Understanding the National Letter of Intent

Written by the Baseball Factory Staff

What is a national letter of intent? Does it guarantee playing time? Once I sign a letter of intent, can other colleges recruit me? The national letter of intent is one of many aspects of the college recruiting process that can spark confusion among players and parents.

Signed by the rising college athlete (and his parent or guardian if he is under the age of 18) the written agreement declares that he will plan to attend that institution for at least one year. In return, he will receive the agreed upon athletic scholarship. Should the player decide he no longer wants to attend the school with which he signed, he will lose two years eligibility.

The signing of this letter signals the end of the college recruiting process for the ballplayer as colleges are not permitted to recruit athletes whom have already signed with another institution.

The national letter of intent must be signed during the designated time frame which varies by sport. Baseball players must sign during one of two periods: Mid November or Mid April – August (see the NCAA web site for exact dates). Otherwise the statement will be considered invalid.

Most players sign letters of intent sometime during their senior year. If they have not done so already, players who sign should submit the necessary information to the NCAA Clearinghouse. If the Clearinghouse deems you a non-qualifier, your National Letter of Intent will be considered void.

If you would like further information about the National Letter of Intent, please contact the school you are interested in attending or visit the National Letter of Intent program online at <u>www.national-letter.org.</u>

Please read the National Letter of Intent below take from the official website of the National Letter of Intent program.

Text of the National Letter of Intent *From national-letter.org

- 1. Initial Enrollment in Four-Year Institution. This NLI is applicable only to prospective student-athletes who will be entering four-year institutions for the first time as full-time students. It is also permissible for 4-2-4 transfers who are graduating from a junior college as outlined in provision 8b to sign the NLI. With the exception of midyear transfer students in football, (who must graduate at midyear for this NLI to be valid), no prospective student-athlete enrolling at midyear shall sign a NLI.
- 2. Financial Aid Requirement. At the time I sign this NLI, I must receive a written offer of athletics financial aid applicable for the entire 2006-2007 academic year from the institution named in this document. The offer shall list the terms and conditions of the award, including the amount and duration of the financial aid. (A midyear football junior college transfer must receive a written offer of athletics financial aid applicable for the

remainder of the 2005-2006 academic year.) In order for this NLI to be valid, my parent/legal guardian and I must sign the NLI and the offer of athletics aid prior to submission to the institution named in this document, and any other stated conditions must also be met. If the conditions stated on the financial aid offer are not met, this NLI shall be declared null and void. An institution submitting an improper offer of athletics aid may be in violation of the NLI program and subject to sanctions.

- a. Professional Sports Contract. If I sign a professional sports contract in the sport in which I signed the NLI, I remain bound by the provisions of the NLI in all other sports, even if NCAA rules prohibit the institution named in this document from providing me with athletics financial aid.
- 3. Provisions of Letter Satisfied.
 - a. One-year Attendance Requirement Met. The terms of this NLI shall be satisfied if I attend the institution named in this document for at least one academic year as a full-time student.
 - b. Junior College Graduation. The terms of this NLI shall be satisfied if I graduate from junior college after signing this NLI either while in high school or during my first year of full-time enrollment in junior college, provided it is not the year I am scheduled to graduate from junior college.
- 4. Basic Penalty. I understand that if I do not attend the institution named in this document for one full academic year, and I enroll in another institution participating in the NLI program, I may not represent the latter institution in intercollegiate athletics competition until I have completed one full academic year in residence at the latter institution. Further, I understand I shall be charged with the loss of one season of intercollegiate athletics eligibility in all sports, except as otherwise provided in this NLI. This is in addition to any eligibility expended at any institution.
 - a. Early Signing Period Penalties. Prospective student-athletes who will participate in football are prohibited from signing an NLI during the early signing period. A student who signs an NLI during the early period in a sport other than football will be ineligible for practice and competition in the sport of football during the student's first year of enrollment at an NLI member institution, and shall forfeit one season of eligibility in the sport of football. In circumstances where a student's primary sport is not football, but the student anticipates participating in football, the student should delay signing an NLI until either the football signing period or during the late signing period for all other sports.
- 5. Release Request Form. An NLI Release Request Form may be obtained and completed in the event I wish to be released from my NLI obligation. I must sign the form, along with my parent/legal guardian, and the Director of Athletics of the institution named in this document. A Release Request Form may be obtained from the NLI website at <u>www.national-letter.org/documents/</u>.

- a. Authority to Release. A coach is not authorized to void, cancel or provide any form of release to this NLI.
- b. Extent of the Release Request Form. The provisions of the Release Request Form shall apply to all NLI participating institutions and shall not be conditional or selective by institution.
- 6. Appeal Process. I understand the NLI Steering Committee has been authorized to issue interpretations, settle disputes and consider petitions for a complete release from the provisions of this NLI when extenuating circumstances are determined to exist and the signing institution denies my request for complete release. I further understand the Steering Committee's decision may be appealed to the NLI Appeals Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding.
- 7. Letter Becomes Null and Void. This NLI shall be declared null and void if any of the following occur:
 - a. Admissions Requirement. This NLI shall be declared null and void if the institution named in this document notifies me in writing that I have been denied admission or, by the opening day of classes in the fall 2006 has failed to provide me with written notice of admission, provided I have submitted a complete admission application.
 - 1. It is presumed that I am eligible for admission and financial aid until information is submitted to the contrary. Thus, it is mandatory for me, upon request, to provide a transcript of my previous academic record and an application for admission to the institution named in this document.
 - 2. If I am eligible for admission, but the institution named in this document defers admission to a subsequent term, the NLI shall be rendered null and void. However, if I defer my admission, this NLI remains binding.
 - b. Eligibility Requirements. This NLI shall be declared null and void if, by the opening day of classes in the fall of 2006, I have not met (a) the institution's requirements for admissions, (b) its academic requirements for financial aid to athletes, or (c) the NCAA requirements for freshman financial aid (NCAA Bylaw 14.3) or the junior college transfer requirements.
 - 1. If I become a nonqualifier (per NCAA Bylaw 14.3), this NLI shall be rendered null and void.
 - 2. If I am a midyear junior college football transfer, the NLI becomes null and void if I fail to graduate from junior college at midyear. The NLI remains binding for the following fall term if I graduated, was eligible for admission and financial aid and met the junior college transfer requirements for competition for the winter or spring term, but chose to delay my admission.
 - c. One-Year Absence. This NLI shall be null and void if I have not attended any institution (or attended an institution, including a junior college, not participating in the NLI program) for at least one academic year, provided my request for athletics financial aid for a subsequent fall term is denied. I may still apply this provision if I initially enrolled in an NLI member institution but have been absent for a period of one academic year. To apply this provision, I must file with the appropriate conference office a statement from the director

of athletics at the institution named in this document that such financial aid will not be available to me for the requested fall term.

- d. Service in the U.S. Armed Forces. Church Mission. This NLI shall be null and void if I serve on active duty with the armed forces of the United States or on an official church mission for at least eighteen (18) months.
- e. Discontinued Sport. This NLI shall be null and void if the institution named in the document discontinues my sport.
- f. Recruiting Rules Violation. If the institution (or a representative of its athletics interests) named in this document violated NCAA or conference rules while recruiting me, as found through the NCAA or conference enforcement process or acknowledged by the institution, this NLI shall be declared null and void. Such declaration shall not take place until all appeals to the NCAA or conference for restoration of eligibility have been concluded.
- 8. Only One Valid NLI Permitted. I understand that I may sign only one valid NLI, except as listed below.
 - a. Subsequent Signing Year. If this NLI is rendered null and void under Provision 7, I remain free to enroll in any institution of my choice where I am admissible and shall be permitted to sign another NLI in a subsequent signing year.
 - b. Junior College Exception. If I signed a NLI while in high school or during my first year of full-time enrollment in junior college, I may sign another NLI in the signing year in which I am scheduled to graduate from junior college. If I graduate, the second NLI shall be binding on me; otherwise, the original NLI, if not already satisfied, shall remain valid.
- 9. Recruiting Ban After Signing. I understand all participating conferences and institutions are obligated to respect my signing and shall cease to recruit me upon my signing this NLI. I shall notify any recruiter who contacts me that I have signed an NLI. Once I enroll in the institution with which I signed, the NLI Recruiting Ban is no longer in effect, and I shall be governed by applicable NCAA recruiting bylaws.
- 10. Institutional Signatures Required Prior to Submission. This NLI must be signed and dated by the Director of Athletics (or his/her authorized representative) before submission in duplicate to me and my parents/legal guardian for our signatures. This NLI may be mailed prior to the initial signing date. When an NLI is issued prior to the initial signing date, the "date issued" shall be the initial NLI signing date and not the date that the NLI was signed or mailed by the institution.
- 11.Parent/Guardian Signature Required. My parent or legal guardian is required to sign this NLI if I am less than 21 years of age at the time of my signing, regardless of my marital status. If I do not have a living parent or a

legal guardian, the person who is acting in the capacity of a guardian may seek permission from the NLI Steering Committee to sign this NLI.

- 12. Falsification of NLI. If I falsify any part of this NLI, or if I have knowledge that my parent or guardian falsified any part of this NLI, I understand I shall forfeit the first year of my athletics eligibility at any NLI participating institution as outlined in Provision 4.
- 13.14-Day Signing Deadline. If my parent/legal guardian and I fail to sign this NLI within 14 days from the date issued, it will be invalid. In that event, another NLI may be issued within the appropriate signing period. (NOTE: This does not apply to the early signing period from November 9-16, 2005.)
- 14. Institutional Filing Deadline. This NLI must be filed with the appropriate conference by the institution named in this document within 21 days after the date of final signature or it will be invalid. In that event, another NLI may be issued within the appropriate signing period. (NOTE: This does not apply to the early signing period from November 9-16, 2005.)
- **15.No Additions or Deletions Allowed to NLI.** No additions or deletions may be made to this NLI or the Release Request Form.
- 16.Official Time for Validity. This NLI shall be considered officially signed on the final date of signature by myself or my parent/legal guardian. If no time of day is listed, the time of 11:59 p.m. will be presumed.
- **17.Statute of Limitations.** This NLI is in full force and effect for a period of four (4) years, commencing with the date I sign this NLI.
- 18.Nullification of Other Agreements. My signature on this NLI nullifies any agreements, oral or otherwise, which would release me from the conditions stated within this NLI.

- **19.If Coach Leaves.** I understand I have signed this NLI with the institution and not for a particular sport or individual. If the coach leaves the institution or the sports program, I remain bound by the provisions of this NLI. I understand it is not uncommon for a coach to leave his or her coaching position.
- 20. Coaching Contact Prohibited at Time of Signing. A coach or an institutional representative may not hand deliver this NLI off campus or be present off campus at the time I sign it. This NLI may be delivered by express mail, courier service, regular mail, e-mail or facsimile machine. A NLI transmitted to an institution by facsimile machine or electronically shall be considered valid.

Please feel free to submit your questions to Baseball Factory by emailing <u>newsletter@baseballfactory.com</u>