

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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SENATE BILL 550

Short Title: Coaches Care Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Theodros and Mohammed (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 26, 2025

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"§ 160A-358. Youth athletics.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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