

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,
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TOOHIL, WAGNER, YOUNGBLOOD, D. COSTA, READSHAW, RAPP, SONNEY,
TOEPEL, SIMMONS, SACCONI, GILLEN, ADOLPH AND R. BROWN,
JUNE 16, 2011

SENATOR PICCOLA, EDUCATION, IN SENATE, AS AMENDED, MAY 1, 2012

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.

1 (2) An athletic contest or competition, other than
2 interscholastic athletics, that is sponsored by or associated
3 with a school entity, including cheerleading, club-sponsored
4 sports activities and sports activities sponsored by school-
5 affiliated organizations.

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

8 (4) Practices, interschool practices and scrimmages for
9 all of the activities listed under paragraphs (1), (2) and
10 (3).

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

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

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

18 Section 3. Sudden cardiac arrest.

19 (a) Educational materials.--

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

1 (2) In developing the guidelines and materials, the
2 department and the Department of Education may utilize
3 existing materials developed by organizations, such as Parent ←
4 Heart Watch and Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes.

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

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

20 (c) Removal from play.--

21 (1) A student who, as determined by a game official,
22 coach from the student's team, certified athletic trainer,
23 licensed physician or other official designated by the
24 student's school entity, exhibits signs or symptoms of sudden
25 cardiac arrest while participating in an athletic activity
26 shall be removed by the coach from participation at that
27 time, SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (3). ←

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

1 prevented from participating in an athletic activity, SUBJECT ←
2 TO PARAGRAPH (3).

3 ~~(3) The student shall not return to participation in an ←
4 athletic activity until the student is evaluated and cleared
5 for return to participation in writing by a licensed
6 physician or certified registered nurse practitioner or, if
7 referred by a licensed physician or certified registered
8 nurse practitioner to a cardiologist for evaluation, the
9 written clearance is provided by the cardiologist.~~

10 (3) A STUDENT REMOVED OR PREVENTED FROM PARTICIPATING IN ←
11 AN ATHLETIC ACTIVITY UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OR (2) SHALL NOT
12 RETURN TO PARTICIPATION UNTIL THE STUDENT IS EVALUATED AND
13 CLEARED FOR RETURN TO PARTICIPATION IN WRITING BY A LICENSED
14 PHYSICIAN, CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER OR
15 CARDIOLOGIST.

16 (4) In order to help determine whether a student is
17 ready to return to play, the licensed physician or certified
18 registered nurse practitioner may consult any other licensed
19 or certified medical professionals.

20 (d) Training course.--

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

24 (2) A coach of an athletic activity shall not coach the
25 athletic activity until the coach completes the training
26 course required under this subsection.

27 (e) Penalties.--The governing body of a school entity shall
28 establish the following minimum penalties for a coach found in
29 violation of the requirements under subsection (c), which
30 penalties shall take effect two years following the effective

1 date of this section:

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

4 (2) For a second violation, suspension from coaching any
5 athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for the
6 next season.

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

9 (f) Other youth athletic activities.--The sponsors of youth
10 athletic activities NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A SCHOOL ENTITY are ←
11 encouraged to follow the guidance stated in this act.

12 (g) Construction.--Nothing in this act shall be construed
13 to:

14 (1) abridge or limit any rights provided under a
15 collective bargaining agreement IN EFFECT ON THE EFFECTIVE ←
16 DATE OF THIS SECTION or any rights provided under the act of
17 July 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the Public Employe
18 Relations Act; or

19 (2) create, establish, expand, reduce, contract or
20 eliminate any civil liability on the part of any school
21 entity or school employee.

22 Section 4. Effective date.

23 This act shall take effect in 60 days.