same time.

Each institution shall designate one individual who is primarily responsible for inputting information into the Reporting Hub ("Primary Inputter") and one back-up inputter ("Back-Up Inputter") for each sport covered by the policy, provided that (1) the Head Coach, Sports Information Director, and Head Athletic Trainer, must be involved in satisfying an institution's obligations pursuant to this policy and (2) the Head Coach is ultimately responsible for compliance with this policy.

10. Enforcement Process

The conference office possesses the authority to investigate potential violations of this policy including, but not limited to, the ability to (1) speak with relevant institutional personnel and student-athletes and (2) review relevant practice film and other relevant materials (e.g., practice plans). Institutional personnel must cooperate with this process.

As part of the conference office's review process, an institution has until 1 p.m. Central time / 2 p.m. Eastern time the day after the game to provide the conference office with information to support its contention that it was placed at a competitive disadvantage due to its opponent's alleged violation of this policy.

11. Penalties

A. Overview

Failure to provide accurate and timely information on the Availability Report will subject the offending institution, and, if appropriate, the offending head coach, to accountability measures, including, but not limited to, private or public reprimands, fines, and other measures as appropriate.



The Commissioner shall have the discretion to administer penalties as appropriate under the circumstances. Accountability measures other than financial penalties (e.g., a warning and/or continuing education for relevant institutional personnel) may be imposed if appropriate, including, for example, (1) the violation did not materially impact competition or (2) the violation resulted from an inadvertent mistake. In such a scenario, the incident shall not count as a violation for purposes of the progressive system for financial penalties.

The prescribed financial penalties vary depending on the sport given the differences in financial incentives and number of games. The progressive system for financial penalties resets on an annual basis.

B. Football

In football, if a financial penalty is appropriate, the following penalty schedule applies to the offending institution:

- First Offense: \$25,000 penalty
- Second Offense: \$50,000 penalty
- Third Offense and Any Successive Offense: \$100,000 penalty

In addition, the head coach of the offending institution is subject to accountability measures, including a financial penalty, as appropriate given the circumstances. A coach who is a repeat violator of this policy is subject to progressively higher penalties.

C. Men's/Women's Basketball and Baseball

In men's/women's basketball and baseball, if a financial penalty is appropriate, the following penalty schedule applies to the offending institution (with the specific amount depending on the sport and other relevant factors such as the competitive impact of the violation):

- First Offense: Up to a \$15,000 penalty
- Second Offense: Up to a \$20,000 penalty
- Third Offense and Any Successive Offense: Up to a \$25,000 penalty

In addition, the head coach of the offending institution is subject to accountability measures, including a financial penalty, as appropriate given the circumstances. A coach who is a repeat violator of this policy is subject to progressively higher penalties.



12. Sport-Specific Modifications and Guidance

The conference office may issue reasonable sport-specific modifications to this policy, provided that the Athletics Directors approve any such modification before it becomes effective.

The conference office may issue guidance on an ongoing basis to promote understanding and compliance with this policy (e.g., Exhibit 1, which provides hypothetical examples pertaining to the policy, and Exhibit 2, which outlines procedures regarding the inputting of the Availability Reports by institutional personnel).



EXHIBIT 1
Hypothetical Examples
Student-Athlete Availability Reporting Policy

The following hypothetical scenarios (categorized by sport) provide additional clarity regarding the student-athlete availability reporting policy. Men's/women's basketball and baseball are grouped together because the policy is identical for both sports.

1. Football

At 12:30 pm Central time on Friday, the starting quarterback (who was not listed on the Initial Report or Thursday Update) presents severe flu-like symptoms including a high fever, leading the Head Athletic Trainer and Head Coach to believe the quarterback has about a 50% chance to play in the game the following day. The institution must list the quarterback as Questionable on the Friday Update.

On Saturday:

- If the quarterback is completely healthy and certain to play in the game, the institution must list the quarterback as Available on the Game Day Update.
- If the quarterback is undecided about whether he can play in the game and the coaching staff and medical personnel conclude they need to evaluate the quarterback in pre-game warmups before deciding if he can play in the game, the institution must list the quarterback as a Game Time Decision on the Game Day Update.
- If the quarterback wakes up feeling much worse and is immediately deemed unable to play in the game, the institution must list the quarterback as Out on the Game Day Update.

2. Football

Due to a mild hamstring strain suffered in the previous game, a starting cornerback did not participate in any live team drills in practice on Tuesday and Wednesday. The Head Athletic Trainer and Head Coach believe it is somewhat possible – but unlikely – the cornerback will play in the team's upcoming game on Saturday. On the Initial Report due on Wednesday night, the institution must list the cornerback as Doubtful.

The cornerback's hamstring improved considerably as the week progresses, and he participated in limited team activities during Thursday's practice and all team activities in Friday's practice. Shortly after Friday's practice, the Head Athletic Trainer cleared the cornerback to participate in the game, and the cornerback is confident he can play his normal role in the game. The Head Coach is leaning toward playing the cornerback in the game but still is uncertain about the cornerback's chances to play. In this scenario, the institution must list the cornerback as Questionable on the Friday Update.



On Saturday, the cornerback arrived at the stadium early (about two hours and thirty minutes before kickoff) to go through drills with his secondary coach. After performing these drills at a satisfactory level, the secondary coach informed the head coach that the cornerback is ready to play his normal role in the game. The Head Coach agreed. In this scenario, the institution must list the cornerback as Available on the Game Day Update.

3. Football

A back-up linebacker who regularly plays in certain defensive packages and on multiple special teams units suffered a concussion and missed the next three games. The institution's medical staff and Head Coach (in consultation with the linebacker and his family) targeted Saturday, October 26, 2024, for his expected return to game action, provided that he passes a series of neurocognitive tests prior to the game. In the week leading up to the game, all signs point to the linebacker getting medical clearance to participate in the game pending satisfactory completion of his final neurocognitive exam on Thursday morning, which the medical staff expects him to pass (although it is not a certainty).

The institution must list the linebacker as Questionable or Probable (as appropriate) on the Initial Report due on Wednesday night. If the linebacker passes his final neurocognitive exam on Thursday morning, the institution must list him as Probable or Available (as appropriate) on the Thursday Update. Alternatively, if the linebacker unexpectedly fails to pass his final neurocognitive exam on Thursday morning, the institution shall downgrade his status as appropriate (potentially all the way down to Out) on the Thursday Update.

4. Basketball and Baseball

At 10:30 pm Central time the night before a game, the starting point guard/shortstop (who was previously listed as Questionable on the Initial Report) notifies the Head Athletic Trainer and Head Coach that he/she is not physically able to participate in the upcoming game due to severe back spasms. After evaluating the point guard/shortstop, the Head Athletic Trainer agrees the point guard/shortstop is unable to participate in the game. The institution is not immediately required to update the Availability Report (because the Initial Report already has been submitted). On game day, the institution must list the point guard/shortstop as Out on the Game Day Update.

5. Basketball and Baseball

The starting shooting guard/centerfielder severely strained his/her lower calf muscle during an SEC Tournament game, which his/her team won. As a result, the shooting guard/centerfielder is unable to play in the next game, which starts at 12 p.m. local time the following day.

Prior to 10 a.m. local time (i.e., the earlier of 11 a.m. local time or two hours before the game), the institution must list the shooting guard/centerfielder as Out on the lone Availability Report it must issue for a game following a game played on the day before.



EXHIBIT 2

Procedures for Inputting Student-Athlete Availability Reports

The following procedures govern the inputting of information in the student-athlete availability reports by institutional personnel.

1. Inputting Information into Availability Report

Each institution shall designate one individual who is primarily responsible for inputting the information into the Availability Report ("Primary Inputter") and one back-up ("Back-Up Inputter") for each sport covered by the policy. The Head Coach, Sports Information Director, and Head Athletic Trainer must be involved in satisfying an institution's obligations pursuant to this policy, and the Head Coach is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance.

The Primary Inputter and Back-Up Inputter will receive from the conference office secure access to a Google Docs file, which will be used to input information into the Availability Report via an online hub available on the conference's official website (referred to as the "Reporting Hub").

The Primary Inputter (or, if he/she is not available, the Back-Up Inputter) is responsible for inputting the necessary information and submitting the institution's Availability Report in a timely manner via the Reporting Hub.

When connected to the internet, the relevant Google Docs file will be accessible via (1) a desktop computer or (2) the "Sheets App" on any smart phone or tablet.

In the event of a technical failure that prevents an institution from submitting the Availability Report, the Primary Inputter (or, if he/she is not available, the Back-Up Inputter) must immediately attempt to contact via telephone – in order – (1) the opposing program's Sports Information Director (whose number will be provided in advance by the conference office) and (2) the conference office (attn: Garth Glissman at 402-202-9733 or Taylor Brasher at 205-746-3900).

2. Automatic Roster Upload and Adjustments to Roster

To help facilitate compliance with the policy, the conference office will automatically upload an institution's roster to the Google Docs file used to input information into the Availability Report.

An institution may request removal of a student-athlete from the roster on the Google Docs file (on the basis the student-athlete is exempt from disclosure pursuant to Section 3 of the policy) by emailing the conference office, to the attention of Garth Glissman (gglissman@sec.org) and Taylor Brasher (tbrasher@sec.org).



3. Student-Athlete Default Participation Status

The default status for every student-athlete on the roster on the Google Docs file will be Available. The only way that a student-athlete's status will change to something other than available is if the Primary Inputter or Back-Up Inputter changes the student-athlete's status.

4. Deadline to Submit Initial Report and, If Applicable, Subsequent Updates

A. Football

In football, prior to a Saturday football game, an institution must issue the Initial Report on Wednesday by 7 pm Central time / 8 pm Eastern time and update the Availability Report once per day on Thursday and Friday (after the conclusion of practice and before 7 pm Central time / 8 pm Eastern time).

On game day, an institution must provide one Game Day Update no later than 90 minutes before game time.

B. Basketball and Baseball

In men's/women's basketball and baseball, an institution must issue the Initial Report the day before the game by 7 pm Central time / 8 pm Eastern time.

On game day, an institution must provide one Game Day Update no later than 90 minutes before game time.

C. Game Following a Game the Day Before (Basketball and Baseball Only)

In basketball and baseball, if an institution played a game the day before, the institution's only obligation is to release one Availability Report by 11:00 am local time the day of the game, or two hours before the game starts, whichever is earlier (i.e., the institution does not also need to issue a Game Day Update 90 minutes before game time).

In this scenario, the only permissible designation statuses on the lone Availability Report are (1) Available, (2) Game Time Decision, or (3) Out.

5. Designated Participation Statuses Prior to Game

The designated participation statuses prior to game day (i.e., for the Initial Report in all sports and the Thursday Update and Friday Update in football) are as follows:

- Out (i.e., will not play/0% chance to play);
- Doubtful (i.e., unlikely to play/25% chance to play);



- Questionable (i.e., uncertain to play/50% chance to play); or
- Probable (i.e., probable to play/75% chance to play).

Additionally, an institution must affirmatively designate a student-athlete as Available (i.e., will play/100% chance to play) when a student-athlete previously appeared on any Availability Report for the upcoming game and, due to a change in circumstances, is expected to participate in the upcoming game.

6. Designated Participation Statuses on Game Day

To minimize the likelihood of confusion during the hectic nature of a game day, the designated participation statuses on game day (i.e., for the Game Day Update issued 90 minutes before game time) are reduced and simplified as follows:

- Out (i.e., not dressing or available for the game);
- Game Time Decision (i.e., coaches and/or medical personnel need to evaluate the student-athlete in pre-game warmups before deciding whether he/she can participate in the game); or
- Available (i.e., will dress for the game and be available to play).

As a reminder, instances of a student-athlete being listed on the Game Day Update as a “Game Time Decision” shall be kept to a minimum and must not violate the duty to act in good faith. Excessive or unreasonable instances of an institution listing a student-athlete as a “Game Time Decision” will trigger review by the conference office and may result in penalties.

7. Public Release of Availability Report

The Availability Reports will be available for public viewing on the conference’s official website at the following times:

- Initial Report (all sports): 10 minutes after the deadline to submit, which generally means the Initial Report will be released to the public at 7:10 pm Central time / 8:10 pm Eastern time.
- Thursday Update and Friday Update (football): 10 minutes after the deadline to submit, which means the Thursday Update and Friday Update will be released to the public at 7:10 pm Central time / 8:10 pm Eastern time.
- Game Day Update (all sports): About 90 minutes before game time (i.e., shortly after submission of the Game Day Update).