

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL****No. 1610** Session of  
2011

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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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TOEPEL, SIMMONS, SACCONI, GILLEN, ADOLPH AND R. BROWN,  
JUNE 16, 2011

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AS AMENDED ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2011

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## 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 fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pains, dizziness and  
29 ABNORMAL racing heart rate. ←

30 (2) In developing the guidelines and materials, the

1 department and the Department of Education may utilize  
2 existing materials developed by organizations, such as Parent  
3 Heart Watch and Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes.

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

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

19 (c) Removal from play.--

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

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

1 (3) The student shall not return to participation in an  
2 athletic activity until the student is evaluated and cleared  
3 for return to participation in writing by ~~an appropriate~~ ←  
4 ~~medical professional~~ A LICENSED PHYSICIAN OR CERTIFIED ←  
5 REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER OR, IF REFERRED BY A LICENSED  
6 PHYSICIAN OR CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER TO A  
7 CARDIOLOGIST FOR EVALUATION, THE WRITTEN CLEARANCE IS  
8 PROVIDED BY THE CARDIOLOGIST.

9 (4) In order to help determine whether a student is  
10 ready to return to play, the ~~appropriate medical professional~~ ←  
11 LICENSED PHYSICIAN OR CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE PRACTITIONER ←  
12 may consult any other licensed or certified medical  
13 professionals.

14 (d) Training course.--

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

18 (2) A coach of an athletic activity shall not coach the  
19 athletic activity until the coach completes the training  
20 course required under this subsection.

21 (e) Penalties.--The governing body of a school entity shall  
22 establish the following minimum penalties for a coach found in  
23 violation of the requirements under subsection (c), which  
24 penalties shall take effect two years following the effective  
25 date of this section:

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

28 (2) For a second violation, suspension from coaching any  
29 athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for the  
30 next season.

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

3           (f) Other youth athletic activities.--The sponsors of youth  
4 athletic activities are encouraged to follow the guidance stated  
5 in this act.

6           (g) Construction.--Nothing in this act shall be construed  
7 to:

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

12           (2) create, establish, expand, reduce, contract or  
13 eliminate any civil liability on the part of any school  
14 entity or school employee.

15 Section 4. Effective date.

16 This act shall take effect in 60 days.