

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

FILED SENATE
Mar 25, 2025
S.B. 550
PRINCIPAL CLERK

S

D

SENATE BILL DRS15254-TC-4

Short Title: Coaches Care Act.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Theodros and Mohammed (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE YOUTH ATHLETICS COACHES TO RECEIVE TRAINING IN
3 YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-407.55(2) reads as rewritten:

6 "(2) Student health and safety rules. – These rules shall govern requirements to
7 ensure student health and safety during participation in interscholastic athletic
8 activities, including rules related to ~~concussions~~concussions, youth mental
9 health first aid, and emergency action plans as required by
10 ~~G.S. 115C-407.57~~G.S. 115C-407.57, ~~G.S. 115C-407.57A~~, and
11 G.S. 115C-407.58. The adoption of these rules shall not be delegated to an
12 administering organization and student health and safety rules shall not be
13 altered or expanded by an administering organization."

14 **SECTION 2.** Article 29E of Chapter 115C is amended by adding a new section to
15 read:

16 "**§ 115C-407.57A. Rules on mental health first aid training for coaches.**

17 (a) For the purposes of this section, a "training program" is a youth mental health first
18 aid program that offers training and certification in the following:

19 (1) Recognizing the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges and
20 substance abuse.

21 (2) Assisting youth that are experiencing mental health challenges.

22 (3) Connecting youth with professional resources that can provide additional care.

23 (b) The State Board of Education shall consult with the Center for Safer Schools, the
24 Department of Health and Human Services, and the University of North Carolina School of
25 Social Work on the selection of approved training programs. The State Board of Education shall
26 annually publish on the State Board of Education's website a list of approved training programs
27 no later than March 1.

28 (c) With regard to middle schools and high schools, the State Board of Education shall
29 adopt rules that require all coaches and athletic directors to possess an unexpired certification
30 from a training program approved by the State Board of Education.

31 (d) Each middle and high school shall maintain complete and accurate records of its
32 compliance with the requirements of this section."

33 **SECTION 3.** Article 18 of Chapter 160A is amended by adding a new section to
34 read:

35 "**§ 160A-358. Youth athletics.**

36 (a) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:



1 (1) A youth athletics organization is any local government entity, nonprofit
2 organization, or other entity that organizes and conducts athletic competitions
3 for participation by persons under the age of 18.

4 (2) A coach is any person over the age of 18 that provides instruction in athletics
5 to persons under the age of 18.

6 (b) No county or city shall allow a youth athletics organization to access county or city
7 owned parks, recreational centers, or recreational facilities unless the youth athletics organization
8 can demonstrate that all coaches possess an unexpired certification from a youth mental health
9 first aid training program approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to
10 G.S. 115C-407.57A.

11 (c) Each county and city shall maintain complete and accurate records of its compliance
12 with the requirements of this section."

13 **SECTION 4.** The State Board of Education shall select The National Council for
14 Mental Wellbeing's Youth Mental Health First Aid course and Teen Mental Health First Aid
15 course as the approved training programs and publish that selection no later than March 1, 2026
16 and annually thereafter until March 1, 2030, if the National Council for Mental Wellbeing
17 continues to offer those courses. The State Board of Education may review those courses and
18 select other courses as provided in G.S. 115C-407.57A for publication beginning March 1, 2031,
19 or if there is evidence of substantial changes to the curriculum of those courses before March 1,
20 2031.

21 **SECTION 5.** The act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning on July
22 1, 2026.