

HUSCH BLACKWELL

NCAA Regulatory Compliance

College athletics today play a central role in an institution's identity, public profile, prestige and student experience—making the management of the legal aspects of college sports a matter of great institutional importance. At the same time, these legal aspects are undergoing a period of transition. The current National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) self-regulatory model is under significant stress, with institutional, state and federal authorities considering changes in the near future. Potential shifts include the scope and role of self-regulation as well as the definition of amateurism.

Husch Blackwell has the experience necessary to guide clients through the complex and shifting world of NCAA regulatory compliance. Led by a former NCAA investigator, our team represents colleges, universities and student-athletes nationwide in enforcement, eligibility and compliance matters. We guide clients through NCAA regulatory processes, assisting with proactive planning and spotting potential conflicts. When disputes do arise, we work closely with clients to achieve the best possible outcomes.

The Husch Blackwell team provides guidance on matters including:



Comprehensive athletics compliance reviews



Athletics policies and procedures evaluations



NCAA enforcement investigations and alleged infractions



Independent investigations



Student-athlete eligibility



NCAA waivers



NCAA rules interpretations

52

bills introduced in state governments in 2020 addressing college athletics

30

attorneys on Husch Blackwell's higher education team

250+

higher education institutions served by Husch Blackwell

Practice Highlights

- Conducted independent review on behalf of Big 10 university of potential NCAA violations involving head coach's provision of extra benefits to student-athlete and worked with NCAA enforcement staff on behalf of university to resolve infractions case.
- Represented Division III college in NCAA investigation related to impermissible financial aid awards provided to student-athletes and successfully resolved case on behalf of college with Division III Committee on Infractions.
- Represented Pac 12 institution in NCAA amateurism review of Division I men's basketball student-athlete and successfully advocated for student-athlete's immediate eligibility.
- Successfully advocated for multiple student-athletes through NCAA waiver and student-athlete reinstatement processes addressing issues related to transfer eligibility, medical hardships, seasons of competition and penalties for violations.
- Represented Division I member institution before Division I Committee on Infractions in contested case and successfully defended institution against charge of lack of institutional control.
- Conducted independent investigation of Division I coach's conduct that allegedly negatively impacted health and safety of student-athletes.
- Represented Southeastern Conference (SEC) university before Division I Committee on Infractions and successfully resolved recruiting violations alleged as Level II with committee, accepting university's self-imposed penalties.

Athletics Compliance Review

Our team conducts comprehensive athletics compliance reviews, providing clients with an independent analysis of their compliance systems and operations based on the four pillars of institutional control. We benchmark against National Association for Athletics Compliance Reasonable Standards, and our comprehensive reports include an evaluation of fourteen standard NCAA compliance areas.

Name, Image and Likeness Developments

Issues related to athlete name, image and likeness (NIL) are considered one of the most likely areas of rule overhaul. In 2020, the NCAA proposed rules that allowed athletes to capitalize on their NIL in advertising and gave institutions a final say on these activities. However, a January 2021 vote on the new measures was shelved indefinitely due to concerns that government authorities had misgivings about the new framework. Our team is closely monitoring proposed state and federal legislation on NIL questions.

Aligned by industry. Built on relationships.

Husch Blackwell is an industry-focused business and litigation law firm delivering innovative and strategic solutions to organizations around the world. Drawing on extensive industry knowledge and experience, we move clients forward.

ATTORNEY CONTACT

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