

Executive Summary

The NCAA's enforcement and hearing operation staffs, along with the Division I Committee on Infractions and Division I Infractions Appeals Committee, are committed to preserving fairness and credibility within college sports. The peer-review process has benefited from the addition of tools such as importation and noncooperation penalties, as well as the negotiated resolution path. For the small subset of complex cases, the Independent Accountability Resolution Process offers an alternate path for the resolution of infractions matters that meet certain criteria.

Snapshots of 2020-21

600+
Tips Received

Pieces of information reported to the NCAA enforcement staff, which decides if information is credible or specific enough to open an investigation.

108
Leads Developed

Number of those initial tips the enforcement staff received that are investigated further at Division I programs.

100
Allegations

Number of allegations made by the enforcement staff in Division I alone. The enforcement staff also investigates and processes cases in Divisions II and III. Other reports were either not substantiated, did not constitute violations, were processed as Level III or were handled through other NCAA procedures.

19 Decisions

Number of cases processed by the Division I Committee on Infractions.

11 Negotiated Resolutions, average processing time: 8.7 days*

5 Contested, average processing time: 53.4 days

1 Summary Disposition, processing time: 72 days

1 Summary Disposition With Expedited Hearings, processing time: 25 days

1 Remand, processing time: 21 days

**Average number of days between final review and release in negotiated resolution cases.*

3 Appeal Decisions

Number of cases processed by the Division I Infractions Appeals Committee. The committee also conducted five oral arguments and considered one case on the written record.

Meet the Vice President of Hearing Operations



In May 2021, the NCAA named Derrick Crawford as the new vice president of hearing operations. A proven leader with decades of legal, regulatory and higher education experience, Crawford serves as direct liaison to the NCAA Committees on Infractions and Infractions Appeals Committees in all three divisions and oversees the staffs that support the committees.

He also provides strategic coordination for the NCAA's Independent Accountability Resolution Process. Specifically, Crawford serves as the NCAA's primary liaison with the Independent Accountability Oversight Committee, Infractions Referral Committee and the Independent Resolution Panel.

In addition to serving as the NCAA's managing director of enforcement since 2013, Crawford brings decades of experience within legal affairs, both as an attorney and investigator. Crawford served as counsel for policy and litigation at the National Football League for eight years. He also served as an assistant attorney general in Alabama. Before his work with the Alabama Attorney General's Office, Crawford spent five years with the Federal Bureau of Investigation as a special agent and legal advisor.

Clarifying Name, Image and Likeness and Previous Penalties

Although student-athletes can now receive benefits from their names, images and likenesses through activities such as endorsements and appearances, NCAA rules still do not permit pay-for-play arrangements. The NCAA infractions process exists to promote fairness in college sports. The rules that govern fair play are voted on, agreed to and expected to be upheld by all NCAA member schools. Previous penalties, including those that are several years old, will not be reevaluated or reconsidered based on the recent changes to NIL rules.

COVID-19 Response

The NCAA's infractions program did not stop during the COVID-19 pandemic. The components of the infractions process transitioned to a virtual environment to limit any disruption and delay caused by the pandemic. The enforcement staff conducted investigations, and the adjudicative bodies held hearings and oral arguments, in an entirely virtual world. Despite the pandemic, 19 Committee on Infractions cases were resolved in Division I during the 2020-21 academic year. The Infractions Appeals Committee issued three decisions and conducted five virtual oral arguments.

Negotiated Resolutions

The negotiated resolution continues to be an attractive and efficient path for parties who are in full agreement on the violations, the level and classification of violations, and penalties. Nearly 60% of cases that reached the Division I Committee on Infractions in the 2020-21 academic year were resolved via the negotiated resolution path. Once approved, the Committee on Infractions releases decisions in about a week.

Infractions Process Committee

In January 2021, the Division I Board of Directors Infractions Process Committee was formed. The committee, created by the board, is charged with advising the board on infractions and enforcement processes that are not case specific. The board created the committee due to several factors, including a request from the Committee on Infractions and Infractions Appeals Committee to facilitate meaningful engagement on infractions issues that are of high import to the membership.

The new committee comprises 10 members: five presidents or chancellors, one conference commissioner, one director of athletics, one senior woman administrator, one faculty athletics representative and one student-athlete.

IARP

From March 2020 to July 2021, six infractions cases progressed through the Independent Accountability Resolution Process structure. In that time, the Infractions Referral Committee held 14 meetings to review and respond to requests for referral. Additionally, the chief panel members and hearing panels have been actively engaged in resolving procedural issues and questions to ensure the Independent Resolution Panel cases continue to proceed to resolution. On more than 53 occasions, the chief panel members or hearing panels resolved one or more procedural issues or questions.

The Independent Accountability Oversight Committee refined operating procedures to appropriately expedite and drive cases to conclusion. Specifically, the Complex Case Unit and schools now have timelines to submit their proposed scheduling deadlines. Also, moving forward, the Complex Case Unit must accept the investigative work of the enforcement staff unless the unit can demonstrate a compelling reason why additional investigation is required. Additionally, timelines of procedural actions and case status have been published for each case in the independent process on iarpcc.org. This change will provide transparency and improve credibility.

Contacts

Have questions, concerns or feedback? Or would you simply like to connect with the NCAA staff that helps oversee this member-driven process?

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