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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NORTHWESTERN FOOTBALL HAZING INVESTIGATION

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On November 30, 2022, Northwestern University received a complaint from an anonymized email address alleging hazing in the Northwestern Football Program. The University immediately retained an outside investigator, Maggie Hickey, to conduct a thorough investigation. Hickey has deep expertise in conducting independent investigations. She is a partner and practice co-leader of both complex litigation and government enforcement and white collar practice at ArentFox Schiff LLP, as well as a former executive assistant U.S. attorney and inspector general of Illinois.

The complainant spoke with the investigation team in December 2022, and the University publicly disclosed the investigation in January 2023.

The complainant's allegations involved football players pressuring team members into participating in hazing activities. The complainant alleged that these activities often occurred in the locker room and may have started at "Camp Kenosha" in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where the team used to hold training camp.

To conduct this investigation, the investigation team received complete cooperation from Northwestern University, including the University's athletics personnel. They interviewed more than 50 people affiliated or formerly affiliated with the football program and reviewed, among other things, hundreds of thousands of emails and player survey data dating back to 2014. Due to confidentiality, the specific findings are not detailed here.

Current and former players varied on their perspective of the conduct; however, the investigation team determined that the complainant's claims were largely supported by the evidence gathered during the investigation, including separate and consistent first-person accounts from current and former players. While the investigation did not uncover evidence pointing to specific misconduct by any individual football player or coach, participation in or knowledge of the hazing activities was widespread across football players.

The investigation team did not discover sufficient evidence to believe that coaching staff knew about the ongoing hazing conduct. They determined, however, that there had been significant opportunities to discover and report the hazing conduct.

Throughout the investigation, the University took steps to eliminate hazing from the football program, including addressing the football team and staff and making changes to locker-room oversight. In response to recommendations from Hickey, Northwestern is making a series of additional changes to improve the culture of the football program and to create additional controls to prevent hazing across Northwestern Athletics:

# Northwestern

- Head coach Fitzgerald has been placed on a two-week suspension without pay, beginning immediately.
- Football practices at “Camp Kenosha” in Wisconsin will be permanently discontinued.
- The University will require monitoring of the football locker room by someone who doesn’t report to the football coaching staff.
- The University will create an online reporting tool specifically for student athletes to anonymously report incidents of potential hazing or hazing-related concerns.
- The University will provide and require annual mandatory anti-hazing training for all coaches, staff members and student-athletes, with an emphasis on reporting options, the duties to report, discipline for future violations and the fact that hazing is not acceptable regardless of consent.
- The University will form an internal working group comprising Northwestern leaders across various disciplines to create a report on policy development, organizational culture, communication, training and enforcement. The group will solicit input from external experts and will make their report open to the entire community.
- Northwestern Athletics will better utilize the annual student-athlete-survey process to ensure coaches are aware of and act on student concerns.
- Northwestern Athletics will work with the NCAA and Big Ten Conference to ensure all processes and rules are followed.