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## ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Rules Pertaining to Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Courses for  
Athletics Personnel and Coaches



PROMULGATED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF  
Act 642 of 2023

Effective Date:

Arkansas Department of Health  
Renee Mallory, RN, BSN,  
Interim Secretary of Health

Jennifer Dillaha, MD  
Director and State Health Officer

Rules Pertaining to Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Courses for  
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Rules Pertaining to Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Courses for  
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**SECTION I – Authority**

The following rules have been hereby promulgated pursuant to Act 642 of 2023, the “Coach Safely Act.”

**SECTION II – Purpose**

The purpose of these rules is to ensure any association, as defined in Section III – Definitions (1), that sponsors or conducts sports training or high-risk youth athletic activities for children aged fourteen (14) and younger requires all coaches and athletics personnel to complete an online or residence courses approved by the Arkansas Department of Health.

**SECTION III – Definitions**

As used in this section:

- (1) “Association” means an organization that administers or conducts high-risk youth athletic activities on property that is owned, leased, managed, or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a political subdivision of the state
- (2) “Athletics personnel” means athletic directors and other individuals actively involved in organizing, training, or coaching athletic activities for individuals who are fourteen (14) years of age or younger
- (3) “Coach” means any individual, whether paid, unpaid, volunteer, or interim, who has been approved by an association to organize, train, or supervise a youth athlete or team of youth athletes.
  - a. “Coach” may include without limitation an individual selected by a youth athlete or a team of youth athletes who has not been approved by an association if the individual approved by an association is unavailable
- (4) “High-risk youth athletic activities” means any organized sport in which there is a significant possibility for a youth athlete to sustain a serious physical injury, including without limitation the sports of football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, ice or field hockey, cheerleading, and lacrosse
- (5) “Residence course” means a course in which the athletic personnel or coach goes to an institutional campus or instructional site as opposed to a course where the athletic personnel or coach completes the course online.
- (6) “Youth athlete” means an individual who is fourteen (14) years of age or younger and participates in an organized sport.

**SECTION IV – Training Requirements**

- (1) Any Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Course described under this section shall provide information and awareness of actions and measures that may be used to decrease

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the likelihood that a youth athlete will sustain a serious injury while engaged or participating in a high-risk youth athletic activity that includes the following subjects, without limitation:

- a. Emergency Preparedness, planning, and rehearsal for traumatic injuries;
  - b. Concussions and head trauma;
  - c. Heat and extreme weather-related injury familiarization;
  - d. Physical conditioning and training equipment usage; and
  - e. Heart defects and abnormalities leading to sudden cardiac death.
- (2) Athletic personnel and coaches that are required to take a course on Youth Injury Mitigation and Information shall complete the course within thirty (30) days of becoming actively engaged in or serving as a part of the athletics personnel or coaching staff for an association.
- (3) Training on the course on Youth Injury Mitigation and Information is an annual requirement to be completed no later than the anniversary of the date on which the individual became actively engaged in serving as athletic personnel or coach for an association.

**SECTION V – Approved Courses**

- (1) The approved course provider list is located on the Coach Safely section of the Arkansas Department of Health website: <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov>.
- (2) Copies of the approved course provider list may also be obtained by contacting the Arkansas Department of Health Substance Misuse and Injury Prevention program:
- Phone: 501-671-1449  
Mailing Address: 4815 West Markham Street, Slot 10, Little Rock, AR 72205  
Email Address: [ADH.injuryprevention@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADH.injuryprevention@arkansas.gov)
- (3) To request review and approval of a course, contact the Arkansas Department of Health Substance Misuse and Injury Prevention program:
- Phone: 501-671-1449  
Mailing Address: 4815 West Markham Street, Slot 10, Little Rock, AR 72205  
Email Address: [ADH.injuryprevention@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADH.injuryprevention@arkansas.gov)

**SECTION VI – Record Keeping Requirements**

An association that conducts a high-risk youth athletic activity or event that requires a coach or an athletics personnel member to complete a Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Course

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shall maintain a record of individual course completion for as long as that individual serves as athletic personnel or coach for the association.

**SECTION VII – Exemption**

- (1) The Youth Injury Mitigation and Information training requirement does not apply to the following individuals:
- a. A licensed teacher with a coaching endorsement on the licensed teacher’s teaching license.
  - b. A licensed teacher who completes the Arkansas Activities Association and the National Federation of State High School Associations coaching endorsement program
  - c. A registered volunteer under the Arkansas Registered Volunteers Program Act, Ark Code Annotated §6-22-101 et seq., who completes the Arkansas Activities Association and National Federation of State High School Associations coaching endorsement program.
- (2) All licensed and certified athletic trainers, doctors, nurses, first responders, and healthcare professionals with acute traumatic life support training are exempt from the Youth Injury Mitigation and Information course requirement.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Rules pertaining to the Youth Injury Mitigation and Information Courses for Athletics Personnel and Coaches were duly adopted by the Arkansas State Board of Health on the XX day of XXXXX, 2023.

Jennifer Dillaha, MD  
Secretary, Board of Health  
Director, Arkansas Department of Health

State of Arkansas  
94th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2023

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 421

By: Senator G. Leding  
By: Representative K. Moore

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE COACH SAFELY ACT; TO REQUIRE  
YOUTH INJURY MITIGATION AND INFORMATION COURSES FOR  
ATHLETICS PERSONNEL AND COACHES; AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO CREATE THE COACH SAFELY ACT; AND TO  
REQUIRE YOUTH INJURY MITIGATION AND  
INFORMATION COURSES FOR ATHLETICS  
PERSONNEL AND COACHES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 18, Subchapter 7, is amended  
to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-18-720. Coach Safely Act.

(a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Coach Safely  
Act".

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Association" means an organization that administers or  
conducts high-risk youth athletic activities on property that is owned,  
leased, managed, or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a  
political subdivision of the state;

(2) "Athletics personnel" means athletic directors and other  
individuals actively involved in organizing, training, or coaching athletic  
activities for individuals who are fourteen (14) years of age or younger;



1           (3)(A) "Coach" means any individual, whether paid, unpaid,  
2 volunteer, or interim, who has been approved by an association to organize,  
3 train, or supervise a youth athlete or team of youth athletes.

4           (B) "Coach" may include without limitation an individual  
5 selected by a youth athlete or a team of youth athletes who has not been  
6 approved by an association if the individual approved by an association is  
7 unavailable;

8           (4) "High-risk youth athletic activities" means any organized  
9 sport in which there is a significant possibility for a youth athlete to  
10 sustain a serious physical injury, including without limitation the sports of  
11 football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, ice or field hockey,  
12 cheerleading, and lacrosse; and

13           (5) "Youth athlete" means an individual who is fourteen (14)  
14 years of age or younger and participates in an organized sport.

15           (c) Any association that sponsors or conducts sports training or high-  
16 risk youth athletic activities for children who are fourteen (14) years of  
17 age and younger shall require all coaches and athletics personnel to complete  
18 an online or residence course approved by the Department of Health, if  
19 available at no cost, which provides information and awareness of actions and  
20 measures that may be used to decrease the likelihood that a youth athlete  
21 will sustain a serious injury while engaged or participating in a high-risk  
22 youth athletic activity.

23           (d) Any youth injury mitigation and information course described under  
24 subsection (c) of this section shall provide information on the following  
25 subjects without limitation:

26                   (1) Emergency preparedness, planning, and rehearsal for  
27 traumatic injuries;

28                   (2) Concussions and head trauma;

29                   (3) Heat and extreme weather-related injury  
30 familiarization;

31                   (4) Physical conditioning and training equipment usage;  
32 and

33                   (5) Heart defects and abnormalities leading to sudden  
34 cardiac death.

35           (e) Any individual required to take a youth injury mitigation and  
36 information course under this section shall complete the course within thirty

1 (30) days of becoming actively engaged in or serving as part of the athletics  
2 personnel or coaching staff for an association.

3 (f) An association that conducts a high-risk youth athletic activity  
4 or event that requires a coach or an athletics personnel member to complete a  
5 youth injury mitigation and information course under this section shall  
6 maintain a record of individual course completion for as long as that  
7 individual serves as athletic personnel or coach for the association.

8 (g) The youth injury mitigation and information course requirement  
9 under this section shall be an annual requirement to be completed no later  
10 than the anniversary of the date on which the individual became actively  
11 engaged in serving as athletic personnel or coach for an association.

12 (h) All licensed and certified athletic trainers, doctors, nurses,  
13 first responders, and healthcare professionals with acute traumatic life  
14 support training are exempt from the youth injury mitigation and information  
15 course requirement under this section.

16 (i) This section does not:

17 (1) Eliminate the involvement of athletic trainers at youth  
18 athletic events; or

19 (2) Impose any additional liability upon political subdivisions  
20 of this state.

21 (j) An athletics personnel member or coach is entitled to a defense  
22 from liability for any injury sustained by a youth athlete as a result of  
23 participation in a high-risk youth athletic activity upon establishing that  
24 the athletics personnel member or coach:

25 (1) Completed the injury mitigation and information course  
26 required under subsection (c) of this section; and

27 (2) Reasonably conformed his or her conduct to the safety  
28 techniques and methods identified in the injury mitigation and information  
29 course.

30 (k) Within one hundred eighty (180) days of the effective date of this  
31 section, the Department of Health shall adopt rules to implement, enforce,  
32 and administer this section.

33 (l) This section shall not apply to:

34 (1) A licensed teacher with a coaching endorsement on the  
35 licensed teacher's teaching license;

36 (2) A licensed teacher who completes the Arkansas Activities

Association and National Federation of State High School Associations  
coaching endorsement program; or

(3) A registered volunteer under the Arkansas Registered  
Volunteers Program Act, § 6-22-101 et seq., who completes the Arkansas  
Activities Association and National Federation of State High School  
Associations coaching endorsement program.

SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. Rules.

(a) When adopting the initial rules required under this act, the  
Department of Health shall file the final rules with the Secretary of State  
for adoption under § 25-15-204(f):

(1) On or before January 1, 2024; or

(2) If approval under § 10-3-309 has not occurred by January 1,  
2024, as soon as practicable after approval under § 10-3-309.

(b) The department shall file the proposed rules with the Legislative  
Council under § 10-3-309(c) sufficiently in advance of January 1, 2024, so  
that the Legislative Council may consider the rules for approval before  
January 1, 2024.

APPROVED: 4/11/23