

HOW DRAFTIQ WORKS

The Stakes Board, the Stay / Declare tool and the Contract Board: what goes in, what each number means, where the data comes from and how often it updates.

143

underclassmen on the Stakes Board

\$6.7M

Round 1 cliff, pick #32 vs. #48

53

2027 free agents and extension candidates priced

\$322.3M

projected 2027 cap used for pricing

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01 · OVERVIEW

WHAT DRAFTIQ IS

DraftIQ is draft and contract intelligence built for NFL agents, not front offices. It answers two money questions you face with clients and recruits:

- **Stay or declare?** For an underclassman, is entering the 2027 draft worth more than going back to school for another year of NIL money and a chance at a better pick?
- **What is the next deal worth?** For a veteran heading toward free agency or an extension, what does the market say his contract should be per year?

Everything runs on public data, refreshed on a set schedule, and every number on the site can be traced back to a source listed in this guide. Nothing you type into the tools is sent anywhere.

PAGE	WHAT IT'S FOR	ADDRESS
Stakes Board	Every top underclassman's draft range and which way the money leans	draftiq.ai/board
Stay / Declare	Run the decision for one player with your own numbers; print a report	draftiq.ai/declare
Contract Board	Projected next-contract value for 2027 free agents and extension candidates	draftiq.ai/contracts
Track Record	How our 2026 draft projections held up, misses included	draftiq.ai/report
For Agents	Request founding-agent access	draftiq.ai/agents

QUICK START: YOUR FIRST FIVE MINUTES

1. **Open the Stakes Board** and filter to your client's position. Find his row: projected pick range, what that range is worth on the rookie wage scale, and the NIL benchmark for his school tier.
2. **Click "Open in tool"** on his row. The Stay / Declare tool opens with his position, school, tier and projected slot already filled in.
3. **Replace the defaults with what you know:** his actual NIL number, how wide you think his range really is, whether his stock is rising, any injury concern.
4. **Read the recommendation and the four scenario cards.** If it's a close call, use Compare Scenarios to test "declare now" against "return and go higher."
5. **Set up your Agent Profile** once (name, agency, logo), then print the Agent Report or Player Report for the family meeting.

TIP The board shows the tool at default inputs. Your client's real numbers will often change the answer, which is the point of running him yourself.

THE STAKES BOARD

The Stakes Board lists 143 draft-eligible underclassmen who still have a real choice to return. Players in their final season of eligibility are left off: they have no decision to make.

Reading a row

COLUMN	WHAT IT MEANS
Projected pick range	Best case to worst case, with the most likely pick marked. Comes from a consensus of public big boards (see "Where the numbers come from").
Rookie deal (ceiling → floor)	Four-year rookie contract total at the top and bottom of his range, on the 2026 wage scale.
Swing	The dollar gap between the top and bottom of his range. A big swing means where he lands matters a lot.
NIL / yr benchmark	A typical per-year NIL range for his position, projected slot and school spending tier. A benchmark, not his actual deal.
DraftIQ lean	Declare when declaring clearly wins at default inputs; Close call when it's within a few million either way or depends on assumptions you should set yourself.

Filters and sorts. Filter by position or school tier; sort by projected pick, biggest swing, highest NIL, or show close calls only. Search finds any player by name.

The Round 1 cliff. The board's headline number is the gap between pick #32 and pick #48 on the wage scale: \$6.7M over four years. Round 1 deals are fully guaranteed and carry a fifth-year option; early Round 2 deals do neither. For a prospect near the line, that cliff often decides the conversation.

04 · STAY / DECLARE TOOL

THE STAY / DECLARE TOOL

The tool compares two paths for one player: **declare now**, or **return to school** for one to three more years. The verdict is a financial call: what NIL pays him to go back, set against what the NFL rookie contract pays him to leave now.

WHAT YOU ENTER

INPUT	WHAT IT DOES
Player name	Type a name and the tool fills in position, school, school tier and projected slot for any player on the board.
Position and school tier	Set the NIL benchmark and the position's injury and draft-movement patterns.
Projected slot: most likely, floor, ceiling	His draft range. The wider the gap between floor and ceiling, the less confident the projection and the more weight the tool gives to both the good and bad outcomes. Enter 258 for undrafted.
Current NIL (\$/yr)	What he earns now, or what he's been offered to return. The benchmark range is shown as a guide.
Return years	One to three.
NIL upside	How much his NIL could grow if he returns and plays well.
Downside: stock drop and NIL downside	How far he could fall, and what his NIL would be, if the return year goes badly.
Injury scenario	None, minor, major surgery, degenerative, or career-threatening. Shows how far an injury in the return year would push his draft slot.
Stock rising	Tilts the outcome toward the upside if he's trending up.
Transfer portal	Optional: models a year at a different school with a different NIL number.

WHAT YOU GET BACK

- Recommendation.** Declare for the Draft, Return to School, or Borderline (within \$2M either way, so non-financial factors should drive the call). The dollar advantage is shown beside it, with a one-line summary of what it's based on.
- Declare card.** The expected value of his four-year rookie deal across his range, year-one salary, how much is guaranteed, and whether he'd get a fifth-year option (Round 1 only).

- **Return: upside, downside and injury cards.** What returning is worth if his stock rises to his ceiling, if it falls to his floor, and if he's hurt. Each one subtracts the NFL salary he gives up by waiting a year, so all three compare directly with declaring now.
- **Slot range panel.** His floor, most likely and ceiling picks with the contract value at each.
- **Long-view note.** Context on what delaying his second NFL contract costs. It's shown as a note only and never changes the recommendation.
- **Career earnings chart.** Five-year earnings for declaring now against the return paths.

COMPARE SCENARIOS

Click **Compare Scenarios** to put two plans side by side. Scenario A mirrors your main inputs (declare now). Scenario B is a return plan you set: the slot you expect after returning, NIL during the return year, years back, and how far he'd fall in a bad year. The tool marks which scenario is better and by how much, and the comparison prints as its own report.

REPORTS AND YOUR AGENT PROFILE

- **Agent Report:** the full analysis, built for your own file or a recruiting pitch.
- **Player Report:** a cleaner version for the player and family.
- **Comparison report:** from Compare Scenarios.

Open **Agent Profile** once to add your name, agency, NFLPA certification number, contact details and logo. They appear on every report you print. Your profile is saved only in your own browser on that computer; DraftIQ never receives it, and neither does it receive any player inputs you type.

THE CONTRACT BOARD

The Contract Board projects what a player's next contract should be worth per year. It has two tabs.

Free agents (19 players). The top players heading toward 2027 free agency who are still unsigned.

Extension candidates (34 players), in three groups:

- **2023 first-rounders in their option year:** option picked up, not yet extended.
- **The 2024 class:** eligible to extend once this season ends. These ranges are early and will be re-priced in January.
- **Veterans with deals ending after 2027:** ten marquee names.

Reading a row

ELEMENT	WHAT IT MEANS
Projected range / yr	Floor to ceiling per year, in dollars and as a share of the salary cap.
Target	Where DraftIQ projects the deal lands, given his profile.
Path	Where the negotiation stands: extension expected, tag candidate, likely to test the market, and so on.
Status	A dated one-line summary from current reporting.

How it's priced. We look at recent deals for players at the same position, age and production tier and record what each was worth as a **share of the salary cap** in the year it was signed. That share is applied to the projected 2027 cap (\$322.3M), so a 2027 deal isn't priced in 2026 dollars. The ceiling is never set below the top comparable deal unless age or injury explains why. The comparable 2026 extensions are listed on the Extensions tab so you can check the anchors yourself.

The Pickens sample brief. A full example of the brief we build for a client: what each path (second tag, extension, open market) is worth over three years, how much is guaranteed, the comps that set his price, likely suitors, and talking points. It's on the board and available as a PDF. Founding agents can request the same brief for their own clients.

WHERE THE NUMBERS COME FROM

NUMBER	SOURCE
Projected draft range	Consensus of three public big boards: NFL Mock Draft Database consensus, Tankathon and StickToTheModel. Every new name is checked against the school's official roster for class and eligibility.
Rookie contract values	The 2026 NFL rookie wage scale, pick by pick (Spotrac, Sporting News).
NIL benchmarks	2025–26 industry surveys of GMs, collectives and agents (CBS Sports, ESPN), scaled by school spending tier using 2026 roster-spend reporting.
School tier	2026 football roster market value: P4 Elite, P4 Mid, P4 Lower, G5.
Injury effect on draft slot	Historical draft movement after injury disclosures, by position and severity.
Second-contract long view	Published research on second-contract value by draft slot (Over the Cap), adjusted by position.
Contract comps and statuses	Over the Cap and Spotrac contract records; NFL.com, ESPN, CBS Sports, Pro Football Rumors, Yahoo Sports, SI and team reporting.
Salary cap	2026 actual cap of \$301.2M, projected forward on the league's long-run growth trend.

HOW OFTEN IT UPDATES

WHAT	WHEN
Stakes Board and tool player list	Every other week through mid-November, then weekly through the January declaration deadline; frozen after the deadline until one post-Combine update. Major injuries are updated the same day.
Contract Board statuses	About every two weeks during the season, plus around the NFL trade deadline. Anyone who signs comes off the board at the next refresh.
Extension candidates (2024 class)	Full re-price in January, once the 2026 season settles.
NIL benchmarks and school tiers	Once a year, or when a major new survey publishes.

Every page shows the date it was last updated. If news breaks between refreshes, the board won't reflect it until the next update.

OUR TRACK RECORD

Before asking agents to trust the model, we ran it on the 2026 draft and published the results, misses included. Our model published projections for all 100 picks before Round 1 began:

- **21 of 32** Round 1 players were projected in Round 1 (66%).
- **9** exact pick hits.
- **43%** of players were projected in the exact round they went.

What it missed matters as much: **eight Round 1 trades** the model had no way to see coming, and **34 drafted players** who weren't in its prospect pool. Both are being fixed for 2027 with trade modeling and a deeper prospect pool. The full breakdown is at draftiq.ai/report, with a two-page PDF.

WHAT DRAFTIQ IS AND ISN'T

- **Projections, not offers.** A contract range is what comparable deals say the market should pay. It isn't a team's offer, and a team's cap situation, scheme or urgency can push a real deal outside it.
- **NIL benchmarks are typical ranges, not a player's deal.** Always replace the benchmark with your client's real number.
- **Draft ranges come from public boards.** They move during the season, and they can't see private team interest, medicals or interviews. You often know more than the boards; the tool is built to take your numbers.
- **There's a refresh lag.** Between scheduled updates, a signing, trade or injury won't be on the board yet. Check the "updated" date.
- **The recommendation is financial.** Family, academics, development, coaching changes and fit all matter and aren't in the math. A Borderline result means those factors should decide.
- **2027 figures use a projected cap.** If the league's 2027 cap comes in higher or lower, every contract projection shifts with it.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is any of my client information sent to DraftIQ?

No. The Stay / Declare tool runs entirely in your browser. Player inputs and your Agent Profile never leave your computer. The only things DraftIQ receives are forms you submit on purpose: an access request, a report download or an email sign-up.

My client isn't on the Stakes Board. Can I still run him?

Yes. Type his name anyway, then set position, school tier and his projected range yourself. The board covers the top underclassmen with a real choice; the tool works for any prospect from pick 1 to undrafted.

Why does the tool say Declare when the board said Close call (or the reverse)?

The board uses default inputs: benchmark NIL and the consensus range. Once you enter his real NIL, a tighter or wider range, or an injury concern, the answer can change. Your inputs win.

Why are contract ranges given as a share of the cap?

Because a deal signed in 2027 is paid in 2027 dollars. A share of the cap is how teams and agents compare deals across years; converting it to dollars on the projected 2027 cap keeps the comparison fair.

What does "Close call" or "Borderline" mean for my advice?

The money is within a few million either way, so the financial case doesn't decide it. Use the scenario cards to show the family the range of outcomes, and let non-financial factors lead.

How current is the data?

Each page shows its update date. See the update schedule above.

Can I get a brief like the Pickens one for my own client?

Yes. Founding agents can request full briefs for their own clients through the 2027 draft.

What does it cost?

Founding agents get everything free through the 2027 NFL Draft, then 50% off Agent Pro for the first year when paid plans launch in spring 2027.

FOUNDING-AGENT ACCESS

DraftIQ is in a founding-agent beta, limited to **25 NFLPA-certified agents**.

- Free through the 2027 NFL Draft: every tool, every client.
- 50% off Agent Pro for your first year when paid plans launch in spring 2027.
- First look at full contract briefs for your own clients.
- In return: a short feedback call after you've used it with a client.

Request access at draftiq.ai/agents. Every request is reviewed personally. Questions: stephen@draftiq.ai.