

Jim Harbaugh Given Four-Year Show-Cause Order For COVID-19 Recruiting Violations



The NCAA announced a four-year-show cause order for former Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh and a one-year suspension should he return to college football. The order is only related to recruiting violations during a COVID-19 dead period.

The punishment is unrelated to the sign-stealing scandal that was discovered last season, an investigation that is still ongoing and could result in additional penalties.

The NCAA Division I on Infractions determined that Harbaugh “violated recruiting and inducement rules, engaged in unethical conduct, failed to promote an atmosphere of compliance and violated head coach responsibility obligations.”

The violations committed included texting during the COVID-19 recruiting dead period, analysts performing on-field coaching and coaches watching workouts over Zoom during the dead period. Harbaugh also reportedly failed to cooperate with the investigation and gave what the NCAA called “false or misleading information” which resulted in a Level I NCAA violation, according to the NCAA’s announcement.

Harbaugh, who has since moved on to take a job as the head coach of the Los Angeles Chargers in the NFL, was the only one involved in this investigating to not come to an agreement with the NCAA which put Michigan on three years of probation along with a fine and recruiting limits. Harbaugh’s attorney, Tom Mars, said that Harbaugh was not invited to participate in the settlement process and wasn’t aware of an agreement being reached.

“The panel noted that Harbaugh’s intentional disregard for NCAA legislation and unethical conduct amplified the severity of the case and prompted the panel to classify Harbaugh’s case as Level I-Aggravated, with penalties to include a four-year show-cause order,” the NCAA announcement said.

The initial notice of allegations regarding the recruiting violations were received by Michigan in January of 2023, but the process was slow enough that no punishment was handed down before the Wolverines were able to go onto win their first national championship since 1997.