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## Q: How should accusations of instructional or behavioral policy violations by coaches be handled?

A: The Athletic Director should be responsible for establishing a fair process for handling student-athlete or parent complaints related to the instructional ability or behavior of a coach that is consistent with standard procedures for handling employee conflicts or performance issues but also includes:

- the opportunity for a student-athlete to report cases of abuse to a neutral third party outside the Athletic Department
- procedures that protect the privacy of the athletes and coaches involved and limitations on confidentiality
- procedures for determining whether abuse has occurred that protect the legal rights of coaches and players until an investigation has been completed
- an appeals procedure in the event that the accused or the alleged victim is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation or hearing
- requirement to inform those involved about statutes of limitations and opportunity for redress in a court of law
- procedures that protect coaches and athletes from retaliation before, during and after a hearing or appeals process with retaliatory behavior viewed as seriously as abuse itself and acknowledging that retaliation can occur independently of whether a charge of abuse is substantiated
- requirement for immediate action to ensure that the environment is free of abuse and ensure that an investigation proceeds in a timely manner
- investigatory guidelines to ensure that investigators follow proper procedures for a fair and effective investigation

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