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[Sexual Harassment: Policy Isn...](#)

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On January 14, 2008, Melissa Jennings won a \$385,000 settlement from the University of North Carolina, paid for by the Athletics Department, ending a sexual harassment claim against her soccer coach. On January 25, 2008, Lauren Summa, a football team manager, filed a sexual harassment suit against Hofstra University, claiming football player taunts, being locked in bathroom on the bus and being replaced after filing a complaint with the University. On February 13, 2008, Fresno State University basketball coach Stacy Johnson-Klein won a multi-million dollar jury award with part of her claim being that she was groped by athletics department administrators. A Washington State Court of Appeals ruled in February that the University of Washington could be sued for civil damages in a rape by football player case in which the University failed to notify the student of her legal options.

The bottom line is that having a policy that addresses sexual harassment, as prohibited by Title IX, simply isn't enough. In-service training of coaches and educational programming for student-athletes is absolutely essential. This training must occur every year because of staff and student turnover. Coaches' contracts should specify the consequences of violating sexual harassment policy. Background checks of employees, now available at such a reasonable cost, should be standard

operating procedure. Immediate action to address complaints, prohibit retaliation and eliminate hostile environments is absolutely essential and required under the law. Nothing is more important to our athletics programs and academic institutions than providing a safe and respectful learning environment.

[Click here](#) for a comprehensive article on sexual harassment.

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