



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III COMMITTEE ON STUDENT-ATHLETE REINSTATEMENT
MAY 21, 2025, IN-PERSON MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative Items

a. Noncontroversial Legislation – Incorporate the Mental Health Hardship Waiver Pilot Program into Legislation.

(1) Recommendation. That NCAA Division III Management Council approve in concept noncontroversial legislation to incorporate the existing Mental Health Hardship Waiver pilot program criteria into Division III legislation, and the pilot program to be extended until the criteria are legislated.

b. Criteria for hardship waivers asserting mental health. The use of the following medical documentation standard for hardship waiver requests based on a student-athlete's mental health condition:

(1) Contemporaneous or noncontemporaneous medical documentation from a practitioner licensed to diagnose mental health conditions demonstrates that:

- (a) The student-athlete's mental health issue or condition occurred during the season in question;
- (b) Occurred before completion of the first half of the traditional playing season; and
- (c) Prevented the student-athlete from competing in more than one-third of the traditional playing season in that sport for the season being waived.

(2) Effective date. Immediate.

(3) Rationale. Mental health conditions are not treated or documented in the same manner as physical injuries or illnesses are. Additionally, mental health conditions are not always diagnosed and/or treated by a medical doctor. The criteria that was implemented during the Mental Health Pilot Program is a more appropriate standard for demonstrating a student-athlete who was unable to participate in athletics due to their mental health condition.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. Student-athletes will have a more convenient way to restore a season of participation due to mental health conditions that rendered them unable to participate in their sport. Specifically, under the current

hardship waiver legislation, hardships asserting mental health are often denied by the conference office due to lack of contemporaneous medical documentation from a medical doctor. This requires additional time to file a hardship waiver appeal via RSRO, and NCAA staff review. The documentation and practitioner standards outlined in the mental health pilot program create a better avenue for student-athletes to receive waivers based on mental health conditions.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Mental Health Hardship Waiver Pilot Program.** The NCAA Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement reviewed the data collected during the two-year mental health hardship waiver pilot program, and recommended the Management Council approve in concept, noncontroversial legislation.
- 2. Review and discussion of sports wagering and the concept of safe harbor.** The committee received a legislative update specific to the deregulation of betting on professional sports. Additionally, the committee discussed the concept of incentivizing disclosing problem gambling, referred to as safe harbor. The committee agreed that a safe harbor is appropriate; however, felt that further discussions and evaluation are necessary to determine the exact criteria for who would qualify for safe harbor, and what the implications for reinstatement penalties will be.
- 3. Educational Case Study.** The committee reviewed an educational case study, demonstrating how staff process reinstatement cases from the time of submission until the final decision is issued. Additionally, the committee thoroughly reviewed the current structure of appeal materials and agreed to combine appeal materials to summarize facts and reduce redundancy. Staff will create a sample of a proposed amended appeal packet for the committee's review which will be reviewed via email after the meeting.
- 4. Review of reinstatement guidelines.** The committee reviewed its guidelines and discussed when and if an outcome of permanent ineligibility is appropriate. Further, the committee reviewed and approved editorial revisions to the Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement Guidelines.
- 5. Review of waiver requests when a student-athlete competes during postseason competition.** The committee reviewed waiver requests involving student-athletes who compete during postseason competitions. The committee stated postseason competition alone does not warrant a meaningful participation opportunity and instructed staff to

weigh postseason competition the same as other competition during the second half of the season.

6. **Review of Division III philosophy statement.** The NCAA Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement reviewed the Division III philosophy statement.
7. **Review Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement November 2024 report.** The committee reviewed and approved the report from its November 2024 meeting.
8. **Review of flexible student-athlete reinstatement decisions.** The committee reviewed and accepted all recent staff decisions that provided relief from established case precedent and/or committee guidelines. All cases will remain available as precedent within RSRO, consistent with NCAA Divisions I, II and III Committees on Student-Athlete Reinstatement policies and procedures.
9. **Governance update.** The committee received a governance update from the managing director of NCAA Division III governance.
10. **Other business.** None.
11. **Future meetings.** The committee established the following future meeting dates and locations:
 - a. November/December 2025 (exact date TBD) videoconference.
 - b. May/June 2026 (exact date TBD), Indianapolis.

Committee Chair: Kaitlin Leach, Vassar College.
Staff Liaisons: James Bullock, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Liz Perry, Academic and Membership Affairs.

| NCAA Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement May 21, 2025, Meeting | |
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| Attendees: | |
| Charles Foster, Mississippi College for Women | |
| Merlin A. Joseph Jr., State University of New York at Oswego | |
| Kaitlin Leach, Vassar College | |
| Morgan Shaw, Willamette University. | |
| Taylor Texeira, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference | |

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| Absentees: |
| Patrick Summers, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference |
| Guests in Attendance: |
| None. |
| NCAA Support Staff in Attendance: |
| Cynthia Alanis, Connor Bush, Dana Conner, McKinzie Green, Tianna Hill, Maison Hubbard, Sean Tuttle and Jerry Vaughn. |
| Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance: |
| Jeff Myers, Bill Regan and Julie Zike. |