

ATHLETIC CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT

Holland & Knight

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As a growing number of colleges and universities seek to move from one athletic conference to another, they find themselves considering a multitude of legal issues that arise during conference realignment. These issues are far-reaching and include conference constitutions and bylaws, media contracts and the seemingly inevitable threat of litigation.

Holland & Knight's Education Team has taken a lead in this critical juncture of sports and law. Our attorneys bring years of hands-on experience advising and representing colleges and universities. We understand that legal issues must be addressed in the context of an institution's simultaneous concerns for reputational, financial and recruiting consequences, among other considerations. Accordingly, we partner with our college and university clients to pursue the legal results that best achieve their own individual goals.



REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Our experience ranges from advising clients at different phases of this athletic conference realignment process to representing them in litigation. For example, we have advised a university in negotiations to move from a mid-major conference to a major new basketball conference. We also have defended a university in litigation arising from its move from one major conference to another. We secured a victory in that case by obtaining summary judgment in the university's favor over the amount of the exit fee owed to the university's former conference. In addition, we represented a leading conference in litigation against a departing member that challenged the validity of the withdrawal payment owed to the conference. In that case, we successfully persuaded a state court in the departing university's own backyard to dismiss antitrust claims filed there against the conference.



Holland & Knight is among the first U.S. firms to form an education legal team, has one of the largest education practices in the country and is a *Chambers*-ranked sports practice.



Education Team members are ranked among America's leading education attorneys by *U.S. News – Best Lawyers "Best Law Firms"* and *The Best Lawyers in America* guides.



Clients call on us to handle critical court battles and cutting-edge issues at the intersection of law, athletics and education



Our Education Team serves as general counsel to numerous institutions without in-house legal departments.

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