

# Justin Fields Focused On Football As Ohio State Waits For NCAA Decision



Justin Fields transferred to Ohio State with a chance to be the starting quarterback in 2019 in mind. As he goes through winter workouts in Columbus, though, there's still a possibility that he won't see the field at all this year.

Fields, a former five-star who transferred to Ohio State from Georgia in January, is waiting to find out if he'll be granted a hardship waiver by the NCAA. If he is, then the Buckeyes likely have their starting quarterback for 2019 ready to go. If the waiver is denied, then Fields will have to take a redshirt, leaving Ohio State with redshirt freshman Matthew Baldwin and fifth-year senior Chris Chugunov as the only scholarship options currently on the roster.

For now, though, Fields isn't focused on the pending decision. He's been with the team since the start of the semester, going through workouts and drills as if nothing else is going on.

"I don't know much about this process," he admitted Wednesday. "All that lawyer stuff, my job is strictly football. This NCAA stuff, I really don't have a great understanding of it. I'm just here to make the team better."

Fields has turned to Tom Mars, an Arkansas-based lawyer, to help guide him through the process. Mars has become known for his ability to help athletes get hardship waivers, notably helping Michigan quarterback Shea Patterson through the process after he transferred from Ole Miss a year ago.

The main basis for Fields' waiver request stems from an incident when a racial slur was directed at him by a Georgia baseball player during a football game last year. Fields had reportedly considered playing baseball in addition to football for the Bulldogs.

As Fields works out with his teammates amid a grueling winter regimen for the Buckeyes, Mars told CBS Sports Dennis Dodd that the case is "close to the finish line."

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day didn't have an exact timeline for an expected decision, but he said the Buckeyes were hoping to hear the news - one way or the other - in the "next few weeks."

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