# [***CLARETT SAYS OHIO STATE LIED ABOUT PAPERWORK FOR TICKET***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47KF-5SD0-0094-52KY-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** RUSTY MILLER, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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**Body**

Ohio State tailback Maurice Clarett contended yesterday that school officials lied about why he was unable to go home for the funeral of a friend.

Clarett criticized the school Monday for giving him "the runaround" when he tried to get an airline ticket home to Youngstown, Ohio.

Ohio State Athletic Director Andy Geiger said the university would have looked favorably on the request, but Clarett did not fill out the proper forms to qualify for NCAA emergency funds.

Clarett said he completed all of the paperwork before he left Ohio Thursday for Arizona.

"They can't lie about that," Clarett said. "I won't sit here and let them lie about that."

The No. 2 Buckeyes meet No. 1 Miami in the Fiesta Bowl Friday night for the national championship.

Heather Lyke Catalano, Ohio State's associate athletic director in charge of NCAA compliance, said she was not allowed to comment.

"I talked to Heather last night and she said he has not filled out the proper paperwork," sports information director Steve Snapp said.

In a statement released last night, Geiger said Clarett had not submitted a Free Application For Federal Student Aid Form to Ohio State as of Monday.

"Maurice may have begun the process but at the time we had to make the decision, there was no indication of a FAFFSA on file for Maurice," Geiger said. "We were therefore compelled to follow the NCAA rules as they apply to the situation."

Clarett also said university officials put football ahead of life. Geiger disagreed.

"We care deeply about all of our student-athletes, and we did everything possible to assist Maurice Clarett in this time of his personal grief," Geiger said. "Unfortunately given the circumstances, we had no choice other than to react in the manner in which we did."

Clarett said he found out his good friend, Juaquin A. "Juan" Bell, died more than a week ago. Youngstown police said Bell was shot multiple times Dec. 21.

He said he asked Coach Jim Tressel about going home. Tressel referred the matter to the university's compliance department, which approves any financial aid or benefits given to student-athletes.

Clarett said his mother filled out the paperwork last week, and he submitted it to university officials. Clarett's mother declined to comment to The Associated Press, adding, "I just don't want to feed it."

Clarett said he was most upset that he was not contacted by Lyke Catalano after he filed his paperwork.

"The compliance lady said she'd get back to me in my room," Clarett said. "She never called back in my room or on my ***cell phone***. That's the real reason I was mad -- because she didn't call me back."

FIESTA BOWL

\* What: No. 1 Miami vs. No. 2 Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl

\* When: 8 p.m. Friday

\* TV: WTAE

\* At stake: The national championship and Miami's 34-game winning streak

\* Favored: Miami by 12 1/2

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