



## School and College Athletics



### What's it like to work with F3?

Schools and colleges think of F3 as their legal coach. Like all great coaches, we're here for you when the rules are hard to understand, when your skills need an objective review, and when the game changes. Athletics play an important role in schools, which means our attorneys take advising on athletics as seriously as on any other school function.

### What can F3 solve for you?

Athletics have always been an important element of education for school and university students, including California's approximately 800,000 student athletes in about 1700 school districts. We train administrators, coaches, and others in compliance with the often complex requirements of state, federal, district, athletic conference, and athletic association rules; audit program performance; help draft Athletic Handbooks, advise on equitable programs; assist with Title IX challenges, and much more. In other words, we're here to keep you "in the game."

**As one of the premier education law firms in California, F3's counsel does not stop at school offices or classrooms. Sometimes we're literally in the field – the athletic field – with the administrators, coaches, and others whose function is guiding school athletics. And there's much to consider. Complex federal and state laws, district policies, conference rules, and athletic associations such as the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and NCAA, all require compliance. While coaches and administrators may be required to have various trainings or certifications (such as how to use an automated external defibrillator(AED)), they are not lawyers and can't be expected to be. That's F3's job. Our attorneys treat school athletic programs no less seriously than they do any other area of education, and because of our depth and breadth of experience and talent, we're able to assist with any need related to athletics. We know the rules. In fact, one of our attorneys has served as general counsel for CIF for more than 20 years and regularly trains district and school personnel on compliance, and another served for years on the NCAA General Counsel's advisory board.**

F3 attorneys know school and college sports. The regulations governing Interscholastic athletics in California are many, complex, and ever-changing, as are the rules governing college sports. On the federal side, a special Title IX section for athletics contains specific provisions requiring equal opportunities and treatment for male and female athletes in everything from scholarships to supplies, from coaching to locker rooms, and more. It also contains provisions for accommodating all students' athletic interests and abilities. The California Department of Education's "Athletes Bill of Rights" further codifies equality in athletics. California's CIF "governs interscholastic athletics, promoting equity, quality, character and academic development." Violation of CIF's extensive regulations can be severe. And at the local level, the Student *Athletic Handbooks* districts and schools develop have their own set of rules. Districts often self-check by having F3 attorneys audit their athletic programs for compliance and offer corrective solutions if violations are discovered. We help develop and review handbooks and provide sportsmanship and other training to administrators and coaches, which they can apply to policies and procedures at the site level ranging from coaching methods to fan behavior at games. At the college level, the athletic landscape has changed dramatically in recent years with the introduction of student-athlete Name, Image and Likeness, the numerous lawsuits redefining amateurism, and the evolving rules and scope of the NCAA in the process. F3 attorneys can help clients keep abreast of the latest developments in NIL, Title IX, and other current issues in college athletics.

## Guidance on the *Athletic Handbook*

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F3 attorneys are experienced in helping schools review and/or develop their customized *Athletic Handbook* – reflective of both the unique needs of each school as well as federal, state, and other regulations. These school- or district-level handbooks cover such policies as what is expected from student athletes, parents, and fans; eligibility standards; attendance; travel; communication procedures; and policies related to drugs, criminal activity, hazing, and more.

## Training sessions and toolkits

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Between administrative and coaching turnover and changing regulations, the need for training in athletic program compliance and best practices is ongoing. F3 has developed and conducts successful training programs for individual schools and athletic associations in California and beyond, as well as providing training toolkits and checklists developed by organizations such as CIF and the Positive Coaching Alliance for coaching certification, Title IX, monitoring compliance, and dealing with situations that may arise.



## The need for sportsmanship training

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As educational institutions seeking to inspire the best in students, staff, and even the community surrounding school athletics, sportsmanship is part of the curriculum. ‘Sportsmanlike’ conduct is expected from student athletes, coaches, fans, and even parents. Because unsportsmanlike behavior is not uncommon, F3 provides training to school administrators and coaches in how to both reflect and promote the best behavior and avoid penalties such as ejection from games, prohibition from participating in sports, and other serious consequences that may result from such actions as harassment, bullying, use of discriminatory language, and other actions.

## F3 is known for these strengths

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- Athletics program review
- Title IX athletics regulations
- NIL rights and policies
- Accommodations
- Equity in athletics
- Sportsmanship training
- Student Athletic Handbook development & review
- Advising on all federal and state athletics regulation
- Compliance with California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) rules
- Customized compliance and training toolkits
- Athletics policies and procedures

## Related Professionals

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