

Date of Hearing:

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM

Christopher M. Ward, Chair

AB 310 (Alanis) – As Introduced January 23, 2025

SUBJECT: Nevaeh Youth Sports Safety Act

SUMMARY: Adds certification requirements for coaches within youth sports organizations to the Nevaeh Youth Sports Safety Act, which will require, beginning January 1, 2027, youth sports organizations to provide their athletes with access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) during any official practice or match.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Beginning January 1, 2027, this bill will require youth sports organizations to ensure that its coaches are certified to perform CPR and operate an AED, and that there is a written and well-practiced cardiac emergency response plan. The written emergency response plan shall be consistent with nationally recognized, evidence-based standards and shall detail all of the following:
 - a) The location and procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest.
 - b) The responsibilities of the coach, administration, athletes, and bystanders during the event.
 - c) How the coach, administration, athletes, and bystanders will be notified and trained on the emergency response plan.
- 2) The organizations would also be required to ensure that its AED is maintained and regularly tested according to the operation and maintenance guidelines established by the manufacturer.

EXISTING LAW:

Provides the following definitions in Health and Safety Code (HSC) 124238:

- 1) Defines “Coach” to mean a person appointed by the youth sports organization to supervise or instruct a participant in a sport.
- 2) Defines “Official practice or match” to mean a sport session in which live action or one or more drills are conducted, or a match, as scheduled by the youth sports organization, the coach, or other designee of the organization.
- 3) Defines a “Youth sports organization” to mean an organization, business, nonprofit entity, or a local governmental agency that sponsors or conducts amateur sports competitions, training, camps, or clubs in which persons 17 years of age or younger participate.

Requires a youth sports organization that elects to offer an athletic program to comply with all of the following from HSC 124238.5:

- 4) Commencing January 1, 2027, a youth sports organization that elects to offer an athletic program must ensure that its athletes have access to an AED during any official practice or match.
- 5) If an AED is administered during an applicable medical circumstance, the AED shall be administered by a medical professional, coach, or other person designated by the youth sports organization, who holds AED certification and who complies with any other qualifications required pursuant to federal and state law applicable to the use of an AED.

FISCAL EFFECT: None. This measure is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

- 1) Author's Statement. According to the author, "AEDs are critical pieces of medical equipment that can save lives, if used properly within minutes of a cardiac emergency. When parents and guardians let their child participate in an athletic program, they should feel comfortable knowing their child will remain safe in the event of an emergency. AB 310 demonstrates a commitment to both youth athletes and their families that in the event of an emergency, there will be someone present with the necessary skills to respond."
- 2) About AEDs. An AED is a portable electronic device used to treat individuals experiencing cardiac arrest through the application of an electrical shock (defibrillation) to restore a normal heart rhythm. The key technical components include:
 - Electrodes that monitor the heart's electrical activity and administer a shock if needed.
 - A microprocessor that interprets the heart's rhythm and determines whether a shock is necessary.
 - An easy-to-follow interface that provides voice prompts and visual cues to guide the user through the process of defibrillation.

Their simplicity, coupled with the effectiveness of modern automated diagnostics, means that anyone, regardless of medical training, can potentially save a life.

More than 356,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests (OHCAs) are reported annually in the United States by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). An estimated 70% to 90% of people experiencing OHCA die before reaching the hospital. CPR and the use of an AED within minutes of cardiac arrest can dramatically raise survival rates, but are not always commonly used or available. One study reported AED use at 10.8% in public settings before emergency medical services arrive.

Research further suggests that the availability of an AED in communities is associated with nearly a doubling of survival after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, reinforcing the importance of strategically expanding community-based AED programs.

- 3) Sports related medical emergencies. On January 2, 2023, during a Monday Night Football game between the Buffalo Bills and Cincinnati Bengals, Bills safety Demar Hamlin collapsed on the field after tackling a Bengals wide receiver. Hamlin remained motionless at

midfield while team athletic trainers and paramedics rushed to his side within 10 seconds. First responders initiated CPR, AED, and other treatments to Hamlin on the field for 10 minutes. It was later reported that Hamlin had initially suffered cardiac arrest and his heartbeat was restored on-field.

Nevaeh Johnson, whom the 2023 Act is named after, collapsed during a sports practice in Waterford, CA in August 2022. Coaches were unaware she was suffering a brain aneurysm, and her heart had stopped. She tragically passed away a few days later, at just 10 years old. Her family believes that if an AED was accessible at the time, she would still be here today.

- 4) Policy Considerations. The policies in this bill are generally consistent with health and safety regulations that have previously passed through the California Legislature. There are a few issues to consider however, on the impacts to youth sports organizations and their coaches as this bill moves forward. Youth organization coaches, which in many cases are the parent/guardian of a participant on the team they are coaching, are unpaid volunteers. There are many CPR and AED certification programs available online. The AED.com website list a training program for CPR, AED, and first aid for \$35. Volunteers may express concerns over the time commitment and cost of maintaining certification.

Additionally, AEDs are not inexpensive pieces of equipment, ranging in price on the AED.com website from \$900, to over \$2,200. There may be concerns by youth sports organizations in less affluent communities on the cost to obtain, upkeep, and meet certification requirements. Will organizations be expected to provide teams and coaches with a device for each of their practices and games, or will individual teams be required to purchase their own as a condition of registration? Will this cost be passed along to participants? Depending on how well a device is maintained and used, AED devices can last between 8 to 15 years. Other questions may include to whom organizations report information in order to ensure compliance, and who determines what a reasonable amount of time is for rehearsal purposes?

- 5) Arguments in Support. According to the California Athletic Trainers' Association in support, "Existing law does not limit who can use an AED in a sudden cardiac arrest emergency. To save more lives we need to encourage access and education for bystanders to take immediate action to help a sudden cardiac arrest victim. AB 310 would require a youth sports organization to have a written and well-practiced emergency response plan that identifies the location of the AED and the protocol for the coach, administration, athletes and bystanders to use the AED to respond to a cardiac emergency... Research continues to show a critical lack of awareness about AEDs, which, when used within minutes of collapse, could flip the outcome for a sudden cardiac arrest victim to a near 90% survival rate. AB 310's education for and empowerment of anyone to use an AED recognizes this pinnacle step in the cardiac chain of survival. In the name of all youth lost to a tragedy that could be prevented, we resoundingly sponsor and support AB 310."
- 6) Arguments in opposition. According to the California Youth Soccer Association – North in opposition, "While we deeply appreciate the intent of both bills and understand the tragedy behind them—our hearts go out to Nevaeh Johnson's family—fulfilling these obligations imposes significant financial challenges on youth sports organizations like ours. Despite our efforts to keep membership fees low and soccer accessible to all children, the combined costs of AB 310 and AB 1467 compliance is substantial. For example, the compliance costs for our

combined leagues and clubs is estimated at \$15 million in year one with added costs for education and maintenance of AEDs over the years. This will likely require most of our organizations to double or triple their per-player fees, potentially pricing many families out of youth sports.”

7) Prior and related legislation.

- a) AB 1467 (Alanis), Chapter 24, Statutes of 2023, establishes the Nevaeh Youth Sports Safety Act, which requires youth sports organizations to provide their athletes with access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) during any official practice or match.
- b) AB 245 (McKinnor), Chapter 422, Statutes of 2023, requires the governing board of a school district, or the governing body of a charter school, that elects to offer any interscholastic athletic program, to ensure that there is a written emergency action plan (EAP) in place. The EAP must include a description of the manner and frequency at which the procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies related to the athletic program's activities or events will be rehearsed. Amendments also add certification in the use of an AED in addition to CPR and first aid, and clarify that a certification in CPR and use of an AED shall be consistent with national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines.
- c) AB 1 (Cooper), Chapter 158, Statutes of 2019, among other provisions, required a coach appointed by a youth sports organization to supervise or instruct a participant in the sport of youth tackle football to annually receive first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and AED certification. Required at least one independent non-rostered individual, appointed by the youth sports organization, to be present at all practice locations. Requires the individual to hold current and active certification in first aid, CPR, AED, and concussion protocols.
- d) AB 379 (Maienschein), Chapter 174, Statutes of 2019, added “an athlete who has passed out or fainted” to existing law that prohibits an athlete from returning to athletic activity until being evaluated and cleared by a health care provider. Required the athlete, if the health care provider suspects that the athlete has a cardiac condition that puts the athlete at risk for sudden cardiac arrest or other heart-related issues, to remain under the care of the healthcare provider to pursue follow-up testing until the athlete is cleared to play.
- e) AB 2009 (Maienschein), Chapter 646, Statutes of 2018, Required a school district or charter school that elects to offer any interscholastic athletic program to ensure that there is a written emergency action plan in place and acquire at least one automated external defibrillator (AED) for each school for the purpose of emergency care in the event of cardiac arrest and other related medical emergencies. Clarifies that existing law providing conditional liability protections to those acquiring or using these AEDs would apply.
- f) AB 2007 (McCarty), Chapter 516, Statutes of 2016, required amateur youth sports organizations to adopt concussion treatment and recognition protocols similar to those in existing law for student athletes in 27 designated sports, as specified. Also required youth sports organizations to develop return-to-play protocols, and provide yearly concussion and head injury information sheets and education, as provided.

- g) AB 1639 (Mainschein), Chapter 792, Statutes of 2016, established the Eric Paredes Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act that requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to make available specified guidelines and materials on sudden cardiac arrest (SCA): pupils and parents to sign informational materials before athletic participation; training of coaches; and set requirements for action in the event a pupil experiences specified symptoms.
- h) AB 2127 (Cooley), Chapter 165, Statutes of 2014, among other things, limits full-contact practices for high school and middle school football teams for concussion and head injury prevention, and requires that a return-to-play protocol after concussion or head injury be no less than seven days in duration.
- i) AB 588 (Fox), Chapter 423, Statutes of 2013, applies existing law relating to students who sustain, or are suspecting of sustaining, a concussion during a school-sponsored athletic activity to charter schools and private schools.
- j) AB 1451 (Hayashi), Chapter 173, Statutes of 2012, includes a basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of concussions and the appropriate response to concussions within the California High School Coaching Education and Training Program, administered by school districts.
- k) AB 25 (Hayashi), Chapter 465, Statutes of 2011, requires a school district that elects to offer athletic programs to immediately remove an athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during that activity; prohibits the return of the athlete to that activity until he or she is evaluated by, and receives written clearance from, a licensed health care provider; requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete's initiating practice or competition.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Athletic Trainers Association
 California Chapter American College of Cardiology
 Eric Paredes Save a Life Foundation
 Grossmont Healthcare District
 Heartfelt Help Foundation
 Just1mike
 Kyle J. Taylor Foundation
 National School District
 Parent Heart Watch
 Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation
 Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation
 Via Heart Project

Opposition

Cal North Soccer

Oppose Unless Amended

Corning Youth Soccer
Davis Ayso Region 218
Elk Grove Youth Baseball
Elk Grove Youth Soccer League
Hanford Youth Soccer League
Laguna Youth Baseball
Rohnert Park Soccer Club
San Juan Bautista Soccer Club
Stockton Youth Soccer
West Contra Costa Youth Soccer League

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