

This "Parent's Cheat Sheet" is designed to be the definitive take-home resource that converts a worried parent into a confident Athletica client. In 2026, the **College Sports Commission (CSC)** and the **NIL-Go** portal have made "doing it yourself" almost impossible for families.

This 1-page guide is your best tool for building immediate trust.

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# The 2026 NIL Parent's Cheat Sheet

## *Protecting Your Athlete's Eligibility in the NIL-Go Era*

**The Golden Rule:** In 2026, NIL is not a "side hustle"—it is a professional business venture. One reporting error can result in an immediate "Compliance Hold," sidelining your athlete for weeks.

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### 1. The "Must-Know" Thresholds

- **The \$600 Rule:** Any deal (cash or product value) exceeding **\$600** must be disclosed to the **NIL-Go Portal** within **5 days** of signing.
- **Aggregated Value:** If a brand sends \$200 in gear three times, that \$600 total triggers a mandatory filing.
- **High School vs. College:** If your athlete is a high school senior, they must disclose all existing deals to their college's CSC portal **14 days prior** to enrollment.

### 2. The "Eligibility Red Flags" Checklist

Before your athlete signs anything, ensure the deal does not contain these "Season-Killers":

- **Pay-for-Play:** Does the contract mention points scored, games won, or stats? (*Illegal: All pay must be for marketing work.*)
- **Institutional Inducement:** Is the deal contingent on the athlete attending a specific school? (*Illegal: This is a recruiting violation.*)
- **Category Conflict:** Does the brand compete with the school's sponsors (e.g., a Nike athlete at an Adidas school)?
- **Morality Clauses:** Does the brand have the right to cancel the deal for "unprofessional conduct" without a clear definition?

### 3. The "Valid Business Purpose" (VBP) Test

The CSC now audits deals for "activation." To pass an audit, your athlete must prove they actually worked.

- **What Counts:** Social media posts, appearances, camps, or modeling shoots.
  - **What Fails:** Getting paid a large sum for "consulting" or "future rights" without any public-facing content.
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#### 4. Financial Safety: Taxes & Net Pay

- **The 30% Rule:** Every NIL dollar is 1099 income. Athletes should set aside **30%** of every check into a separate "Tax Savings" account immediately.
  - **FMV (Fair Market Value):** If a local booster pays \$5,000 for a post that is worth \$500, the CSC may flag the extra \$4,500 as an improper gift. Athletica provides the **FMV Certification** to justify your athlete's higher rates based on their unique brand value.
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#### How Athletica Carries the Weight for You:

1. **Automated Reporting:** We handle the 5-day NIL-Go disclosure window for you.
2. **Contract Shield:** We audit every deal for predatory language and eligibility risks.
3. **The "Modeling-Style" Advantage:** We produce the high-end content that proves "Valid Business Purpose" to the CSC.

We are certain there are many other questions to answer! Let's set up a time to talk about those and what Athletica can do for you and your student-athlete!

Email our agent, Benny Lego to schedule that appointment: [benny@athleticagr.com](mailto:benny@athleticagr.com)