

"In memory of Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr."

**TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL**



NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETBALL INVITATIONAL

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# **2026 NABI APPLICATION OVERVIEW**

**Phoenix, Arizona | July 14 – 18, 2026**

**Registration Opens:** November 1, 2025 | **Auto-Entry Deadline:** November 15, 2025 | **Registration Deadline:** February 1, 2026

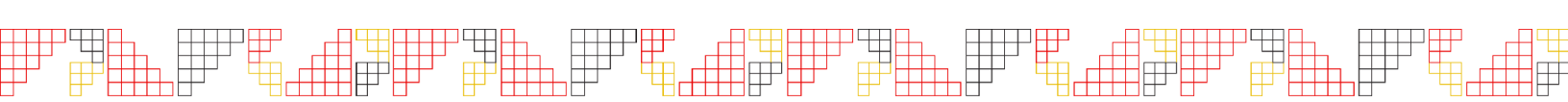
## **REGISTRATION FEES**

- Online Registration Only
- Team Fees (US Currency)
  - o **New: (6) MIN-(10) MAX Players - \$1000 "per team"**
  - o **Teams must have the minimum of (6) players to compete.**
  - o **New: Roster deadline date of July 10, 2026. Rosters to be submitted via Exposure Events platform.**
    - **NABI encourages Coaches to order (10) uniforms and to take advantage of NABI's Free Agency announcements to fill team roster by deadline date of July 10, 2026**
  - o (2) Coaches MAX
    - Head Coach - \$50 (must be 21 or older)
    - Assistant Coach - \$50 (must be 21 or older)
    - Coach changes after March 1, 2026 will result in an additional \$50 registration fee. No changes after June 1st.

## **TEAM BENEFITS**

- (4) Games minimum
- **Teams will receive NABI Nation Custom Team Uniforms (Jersey and Shorts)**
  - o NABI Player Credentials (1x per Player)
  - o Credentials are non-transferable
- **New: NABI Coach(s) will receive NABI Nation Custom Short Sleeve Dri-Fit Shirt**
  - o NABI Coach Credentials (1x per Coach)
  - o Credentials are non-transferable
- Access into all NABI games, including Championship games at Mortgage Matchup Center
- Access into all NABI special events:
  - o NABI College & Career Fair
  - o NABI Team Meet & Greet Party
  - o NABI Educational Youth Summit
- NABI College Scholarship Fund: Graduating seniors are eligible to apply.

*\*Rules, regulations, benefits, NABI related events, venues and dates are subject to change without notice.*



## CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM BENEFITS

- **New: Team Fee and Travel Reimbursement**
  - **\$500 per player and coach, not to exceed \$6,000 per team**
- Championship games played at Mortgage Matchup Center, home of the Phoenix Suns and Phoenix Mercury, and broadcasted LIVE on AZFamily Sports
- Private Lunch at Mortgage Matchup Center VIP Club on Championship Day (July 18, 2026)
- NABI Championship Trophy
  - NABI Championship Trophy created exclusively for NABI - solid bronze custom design by Indigenous artist, Dave Montour (MHA Nation)
- NABI Championship Rings
- NABI Championship Medals
- NABI Championship Shirt and Cap
- Automatic entry into the 2027 NABI Tournament

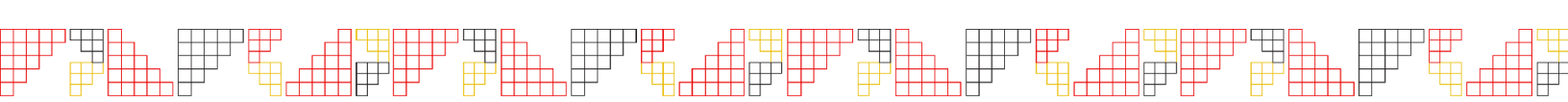
## AUTO REGISTRATION: NOVEMBER 1-15, 2025

- Auto-entry for the first 64 teams who apply and submit a **\$500 non-refundable deposit** by November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Teams must meet all NABI eligibility requirements and have no previous year infractions/notifications.
- Remaining balance must be received by the deadline date February 1, 2026, to be accepted.

## FORMS OF PAYMENT

- **Electronic Payment Only**
  - Payment must be submitted by credit card via Exposure Events by the deadline date (February 1, 2026) for application to be accepted.
  - NO Personal Checks, Money Order or Cash will be accepted.
- **Team Sponsors**
  - **New: Teams are responsible for paying team fees in full by the deadline date.**
  - NABI will reimburse team head coach any overpayments once sponsor(s) check(s) have been received and cleared the NABI bank account.
  - Upon request from the coach, NABI will provide a NABI W-9 to potential team sponsors. The coach must provide the sponsor contact name, email and phone number.
  - Only checks from the tribes and/or companies sponsoring a team will be accepted. No personal checks.
  - Sponsor checks must include: Team Name and Division (Girls or Boys) in the memo of check.
  - Issue payment to: NABI, PO Box 25606, Phoenix, AZ 85002-5606. ATTN: Team Applications (on envelope)
  - The deadline date to receive team sponsor checks is February 1, 2026.

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## \*REFUNDS

- Teams not accepted will receive a 100% refund.
- Accepted teams must notify NABI before February 13, 2026 to decline their invitation and receive a full refund. Auto-entry teams \$500 deposit is non-refundable.
- No refunds after February 13, 2026.

## PLAYER ADDITIONS

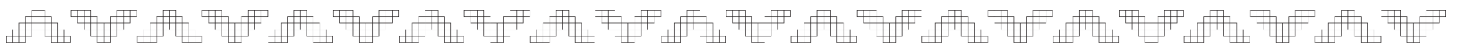
- No additions to the team roster after July 10, 2026. Max (10) players per team

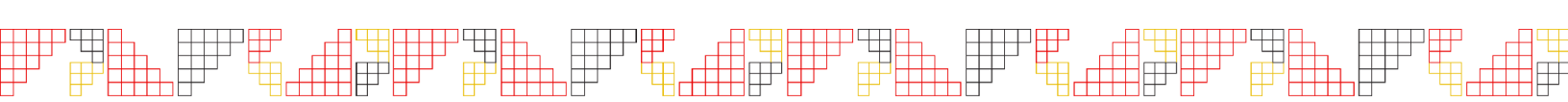
## TEAM NAMES

- NABI recommends teams use tribal affiliation or tribal community names.
- All team names to be approved by NABI.
- No name changes will be made after the deadline date, February 1, 2026.

## TEAM UNIFORMS

- **New:** Teams will receive max (10) uniforms.
  - Please provide sizes for (10) uniforms on application.
- NO SIZE EXCHANGES after Feb 1, 2026.
- Teams who drop-out after the refund deadline and/or no-show at team check-in will not receive a refund or uniforms.
- Uniforms become property of players at the end of the tournament.



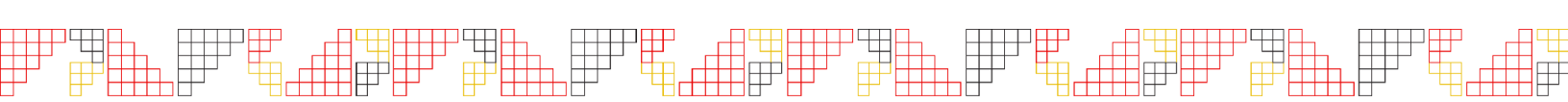


# **ELIGIBILITY, RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES,** **TEAM SELECTION PROCESS**

## **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- Players must be Native American or Indigenous to the Country they are representing.
  - Head Coach must carry with them at all times (4) proofs of player(s) eligibility below:
    - Tribal Membership ID **or** C.I.B. (Certificate of Indian Blood)
    - School transcript **or** report card for 2025-2026 academic year
    - Photo ID **and** Copy of Birth certificate
  - To apply for a Certificate of Indian Blood, see the following link:  
<https://www.bia.gov/online-form/certificate-degree-indian-or-alaska-native-blood-cib-pdf>
  - Please allow ample time to apply. For more information, please contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the agency from whom you receive services from.
  - NABI no longer accepts Birth Certificates and Tribal Documents from relatives to prove descendency.
  - Teams and/or players representing: First Nations Canada, Native Hawaiian, Native Pacific Islanders, Indigenous Australia, Indigenous New Zealand and Indigenous Mexico are eligible to compete. Documentation issued by participating countries must be provided as proof of eligibility.
- Participants must be enrolled in high school with the exception of (1) graduating 8th grader per team.
  - **New: GED students are no-longer eligible. Players must be enrolled in high school to be eligible.**
  - Graduating seniors for the 2025-2026 academic year are eligible.
  - (1) Graduating 8th grader for the 2025-2026 academic year (incoming freshmen for the 2026-2027 academic year) are eligible to compete.
    - Due to the high skill level of NABI teams, NABI does not recommend graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders unless the player in question has High School experience or skill level.
  - Participants who turn 20 years old before or on July 18, 2026 are NOT ELIGIBLE.
  - Students who received their High School diploma prior to 2025-2026 academic and/or are currently enrolled in a post graduate institution or Preparatory Academy are NOT ELIGIBLE to play.
  - Must provide a copy of school transcript or report card from the 2025-2026 academic year.
  - Must provide photo ID and copy of birth certificate.

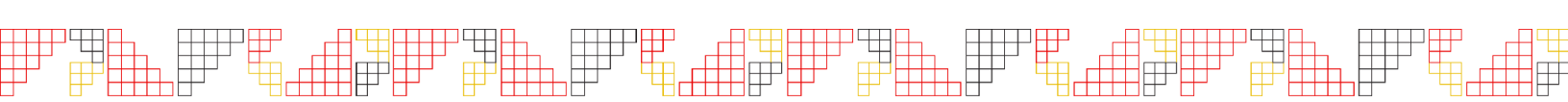
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- Participants must complete and sign a *Participate Waiver & Release Form*, available on Exposure Events.
  - A Parent or Legal Guardian must sign, if under the age of 18.
  - **New: Coaches are prohibited to sign for under-age players unless he/she is a legal guardian or parent. Legal Guardian documentation will be required.**
  - Waivers due July 10, 2026
- No player can play for more than one team.
- Players who do not attend the mandatory check-in and College & Career Fair on Tuesday will not be eligible. In addition, players must play all scheduled games to remain eligible. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- Mandatory for all players to attend the Educational Youth Summit. **New: This rule will be enforced!**

## COACH ELIGIBILITY

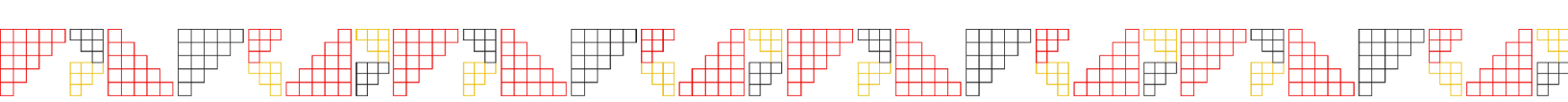
- Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches must agree to a background check.
  - a. **New: Must submit background check information by March 1, 2026. NABI will send the link to Head Coaches once teams are confirmed. If information is not submitted by March 1st, the team will not be able to participate in NABI and no refund will be given.**
- Coaches do not have to be Native American and/or Indigenous.
- Head and Assistant Coaches must be over the age of 21.
- A limit of (2) coach(s) per team; (1) Head Coach and (1) Assistant Coach.
- **New: Head Coach(s) and Assistant Coach(s) can only coach one team.**
- Coach(s) are responsible for the conduct of their team and must always escort and supervise their team.
- Coaches must complete and sign a *Participant Waiver & Release Form*.
- Head and Assistant Coaches must show a valid ID at check-in.



## PLAYER & COACH: RULES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Adhere to all deadlines.
  - Important: To minimize disruption of the Check-In process and related events, NABI will not allow late check-in. All players and coaches must be present for Check-In. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- **New: Attend all NABI related events to include the NABI Team Meet & Greet Party, NABI Coaches Meeting, and (2) sessions of the NABI Educational Youth Summit (MANDATORY). Coaches/Teams who do not attend will not be invited back to participate in NABI. This rule will be enforced.**
- At all times, head coaches must carry all player eligibility documents (transcript/report card, C.I.B/Tribal Membership and photo ID/copy of birth certificate) in the event a player's eligibility is challenged. If the head coach does not have any player eligibility documents at the time a challenge has been called, that player or team will be disqualified from the remainder of the tournament.
  - **New: Any falsification of eligibility documents will call for the whole team to be ejected from the tournament and possible ejection from competing in future NABI events and NABI Scholarship eligibility.**
- For security purposes all players and coaches must wear their NABI credentials at all times.
  - If a player/coach loses their NABI badge, a replacement will cost \$30.
  - Damaged badges can be exchanged for free. Must return the damaged badge to NABI Staff in order to exchange.
  - **New: Sharing credentials with non-players/coaches will result in ejection from the tournament.**
- Players and coaches must wear the official team uniform and coach shirt during all NABI games.
- **New: NABI Uniforms cannot be altered for political and/or protest purposes.**
- Drugs, alcohol, gambling, and firearms are prohibited.
- Teams are responsible for lodging, meals, and travel costs to and from the NABI Tournament.
  - For lodging information, please visit the NABI Nation website (available after team selection).
- Must adhere to the NABI Code of Conduct:
  - "This Code of Conduct is established to reflect positive behavior and choices during any NABI tournament and events. This code strictly prohibits the use of illegal and/or recreational drugs and alcohol, falsification of eligibility documents, unruly behavior and any/or all forms of harassment. By participating in NABI, you agree to abide by the code of conduct, all rules and regulations, and conduct yourself in a manner that reflects positive behavior. Breaking the "Code of Conduct" will result in your immediate dismissal and removal from NABI and/or NABI venues, and may jeopardize future eligibility and/or participation."
  - Any use of racial slurs will call for the player to be ejected from the tournament and possible ejection from competing in future NABI events and NABI Scholarship eligibility.

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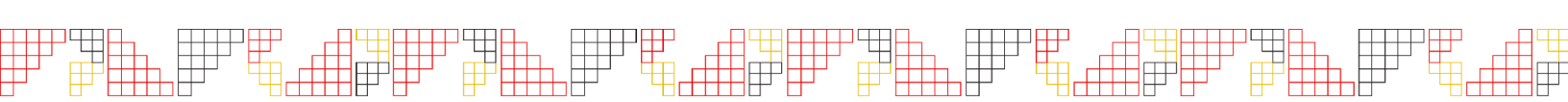
- o **New:** In the case of a coach ejection from any NABI event, game and/or gym, the team can continue to participate with the assistant coach listed on the roster. If no assistant coach is listed on the roster, the whole team will be ejected.
  - i. Coaches who are ejected will be ejected from the remainder of the tournament and NABI facilities.
  - ii. Coaches who are ejected are ineligible to coach any future NABI teams.

## TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

- All team applications will be reviewed, and teams will be selected by way of the following criteria:
  - o Submit completed and signed online application and team fees by the *deadline date of February 1, 2026.*
  - o Coaches to submit background information for background check by March 1, 2026.
  - o Submit all contact information to include: ACTIVE cell number and email address.
  - o Teams and Coaches agree to comply with all NABI rules & regulations posted on the official NABI Nation website.
  - o Agree to participate in mandatory NABI related events below:
    - Team Check-In
    - College and Career Fair
    - Meet & Greet Party
    - Coaches Meeting
    - Educational Youth Summit
      - Mandatory for all players to attend when not scheduled for a game.
    - All other NABI or NABI sponsor related events.
- 2025 Semifinalists will automatically be accepted for NABI 2026. NABI 2026 application and fees must be submitted by the deadline date of Feb 1, 2026.
- Tribal Affiliation: When making selections, NABI strives to have fair representation of Tribal participation throughout the United States and qualifying countries.
- Returning teams: Selection based on the following:
  - o Previous year's participation in all NABI related events, including the Meet & Greet Party, Coaches Meeting, and Educational Youth Summit.
  - o Infraction notifications from previous years will also be reviewed.
  - o Bracket play performance in previous NABI tournaments.
- New Teams: NABI will consider all new teams who have not previously participated in NABI. Selection will be based on location, Tribal representation, and placement in other national tournaments.
  - o NABI will highly consider new teams who placed in semifinals from other National tournaments.



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# IMPORTANT DATES

## **NOVEMBER 2025**

**Saturday, November 1, 2025:**

Application available online.

**Saturday, November 15, 2025:**

Deadline for auto-entry registration.

## **FEBRUARY 2026**

**Sunday, February 1, 2026:**

Application and team fees deadline. (10) player(s) max

**Friday, February 6, 2026:**

Teams notified of acceptance or decline, notifications sent out *via email*.

**Friday, February 13, 2026:**

Teams announced publicly on [NABINation.com](http://NABINation.com) and social media. No refunds after February 13th

## **MARCH 2026**

**Sunday, March 1, 2026:**

Deadline for coach(s) to submit background check information.

## **JULY 2026**

**Friday, July 10, 2026:**

Player(s) & Coach(s) waivers due. Team rosters due.

**Tuesday, July 14, 2026:**

Team Check-in, Coaches Meeting, and Team Meet & Greet Party

**July 15-16, 2026:**

Educational Youth Summit

**July 15-17, 2026:**

Pool & Bracket Games

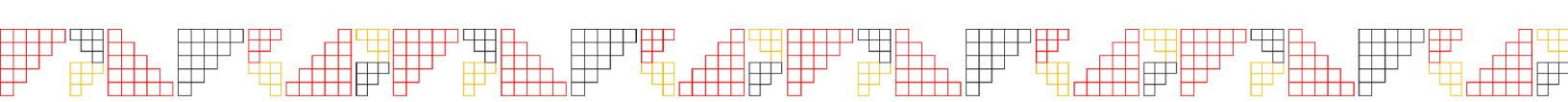
**Saturday, July 18, 2026:**

Semifinals & Championship games.



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*By applying and signing the online application, you agree to the above NABI tournament rules and regulations, and the eligibility and responsibilities outlined in the registration process of the official NABI Nation website.*

*Any rule that is violated will result in a forfeit of game and possible ejection from the tournament and not allowed to participate in future NABI tournaments.*

*NABI has the right to eject any player, coach, or team from the tournament for unacceptable behavior.  
NABI staff have the right to conduct proof of eligibility at any time during the tournament.*

**PLEASE READ ALL INFORMATION ON THIS DOCUMENT AND THE NABI OFFICIAL WEBSITE  
[WWW.NABINATION.COM](http://WWW.NABINATION.COM) IN ITS ENTIRETY BEFORE CALLING OR EMAILING WITH ANY QUESTIONS.**

Questions? Please email Vincent at [nabi@nabination.com](mailto:nabi@nabination.com)

**[Click here to register on Exposure Events!](#)**

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