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Christopher A. Callanan
CAMPBELL CAMPBELL EDWARDS & CONROY
PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
One Constitution Center
Boston, MA 02129-2025

Social Host Liability

The [Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association](#) (MIAA) announced a new zero-tolerance policy punishing student-athletes caught drinking alcohol, using drugs, smoking or chewing tobacco at any time of year.

Now, any athlete caught violating the Chemical Health rule in the summer or any off-season period will be punished just as if he or she were caught in season: 25% suspension for a first offense; 60% suspension for the second offense and completion of an approved dependency program (*i.e.*, Alcoholics Anonymous) for a third offense.

If the student-athlete attends a school with more restrictive rules, the more restrictive local rules govern. Last year Framingham implemented a stricter policy that held athletes accountable all year. The policy permitted a student to work off the penalty by the time his or her sport began. The new MIAA rule will permit athletes to work off only summertime violations

Parents and students should understand clearly: the MIAA will continue to enhance its regulations so that they are truly “zero tolerance.” Rules and penalties will be stiffened, not relaxed. As incidents occur in particular towns, towns will tighten their rules and enhance their penalties. Regardless of when or where, any student-athlete who drinks, smokes, or chews tobacco directly jeopardizes his or her right to play scholastic sports regardless of the sport or season.