

# #FIXCFB

## **Solution 2: Transfer Acquisition Fees**

Compensate Development, Create Economic Friction

Part of the comprehensive Fix CFB proposal

# Transfer Acquisition Fees

Acquiring schools pay developing schools \$25K-\$150K when poaching transfers, scaled by player class and starter status. Creates economic friction without restricting player movement. Protects Group of 5 programs—and will never be adopted because Power 4 schools benefit from free poaching.

## The Problem: Unlimited Free Agency, Zero Consequences

The transfer portal exploded from [875 entries in 2018](#) to [5,400 in 2025-26](#)—a 520% increase in seven years. Courts struck down all transfer restrictions ([Ohio v. NCAA](#)), creating unlimited free agency with zero economic consequences for poaching schools.

- **Rosters turn over 30-40% annually:** Entire starting lineups transfer. Team chemistry impossible. Coaches spend spring recruiting their own players to stay instead of developing them.
- **Development is punished:** Why develop high school prospects when you can poach proven transfers? High school recruiting becomes irrelevant for positions where transfers are available.
- **Late-season poaching destroys programs:** Players enter portal after final regular season game, leaving teams scrambling to fill rosters for bowl games and spring practice.
- **Power imbalance accelerates:** SEC and Big Ten treat G5 as free minor leagues. MAC, Sun Belt, and C-USA become permanent feeder systems with no economic compensation.

## Fee Structure

Player Class	Base Fee	Starter Premium	Non-Starter	Starter
Freshman/Soph	\$25,000	+\$50,000	\$25,000	\$75,000
Junior	\$50,000	+\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Senior	\$75,000	+\$50,000	\$75,000	\$125,000
Graduate	\$100,000	+\$50,000	\$100,000	\$150,000

## Why It Works

- **Doesn't Restrict Players:** Players can still transfer unlimited times. Fee is paid by institutions, not players
- **Compensates Development:** G5 school gets paid for 3-4 years of investment in recruiting, training, education

- **Creates Market Clarity:** If no school will pay the fee, player wasn't worth acquiring. Economic friction, not restriction
- **Coaching Change Exemption:** No fee if player's head coach departed within prior 6 months

## Legal Framework

**Ohio v. NCAA (2023):** Court struck down transfer restrictions on players, ruling they violated antitrust law. However, the court distinguished between restricting players (illegal) and creating institutional costs for acquiring players (permissible).

- **Key Distinction:** Fee doesn't prevent players from transferring. Players retain full mobility. Fee is an institutional cost, like conference membership fees or facility requirements
- **MLB Precedent:** Draft pick compensation system—teams forfeit draft picks when signing free agents who received qualifying offers. Similar concept: compensating team that developed player
- **Conference Membership Fees:** Schools already pay fees to join conferences. This extends that principle to player acquisition

## Why It Won't Happen (Feasibility: 4/10)

Power 4 benefits from free poaching. Why would Alabama, Ohio State, Georgia voluntarily pay millions to raid G5 rosters when they can currently do it for free? Group of 5 has no leverage to demand fees from P4 schools. Players' lawyers would challenge this even though fees are paid by schools, arguing it indirectly restricts movement.

# References

- **Transfer Portal Data:** [On3 Transfer Portal Tracker](#), [247Sports Database](#)
- **Legal Cases:** [Ohio v. NCAA \(2023\)](#)
- **Professional Sports Model:** [MLB Draft Pick Compensation](#)

# Contact & Resources

- **Email:** [contact@fixcfb.com](mailto:contact@fixcfb.com)
- **Website:** [fixcfb.com](http://fixcfb.com)
- **Full Proposal:** 30-page comprehensive document available at [fixcfb.com](http://fixcfb.com)
- **Executive Summary:** 10-page overview available at [fixcfb.com](http://fixcfb.com)