

Vikings Coach Suspended for 'Homophobic' Remark

The Minnesota Vikings suspended special teams coordinator Mike Priefer for three games without pay on Friday after an independent investigation revealed he used homophobic remarks during the 2012 NFL season.

Former punter Chris Kluwe made allegations against Priefer earlier this year. The investigation found Priefer made a single homophobic statement to Kluwe.

"In this instance, Coach Priefer fell short of what is expected," Vikings owner Zygi Wilf and President Mark Wilf said in a statement.

"We will continue to hold all team members accountable and take the outlined critical steps to further educate everyone within our organization both individually and collectively."

Priefer will serve the suspension during the 2014 regular season, though it could be reduced to two games if he attends individualized sensitivity training.

"I owe an apology to many people. The Wilf family, the Minnesota Vikings organization and fans, my family, the LGBT community, Chris Kluwe and anyone else that I offended with my insensitive remark," Priefer said in a statement.

"I regret what has occurred and what I said. I am extremely sorry, but I will learn from this situation and will work on educating others to create more tolerance and respect."

Kluwe had also said his activism on gay marriage had been a factor in his release from the Vikings, though the investigation said his performances and the distraction caused by his activism, rather than his actual views, were the

reasons.

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