

# Lawyer For Ousted Grammys CEO Deborah Dugan Slams Recording Academy – Update

By Bruce Haring

January 17, 2020 7:30am

4  
COMMENTS

Recording Academy President/CEO Deborah Dugan participates in the 62nd Grammy Awards nominations press conference at Studio 43 at CBS Broadcast Center on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019, in New York. (Photo by Charles Sykes/Invision/AP)

AP Images

**UPDATED with statement from [Deborah Dugan's attorney](#):** The attorney for Deborah Dugan is firing back after Dugan was placed on administrative leave from her post as president/CEO of the [Recording Academy](#).

“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,” attorney Bryan Freedman tweeted.

Dugan, the first female president of the Recording Academy, was put on leave Thursday from her position as the organization’s head after just over five months tenure.

The Los Angeles Times first [reported](#) the news. Dugan’s leave comes just ten days before the 62nd annual Grammy Awards on Jan. 26. Ironically, the Times ran a profile of Dugan on Wednesday. Its headline quoted her saying, “Everything’s being examined.”

An internal Recording Academy memorandum quoted by the Times from interim Recording Academy President and CEO Harvey Mason Jr. said that the “Recording Academy Board of Trustees has placed Recording Academy President and CEO Deborah Dugan on Administrative Leave, effective immediately.

“The Board of Trustees felt this action to be necessary, due to serious concerns that recently were brought to our attention. While we are unable to share the details of the concerns to protect employee privacy, please know that the Board has retained two independent third-party investigators to conduct independent investigations into allegations that have been made.”

Dugan replaced chief executive Neil Portnow, whose tenure was rocked when he suggested following the 2018 Grammys that female artists should “step up” in response to a lack of awards representation.

In another report by Variety, a second memo states, “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 Recording Academy President and CEO Deborah Dugan on administrative leave, effective immediately. The Board has also retained two independent third-party investigators to conduct independent investigations of the allegations.

The Board determined this action to be necessary in order to restore the confidence of the Recording Academy’s Membership, repair Recording Academy employee morale, and allow the Recording Academy to focus on its mission of serving all music creators. Board Chair Harvey Mason Jr. will serve as interim President and CEO pending the conclusion of the investigation.

“The Recording Academy Board of Trustees is committed to fostering a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace, music industry, and society,” the statement concludes.



**READ MORE ABOUT:** [DEBORAH DUGAN](#) / [RECORDING ACADEMY](#)

## Connect with Us

Get our latest stories in the feed of your favorite networks

