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TO: Superintendents of Schools
Principals of High Schools
Directors of Physical Education
Directors of Athletics

FROM: Gemma C. Rinefierd, Ed.D.

RE: Amendment to First Aid Knowledge and Skills Requirements for Coaches

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) would like to inform schools of revisions to Commissioner's Regulation Section 135.5 regarding coaches first aid and CPR courses, which have been adopted by the Board of Regents and are effective July 30th, 2025. The new regulation affirms and requires basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)/automatic external defibrillator (AED) courses be provided by nationally recognized organizations and eliminates the Department specific course outline as an equivalent course. This ensures that training reflects current best practices as developed by experts and promotes consistency in first aid training of coaches.

As a result of this new regulation, please note the following clarifying points:

- The new regulation requires certification in both first aid and CPR/AED is from "a nationally recognized organization" as defined in [Public Health Law §3000-b](#).
- First aid courses taken on or after 7/30/25 must be provided by a nationally recognized organization, (e.g., American Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council etc.).
- Instructors that have approval to teach first aid and/or CPR/AED courses have always been required to be certified by a nationally recognized organization. Certified Instructors may teach a First aid and/or CPR/AED course from the nationally recognized organization in which they are certified.

Note: Those who have previously taught the Department course as an approved Instructor are already certified Instructors through a nationally recognized organization, and therefore can continue to instruct the courses in accordance with that national organization's standards, maintaining credentialing with, and providing training through, that body.

- Current certificates for the Department first aid and/or CPR/AED issued on or before 7/29/25 are valid through their expiration date. Certificates for the Department first aid and/or CPR course issued on or after 7/30/25 are not valid.
- Certification cards issued by a nationally recognized organization create a third-party record that can be independently verified. This protects school districts by ensuring compliance with the requirements.

- Each district's board of education will be responsible for ensuring that each coach holds individual, verifiable certification that meets the standards required in regulation.
- The Department will no longer approve individual courses and maintain a web-based list of courses. Instead, districts are encouraged to consult with their director of school health services (a.k.a., medical director) regarding whether courses meet the requirements for basic first aid.

For questions or more information, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at StudentSupportServices@nysed.gov or call (518) 486-6090.