

Ohio State Self-Reports Four Minor NCAA Violations In Football Program



According to public records obtained by The Columbus Dispatch, Ohio State's athletic department has self-reported four minor NCAA violations dating back to last summer, all on the recruiting front.

All of the violations were considered Level III - considered "isolated or limited" - and resulted in mild penalties. Just one of the four violations led to further action by the NCAA.

The first violation occurred on July 28, when Ohio State was hosting "SummerFest," a recruiting event. Following a verbal commitment from wide receiver Chris Henry Jr., a 2026 prospect out of Cincinnati, offensive coordinator/wide receivers coach Brian Hartline provided Henry's legal guardian with an edited photo from Ohio State's creative staff, which is not allowed until a prospect has entered their junior year. As a result, Hartline was then prohibited from sending recruiting materials to prospects for a week, and Ohio State was prohibited from sending materials to Henry for two weeks.

Then, on Aug. 18, an Ohio State assistant coach contacted a player from another school who intended to transfer but had not yet entered his name into the transfer portal. As a result, Ohio State suspending recruiting activities for a week and reduced in-person days and official visits by four and three, respectively. Athletic director Gene Smith also met with the assistant, and Ohio State's staff was provided with a letter of education on tampering.

The next violation occurred in September, when two unnamed boosters took a picture with a recruit on the sidelines at Ohio Stadium and shared it on social media. According to the NCAA, that exchange was prohibited only "authorized institutional staff members" are able to contact recruits and their families. The boosters received rules education and one was prohibited from receiving a sideline pass for the next two games, and after the violation was reported, the NCAA eliminated two in-person recruiting days.

Finally, a violation occurred last month when a staff member commented on a social media post of a transfer announcing their verbal commitment to Ohio State, violating NCAA rule 13.10.1.1, a bylaw that prevents schools from commenting on players until they have signed an aid agreement. While neither the staffer nor the player were named, the commitment was noted as Jan. 19, which is when former Alabama safety Caleb Downs announced his commitment to Ohio State.