



TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Angelique Johnson-Dingle *Angelique Johnson-Dingle*

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment of Section 135.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Relating to First Aid Requirements for Coaches

DATE: February 27, 2025

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Dom [Signature]* *Beth [Signature]*

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Should the Board of Regents adopt the proposed amendment of section 135.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education relating to first aid requirements for coaches?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Review of policy.

Proposed Handling

The proposed amendment is presented to the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the March 2025 Regents meeting. A copy of the proposed rule (Attachment A) is attached.

Procedural History

A Notice of Proposed Rule Making will be published in the State Register on March 26, 2025, for a 60-day public comment period. Supporting materials are available upon request to the Secretary of the Board of Regents.

Background Information

Education Law §§ 3001-b and 3001-c require all coaches of extra class periods in physical education in the state to have valid certification in first aid knowledge and skills. Specifically, the law requires coaches to hold a valid certificate of completion of a

course of study in first aid knowledge and skills offered by a nationally recognized organization, as defined in the Public Health Law § 300-b(1)(d) and approved by the Commissioner—or the equivalent as determined by the Commissioner.

When first implementing these requirements, the Department developed a first aid course outline that served as an equivalent to the statutory requirements. Department-approved instructors of first aid courses then determined the content of the course in accordance with the Department's outline. However, the course outline has not been updated in 40 years.

Over the last 20 years, coaches in public and nonpublic schools have increasingly relied on first aid courses provided by nationally recognized organizations. To ensure consistency with Education Law §§ 3001-b and 3001-c, the Department has evaluated these courses to ensure that they contain the same content as the Department-developed course outline. However, this process proved difficult due to the frequency with which nationally recognized organizations update their curricula, including changes to their course names. The Department's inability to keep track of these changes sometimes led to coaches having to take supplemental first-aid training.

Additionally, due to the specificity of the topics in the Department course outline, only advanced first aid courses from nationally recognized organizations have previously been approved. This level of first aid knowledge is not statutorily required for coaches, as their role is primarily to provide support while awaiting the arrival of professional health responders and/or a parent/guardian. Moreover, the complexities of advanced first aid are generally not retained unless used on a routine basis, and coaches rarely have the opportunity to use advanced first aid during athletic competitions. Alternatively, basic or standard first aid courses cover a broad range of topics—including those areas covered in the Department approved outline (see Attachment B [e.g., heart attack versus cardiac emergencies, skull fracture versus head injuries]) and are better suited to the types of health emergencies that a coach may encounter.

Thus, the proposed regulation eliminates reference to a Department-developed outline, simplifies equivalent training in first aid knowledge and skills, clarifies the first aid training a coach must receive (which includes first aid knowledge and skills, recognizing the signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest, and use of an automatic defibrillator), and clarifies that basic first-aid courses provided by nationally recognized organizations are sufficient to meet the standards of first-aid care expected of coaches. The proposed regulations also define cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, first aid training, first responders, and nationally recognized organizations. The Department anticipates that these changes will ensure that coaches take courses developed by experts, reduce confusion in the field, and promote consistency in first-aid training.

Related Regents Items

[September 2022: Proposed amendment of Section 135.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Relating to the Dominick Murray Sudden Cardiac Arrest Act.](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/922p12a5.pdf)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/922p12a5.pdf>)

Recommendation

Not applicable.

Timetable for Implementation

It is anticipated that the proposed amendment will be presented for permanent adoption at the July 2025 Regents meeting, after publication of the proposed amendment in the State Register and expiration of the 60-day public comment period required under the State Administrative Procedure Act. If adopted at the July 2025 meeting, the proposed amendment will become effective on July 30, 2025.

AMENDMENT TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Pursuant to sections 101, 207, 305, 3001-b, and 3001-c of the Education Law.

Section 135.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education is amended to read as follows:

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) *Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)* means measures performed in an attempt to restore cardiac function or to support ventilation in the event of a cardiac or respiratory arrest.

(2) *First aid* means simple, one-time treatment for minor illness or injury or to provide basic support until professional healthcare can be obtained. First aid is intended to minimize the impact of an injury or illness and prevent it from worsening and is usually given immediately at the location where the injury or illness occurred.

(3) *First aid training* means a course from a nationally recognized organization that provides instruction on how to perform simple first aid procedures.

(4) *First responder* means a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not) who, in the course of their professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies.

(5) *Nationally recognized organization*, as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d), means a national organization approved by the New York State Department of Health for the purpose of training people in use of an automated external defibrillator.

[(a)] (b) Coaches of extra class periods in physical education, as defined in section 135.1(h) of this Part, shall [meet the requirements of this section] hold valid certification from a nationally recognized organization or meet equivalent requirements as set forth in this section, in:

(1) first aid knowledge and skills; and

(2) recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest; sudden cardiac arrest and the administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d); and use of an automatic external defibrillator as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(3)(a).

[(b) Except as provided in subdivision (c) of this section, all coaches must hold valid certification in first aid knowledge and skills, including instruction in the administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as issued by a nationally recognized organization, as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d), or meet equivalent requirements as set forth in this section.]

[(c) By January 15, 1993, all coaches employed on or after January 15, 1992, must hold valid certification in first aid knowledge and skills, including instruction in administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation and instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest and sudden cardiac arrest, as issued by a nationally recognized organization, as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d), or meet equivalent requirements as set forth in this section.]

[(d)] (c) For the purpose of this section, the following shall be deemed [as] equivalent to certification in first aid knowledge and skills [, including instruction in administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation as issued by a nationally recognized organization, as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d)]:

[(1) completion of an approved course for coaches in first aid knowledge and skills, including instruction in administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation and instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest and sudden cardiac arrest;]

[(2) completion of an approved college or university first aid knowledge and skills course, including instruction in administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation and instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest and sudden cardiac arrest;]

[(3) completion of approved college or university courses in athletic training and sports medicine, which include first aid knowledge and skills, including instruction in administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation and instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest and sudden cardiac arrest; or]

[(4) equivalent experience which is approved by the Commissioner of Education]

(1) a health care practitioner licensed or certified under Title VIII of the Education Law; or

(2) first responders as defined in this section.

[(e)] (d) [Except as provided in subdivision (c) of this section, prior] Prior to the start of each sports season, coaches must provide [valid evidence] documentation to [their chief school officer] school administration that their first aid and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation [knowledge and skills] certifications are current pursuant to the requirements established by a nationally recognized organization, as defined in Public Health Law §3000-b(1)(d), or that they meet equivalent requirements as set forth in subdivision [(d)] (c) of this section.

Attachment B

Comparison of NYSED first aid course elements to those in nationally accredited basic /standard first aid courses.

NYSED First Aid Course Topics	Red Cross- Responding to Emergencies Comprehensive First Aid/CPR/AED	American Heart Association Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, AED	National Safety Council First Aid, CPR, and AED	ProTraings Because Life Matters- Pro First Aid Basic Lay Rescuer Adult CPR/AED and First Aid	Health and Safety Institute
ABCs and D	X	X	X	X	X
Anaphylaxis	X		X		X
Bleeding	X	X	X	X	X
Blood-borne pathogens universal precautions ¹		X	X	X	
Cold Related	X	X	X	X	X
Concussion ²	X		X	X	X
Dental Injuries		X		X	X
Diabetes	X	X	X	X	X
Dislocations	X	X	X		X
Eye Injuries	X	X		X	X
Fractures	X	X	X	X	X

¹ Blood borne pathogen training is required for employees with potential exposure as part of a public employee's Exposure Control Plan as required by OSHA.

² Coaches required to take concussion course, every 2 years per the Concussion Management and Awareness Act

Heart Attack	X	X	X	X	
Heat Related	X	X	X	X	X
Poisoning	X	X			X
Preparing for EMS arrival	X	X	X	X	X
Shock	X	X	X	X	
Skull Fractures	X				
Soft Tissue Injury	X	X			X
Spinal Injuries	X	X	X	X	X
Strains/Sprains	X			X	
Stroke	X	X	X	X	X

Topics <u>NOT</u> in NYSED course	Red Cross- Responding to Emergencies Comprehensive First Aid/CPR/AED	American Heart Association Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, AED	National Safety Council First Aid, CPR, and AED	ProTraings Because Life Matters- Pro First Aid Basic Lay Rescuer Adult CPR/AED and First Aid	Health and Safety Institute
Cardiac emergencies	X	X		X	X
Breathing emergencies	X	X		X	X
Musculoskeletal injuries	X	X	X	X	X
Injuries to head, neck & spine	X		X	X	X
Injuries to chest, abdomen & pelvis	X	X	X	X	X
Sudden Illness	X	X	X	X	
Substance use	X	X		X	X
Heat related illness	X	X	X	X	X
Standard precautions			X	X	
Burns		X		X	X

The intent of a first aid course is to train laypersons to recognize conditions that require follow-up care and to provide basic support until professional health personnel arrive or the student is picked up by the parent/guardian.

The areas below are topics covered in the NYSED first aid course but are outliers when compared to the nationally accredited first aid courses due to the specificity of the topic in the NYSED course:

Blunt trauma – Blunt trauma typically involves an injury caused by a forceful impact; this could be a fall or hit with an object. Treatment of blunt trauma is covered in first aid courses under injuries to the head/neck & spine, musculoskeletal, abdominal, and chest areas.

Chemical Abuse/substance abuse – typically covered under first aid courses under altered consciousness, vomiting, or other signs/symptoms.

Comotio Cordis³ – is extremely rare, it happens after a sudden impact to the chest, which disrupts the heartbeat and causes sudden cardiac arrest. Coaches are required to be certified in CPR/AED and taught to identify sudden cardiac arrest and implement the chain of survival. All first aid courses cover cardiac emergencies, but not all specify the cause, such as commotio cordis.

Emergency care plans for athletes with chronic conditions – the school nurse would provide and review with the coach a student-specific emergency care plan.

Hyponatremia – Hyponatremia occurs when the sodium level in the bloodstream is very low, related to drinking too much water or other medical conditions. Symptoms of hyponatremia include nausea, vomiting, headache, confusion, fatigue, restlessness, irritability, seizures, and coma. If these symptoms are observed, the coach would contact the parent/guardian or call 911 depending on severity, which is covered in a first aid course.

Joint Pain – In a first aid course, joint pain is addressed when fractures, sprains, muscle injuries, and soft tissue injuries are being taught. Typically, the issue of joint pain is not covered as an independent entity, it ties into other areas of first aid that are within the course.

Recognizing visual clues/warning signs is specific to the issue being addressed – signs and symptoms are covered under the type of medical condition in a first aid course.

Skill Check Splinting – general information on splinting and immobilization of an extremity is covered in some first aid courses but not necessary while awaiting EMS arrival.

Skin Infections, emotional stress, and self-created medical emergencies: Not covered in all first aid courses, as with the exception of a self-created emergency, skin infections, and emotional stress are not emergencies. The self-created emergency is dealt with in first aid by type (substance use, cutting, head injury, etc.)

Skull fractures – covered under head injuries in first aid courses.

Vitals and history –Taking a pulse and respirations are covered in a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course coaches are required to take.

³ Coaches must take instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest; sudden cardiac arrest and the administration of adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation as defined in paragraph (d) of subdivision one of section three thousand-b of the public health law; and use of an automatic external defibrillator as defined in paragraph (a) of subdivision three of section three thousand-b of the public health law.