



HOUSE BILL 602: Coach Safely Act.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House State and Local Government. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 6, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Reeder, Willis	Prepared by:	Michael Whitfield
Analysis of:	PCS to Second Edition H602-CSCW-16		Committee Co-Counsel

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 602 would require coaches and athletics personnel engaged in or serving youth athletic activities on State property or property of the State's political subdivisions to annually complete youth sports injury education training. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health (DHHS) would be required to approve courses that meet the annual training requirement.*

The PCS to House Bill 602 would modify the effective date of the act and require DHHS approval of courses in advance of the implementation of the remainder of the act.

BILL ANALYSIS: The bill would amend Chapter 130A of the General Statutes by adding Article 18A entitled "The Coach Safely Act for Protection of Youth Athletes." The Article would include definitions for the terms "association," "athletics personnel," "coach or coaching staff," "department," and "youth athlete."

Training Requirement

- Every association would be required to have its coaches and athletics personnel complete a youth sports injury education course free of charge and approved by DHHS.
- Coaches and athletics personnel of an association would be required to complete the training within 30 days of becoming actively engaged in or serving the association as coaching staff or athletics personnel. Coaches and athletics personnel would be required to complete the training each year by the anniversary date on which they first started working with the association.
- Associations would be required to maintain individual records for athletics personnel and coaches who complete the training and retain those records for the duration of individuals' service to the association.
- The following persons would not be subject to the training requirement if they have completed advanced trauma life support training:
 - Licensed athletic trainers.
 - Licensed physicians.
 - Licensed nurses.
 - Advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders, and emergency medical services-nurse practitioners.
 - Other healthcare practitioners.

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DHHS Approval

- DHHS would be required to approve at least one course that meets the evidence-based, best practice standards of the National Athletic Training Association, National Council of Youth Sports, or other nationally recognized organization for youth sports injury education.
 - DHHS would be required to approve at least one of these courses by October 1, 2025.
- Youth sports injury education courses would be required to address the following topics:
 - Safety techniques and methods that coaches can use to lower the chance that a youth athlete will be seriously injured while participating in youth athletics.
 - Emergency preparedness and planning, and rehearsals for responding to traumatic injuries that occur during youth athletics.
 - Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and general first aid techniques.
 - Concussions and head trauma.
 - Injuries caused by heat or extreme weather.
 - Physical conditioning and the use of training equipment.
 - Heart defects and abnormalities that lead to sudden cardiac death.

Defense to Liability Claims

- Coaches and athletics personnel would be immune from liability for an injury to a youth athlete participating in athletic activities if the coach or athletics personnel did both of the following:
 - Completed the youth sports injury education.
 - Reasonably conformed their conduct to the safety methods and techniques in the education course.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The provision requiring DHHS to approve a course by October 1, 2025, is effective when it becomes law. The remainder of the act would become effective August 1, 2026 and apply to causes of action arising on or after that date.

Stewart Sturkie, Legislative Fellow for the Legislative Analysis Division, contributed substantially to this summary.