



**Letitia James**

New York State Attorney General

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## **Attorney General James Announces Agreement Requiring NCAA to End Transfer Eligibility Rule**

**AG James and Multistate Coalition Sued NCAA for Preventing College Athletes from Immediately Competing in Sports When they Transfer Schools, NCAA Agrees to Drop Rule**

**May 30, 2024**

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NEW YORK – New York Attorney General Letitia James, the U.S. Department of Justice, and a multistate coalition of 10 attorneys general today announced that the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has agreed to permanently end its transfer eligibility rule, which prohibited Division I college athletes from competing for one year if they transferred schools twice. The NCAA’s transfer eligibility rule forced college athletes to either stay in colleges they wanted to leave or miss out on athletic opportunities, limiting their career potential. The settlement resolves the lawsuit filed by Attorney General James and the multistate coalition, and requires the NCAA to stop enforcing its transfer eligibility rule.

“The end of the NCAA’s unfair transfer eligibility rule will be a game changer for student athletes who wish to transfer schools and still compete in top-tier sports programs,” said **Attorney General James**. “This settlement will ensure that student athletes don’t have to choose between their academic goals and their athletic pursuits. I am proud to stand with my colleagues to support college athletes.”

The agreement, which must be approved by U.S. District Judge John Preston Bailey, removes what the coalition views as an illegal restraint on the athletes’ ability to market their labor and control their education. In addition to ensuring athletes’ autonomy, the agreement:

- Prevents retaliation from the NCAA against member institutions and athletes who challenge the rule or support those who do. This includes safeguarding student athletes' rights to compete during legal proceedings without fear of punitive actions from the NCAA.
- Requires the NCAA to grant an additional year of eligibility to Division I athletes who for any reason were previously deemed ineligible under the transfer eligibility rule since the 2019-20 academic year.
- Prohibits the NCAA from undermining or circumventing its provisions through future actions, rules, or policies, thereby ensuring college athletes' rights and freedoms.
- Establishes the court's continuing jurisdiction to enforce its terms and resolve any disputes that may arise.

In December 2023, Attorney General James and a multistate coalition sued the NCAA over its anticompetitive transfer eligibility rule that restricted student athletes' careers and their ability to choose which university they wanted to attend. An athlete who transferred to the University of Buffalo was initially prohibited from competing on the university's basketball team because of the NCAA's transfer eligibility rule. However, Attorney General James and the multistate coalition secured a temporary restraining order, temporarily blocking the NCAA from enforcing the transfer eligibility rule and allowing the student athlete to compete in the University of Buffalo's basketball team. Today's settlement requires the NCAA to completely stop enforcing the rule and prevents the Association from adopting any similar restrictions on college athletes.

Joining Attorney General James and the U.S. Department of Justice in today's settlement are the attorneys general of Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

Attorney General James has been a national leader on efforts to protect the rights of student and professional athletes and ensure sports regulation authorities are held accountable for illegal policies. Earlier this month, Attorney General James and a multistate coalition sued the NCAA for preventing student athletes from reviewing NIL compensation offers before enrolling in a school. In October 2023, Attorney General James and a bipartisan coalition urged the U.S. Supreme Court to protect baseball minor leagues throughout the country.

For New York, this matter is being handled by Senior Enforcement Counsel Bryan Bloom, Deputy Bureau Chief Amy McFarlane, and Bureau Chief Elinor Hoffmann, all of the Antitrust Bureau. The Antitrust Bureau is a part of the Division for Economic Justice, which is led by Chief Deputy Attorney General Chris D'Angelo and overseen by First Deputy Attorney General Jennifer Levy.