

Deborah Dugan's Attorney Slams Grammys With Fiery Statement After Ouster

By **JEM ASWAD**



CREDIT: AMANDA FRIEDMAN/RECORDING ACADEMY

Less than 12 hours after news broke that [Deborah Dugan](#) had been placed on administrative leave from her post as president/CEO of the Recording Academy, her attorney fired back with a statement.

"What has been reported is not nearly the story that needs to be told. When our ability to speak is not restrained by a 28-page contract and legal threats, we will expose what happens when you 'step up' at the [Recording Academy](#), a public nonprofit," wrote her attorney Bryan Freedman.

In the wake of [Dugan's sudden removal from her post as president/CEO of the Recording Academy](#) on Thursday — a mere five months after she'd taken charge, and just ten days before the [Grammy Awards](#) — even insiders were stunned by the abruptness of the move and perplexed by the purported reasons for it.

But sources close to the situation tell *Variety* that what may have taken place was a "coup": a move by entrenched Academy veterans to discredit and remove Dugan, who came in promising significant changes to the organization, before she could establish herself with a successful first show.

An official Academy statement reads in part, "In light of concerns raised to the [Recording Academy Board of Trustees](#), including a formal allegation of misconduct by a senior female member of the [Recording Academy](#) team, the Board has placed [Dugan] on administrative leave, effective immediately."

Freedman's statement references former Grammy chief Neil Portnow's controversial 2018 comment that female artists and executives need to "step up" in order to advance in the music industry. Portnow announced he was stepping down three months after making the comment.



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