
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1610 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY VEREB, QUIGLEY, MATZIE, CREIGHTON, BOBACK,
BRADFORD, BRIGGS, V. BROWN, BROWNLEE, DEASY, DONATUCCI,
FARRY, FRANKEL, GEIST, GINGRICH, HARKINS, HENNESSEY, HESS,
HORNAMAN, KAUFFMAN, KILLION, KOTIK, MANN, MICOZZIE, MURT,
NEUMAN, M. O'BRIEN, O'NEILL, PASHINSKI, PYLE, QUINN, ROCK,
SANTARSIERO, SCAVELLO, SCHRODER, STERN, SWANGER, TAYLOR,
TOOHIL AND WAGNER, JUNE 16, 2011

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JUNE 16, 2011

AN ACT

1 Establishing standards for preventing sudden cardiac arrest and
2 death in student athletes; assigning duties to the Department
3 of Health and the Department of Education; and imposing
4 penalties.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Sudden
9 Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

11 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
12 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Athletic activity." All of the following:

15 (1) Interscholastic athletics.

16 (2) An athletic contest or competition, other than

1 interscholastic athletics, that is sponsored by or associated
2 with a school entity, including cheerleading, club-sponsored
3 sports activities and sports activities sponsored by school-
4 affiliated organizations.

5 (3) Noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by or
6 associated with a school entity.

7 (4) Practices, interschool practices and scrimmages for
8 all of the activities listed under paragraphs (1), (2) and
9 (3).

10 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

11 "Interscholastic athletics." As defined in section 1602-A of
12 the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public
13 School Code of 1949.

14 "School entity." As defined in section 1602-A of the act of
15 March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code
16 of 1949.

17 Section 3. Sudden cardiac arrest.

18 (a) Educational materials.--

19 (1) The department and the Department of Education shall
20 develop and post on their publicly accessible Internet
21 websites guidelines and other relevant materials to inform
22 and educate students participating in or desiring to
23 participate in an athletic activity, their parents and their
24 coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac
25 arrest, including the risks associated with continuing to
26 play or practice after experiencing the following symptoms:
27 fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pains, dizziness and
28 racing heart rate.

29 (2) In developing the guidelines and materials, the
30 department and the Department of Education may utilize

1 existing materials developed by organizations, such as Parent
2 Heart Watch and Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes.

3 (3) A student participating in or desiring to
4 participate in an athletic activity and the student's parent
5 or guardian shall, each school year and prior to
6 participation by the student in an athletic activity, sign
7 and return to the student's school an acknowledgment of
8 receipt and review of the sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and
9 warning sign information sheet developed under this
10 subsection.

11 (b) Informational meeting.--A school entity may hold an
12 informational meeting prior to the start of each athletic season
13 for all ages of competitors regarding the symptoms and warning
14 signs of sudden cardiac arrest. In addition to students,
15 parents, coaches and other school officials, informational
16 meetings may include physicians, pediatric cardiologists and
17 athletic trainers.

18 (c) Removal from play.--

19 (1) A student who, as determined by a game official,
20 coach from the student's team, certified athletic trainer,
21 licensed physician or other official designated by the
22 student's school entity, exhibits signs or symptoms of sudden
23 cardiac arrest while participating in an athletic activity
24 shall be removed by the coach from participation at that
25 time.

26 (2) If a student is known to have exhibited signs or
27 symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest at any time prior to or
28 following an athletic activity, the student shall be
29 prevented from participating in an athletic activity.

30 (3) The student shall not return to participation in an

1 athletic activity until the student is evaluated and cleared
2 for return to participation in writing by an appropriate
3 medical professional.

4 (4) In order to help determine whether a student is
5 ready to return to play, the appropriate medical professional
6 may consult any other licensed or certified medical
7 professionals.

8 (d) Training course.--

9 (1) Once each school year, a coach of an athletic
10 activity shall complete the sudden cardiac arrest training
11 course offered by a provider approved by the department.

12 (2) A coach of an athletic activity shall not coach the
13 athletic activity until the coach completes the training
14 course required under this subsection.

15 (e) Penalties.--The governing body of a school entity shall
16 establish the following minimum penalties for a coach found in
17 violation of the requirements under subsection (c), which
18 penalties shall take effect two years following the effective
19 date of this section:

20 (1) For a first violation, suspension from coaching any
21 athletic activity for the remainder of the season.

22 (2) For a second violation, suspension from coaching any
23 athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for the
24 next season.

25 (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from
26 coaching any athletic activity.

27 (f) Other youth athletic activities.--The sponsors of youth
28 athletic activities are encouraged to follow the guidance stated
29 in this act.

30 (g) Construction.--Nothing in this act shall be construed

1 to:

2 (1) abridge or limit any rights provided under a
3 collective bargaining agreement or any rights provided under
4 the act of July 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the
5 Public Employe Relations Act; or

6 (2) create, establish, expand, reduce, contract or
7 eliminate any civil liability on the part of any school
8 entity or school employee.

9 Section 4. Effective date.

10 This act shall take effect in 60 days.