

# ALABAMA HOUSE BILL 9 (2018): THE COACH SAFELY ACT

## Section 1. Named the Coach Safely Act

Relating to youth sports programs; to require any unpaid or volunteer coach or trainer associated with a youth athletics association of the state, or a political subdivision of the state, that sponsors or conducts any high risk youth athletics activity where there is a likelihood that a child or youth can sustain a serious injury be required to take a course to reduce the likelihood of a child being injured.

## Section 2; For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings;

1. ASSOCIATION. Any organization that administers or conducts high risk youth athletics activities on property owned, leased, managed, or maintained by the state, an agent of the state, or a political subdivision of the state.
2. ATHLETICS PERSONNEL. Athletic Directors and other individuals actively involved in organizing, training, or coaching sports activities for individuals age 14 and under.
3. COACH. Any individual, whether paid, unpaid, volunteer, or interim, who has been approved by the association to organize, train, or supervise a youth athlete or team of youth athletes. If an individual approved by the association is unavailable, the term may include an individual selected by a youth athlete or a team of youth athletes who has not been approved by the association.
4. HIGH RISK YOUTH ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES. Any organized sport in which there is a significant possibility for a youth athlete to sustain a serious physical injury, including, but not limited to, the sports of football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, ice or field hockey, cheerleading, and lacrosse.
5. YOUTH ATHLETE. Individuals age 14 and under participating in an organized sport.

## Section 3.

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

(b) Any youth injury mitigating and information course required to be taken by an unpaid or volunteer a coach or trainer athletics personnel under this section, at a minimum, shall provide information on the following subjects:

1. Emergency preparedness, planning, and rehearsal for traumatic injuries.
2. Concussions and head trauma.
3. Heat and extreme weather related injury familiarization.
4. Physical conditioning and training equipment usage.
5. Heart defects and abnormalities leading to sudden cardiac health death.

(c) Any individual required to take an injury mitigating course under this section shall complete the course within 30 days of becoming actively engaged in, or serving as, athletics personnel or coach for the association.

(d) Any state youth athletic association that conducts high risk youth athletic activities or events that requires coaches and athletics personnel to complete an injury mitigating course under this section shall maintain a record of individual course completion for as long as that individual serves as athletic personnel or coach for the association.

(e) The course requirement under this section shall be an annual requirement to be completed not later than the anniversary of the date on which the individual became actively engaged in serving as athletic personnel or coach for the association.

(f) All licensed and certified athletic trainers, doctors, nurses, first responders, and health care professionals with acute traumatic life support training shall be exempt from the course requirement under this section.

(h) This act may not be construed to eliminate the involvement of athletic trainers at youth athletic events.

(i) This act shall not be construed to impose any additional liability upon political subdivisions of this state.

(j) Athletics personnel and coaches shall be entitled to a defense from liability for any injury sustained by a youth athlete as a result of participation in a high risk youth athletic activity upon establishing (1) that they completed the injury mitigation and information course described in Section 3(a) and (2) that they reasonably conformed their conduct to the safety techniques and methods identified in such injury mitigation and information course.

(k) The Department of Public Health shall within 180 days of enactment of this Act adopt rules, not inconsistent with this Act, for purposes of implementing, enforcing, and administering this Act.

## Section 4.

This act shall become effective on the effective date of rules adopted by the Department of Public Health under subsection 3(k) of this Act.