

HOUSE BILL 837

F1, J1

6lr1794
CF SB 593

By: **Delegates Ebersole, Feldmark, Boyce, Fair, and Palakovich Carr**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Student Athletic Activities – Physical Examinations and**
3 **Cardiovascular Prescreening**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a certain physical examination used to determine the physical
5 fitness of a student seeking to participate in interscholastic sports to include a
6 certain cardiovascular prescreening; requiring certain health care providers who
7 perform certain physical examinations for students participating in interscholastic
8 sports to include a cardiovascular prescreening as part of the examination; requiring
9 the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Maryland Department
10 of Health to develop certain guidelines; requiring certain nonpublic schools that offer
11 athletic activities for students to develop policies and programs to provide certain
12 information on sudden cardiac arrest to certain persons participating in the
13 nonpublic school's athletic programs; and generally relating to student athletic
14 activities, physical examinations, and cardiovascular prescreening.

15 BY adding to

16 Article – Education
17 Section 7–402.1
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

21 Article – Education
22 Section 7–436
23 Annotated Code of Maryland
24 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

25 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

26 Article – Health – General
27 Section 14–501(a)(1), (3), and (5) and (b)
28 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

2 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
3 Article – Health – General
4 Section 14–501(a)(4)
5 Annotated Code of Maryland
6 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

7 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
8 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

9 **Article – Education**

10 **7–402.1.**

11 (A) IN THIS SECTION, “CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING” MEANS A SET OF
12 TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS DESIGNED TO ASSESS AN INDIVIDUAL’S HEART HEALTH,
13 IDENTIFY RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE, AND DETECT ANY UNDERLYING
14 CARDIOVASCULAR ABNORMALITIES BEFORE SYMPTOMS APPEAR, INCLUDING:

15 (1) A TARGETED PERSONAL AND FAMILY HISTORY; AND

16 (2) A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION BASED ON NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED,
17 EVIDENCE–BASED GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED BY ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON
18 CARDIOVASCULAR CARE IN PEDIATRIC POPULATIONS.

19 (B) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 THAT HOLD A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD UNDER §
21 2–206 OF THIS ARTICLE THAT REQUIRES STUDENTS TO RECEIVE A PHYSICAL
22 EXAMINATION DETERMINING PHYSICAL FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN
23 INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS.

24 (C) A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF A STUDENT USED TO DETERMINE THE
25 STUDENT’S PHYSICAL FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS,
26 INCLUDING A TRY-OUT, PRACTICE, OR CONTEST OF A SCHOOL TEAM, SHALL
27 INCLUDE A CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION
28 BEFORE THE STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN AN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT.

29 (D) (1) (I) BEGINNING IN THE 2026–2027 SCHOOL YEAR, A QUALIFIED
30 HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHO PERFORMS PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS UNDER § 7–402
31 OF THIS SUBTITLE FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS OR
32 FOR A NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT, SHALL INCLUDE A CARDIOVASCULAR
33 PRESCREENING AS A PART OF THE EXAMINATION.

5 (2) IF A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER DETERMINES THAT A STUDENT'S
6 CARDIOVASCULAR PREScreenING HAS A POSITIVE FINDING, THE HEALTH CARE
7 PROVIDER SHOULD DETERMINE WHETHER A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR
8 FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING IS NECESSARY.

9 (E) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND
10 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SHALL DEVELOP GUIDELINES TO INCREASE HEALTH
11 CARE PROVIDER KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF CARDIOVASCULAR
12 PRESCREENING FOR CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN YOUTH SPORTS, INCLUDING
13 POLICIES, PROGRAMS, TRAINING, AND CONTINUING EDUCATION ON:

14 (1) HOW TO COMPLETE A CARDIOVASCULAR PREScreening,
15 INCLUDING COLLECTING A FAMILY HISTORY AND PERSONAL REPORTS OF
16 SYMPTOMS;

19 (3) REFERRAL PROCEDURES FOR POSITIVE FINDINGS.

20 (F) (1) BEGINNING IN THE 2026–2027 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH PUBLIC
21 SCHOOL SHALL REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD OR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
22 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO:

23 (I) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION TO PARTICIPATE IN
24 INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;

25 (II) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION THAT INCLUDED A
26 CARDIOVASCULAR PREScreenING TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;
27 AND

28 (III) WERE GIVEN A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR
29 FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING RESULTING FROM A CARDIOVASCULAR
30 PRESCREENING.

1 TO THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BY THE DATE ESTABLISHED THE
2 MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

3 (G) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 31 EACH YEAR, THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
4 OF HEALTH SHALL PUBLISH A REPORT ON ITS WEBSITE:

5 (1) LISTING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO:

6 (I) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION TO PARTICIPATE IN
7 INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;

8 (II) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION THAT INCLUDED A
9 CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;
10 AND

11 (III) WERE GIVEN A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR
12 FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING RESULTING FROM A CARDIOVASCULAR
13 PRESCREENING; AND

14 (2) ANALYZING THE OUTCOMES OF THE CARDIOVASCULAR
15 PRESCREENING REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING UTILIZATION AND UPTAKE BY
16 CLINICIANS, THE PROPORTION OF POSITIVE SCREENINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
17 FOR ANY ADDITIONAL DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES.

18 (H) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND
19 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS
20 SECTION.

21 7-436.

22 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

23 (2) (i) "Athletic activity" means:

24 1. Interscholastic athletics;

25 2. An athletic contest or competition that is sponsored by or
26 associated with a school; and

27 3. Practices and scrimmages.

28 (ii) "Athletic activity" includes cheerleading and sports sponsored by
29 school-affiliated organizations.

(3) "Sudden cardiac arrest" means a condition in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating.

(4) "Youth sports program" means a program organized for recreational athletic competition or instruction for participants who are under the age of 19 years.

5 (b) Nothing in this section may be construed to create, establish, expand, reduce,
6 contract, or eliminate any civil liability on the part of a county board employee, school
7 employee, or youth sports program volunteer.

14 (i) The nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, including
15 fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pains, dizziness, and abnormal heart rate; and

16 (ii) The risks associated with continuing to play or practice after
17 experiencing a symptom of sudden cardiac arrest.

(2) The program shall include a process to verify that a coach has received information on the program developed under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

24 (ii) The student and the parent or guardian of the student shall sign
25 a statement acknowledging receipt of the information sheet.

26 (iii) The Department shall create the information sheet and
27 acknowledgment statement required under this paragraph.

32 (d) A public school may hold an informational meeting before the start of each
33 athletic season regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest.

34 (e) (1) Before an individual participates in an authorized athletic activity on
35 school property, the county board shall provide, or require that a third party provide:

(i) Information on sudden cardiac arrest to the individual and, if applicable, a parent or guardian of the individual; and

3 (ii) Notice that acknowledgment of the receipt of the information by
4 the individual and, if applicable, the parent or guardian of the individual, is required.

5 (2) The information required under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall
6 be in the form of:

7 (i) A separate information sheet; or

(ii) A notice on the registration form for a youth sports program stating that information on sudden cardiac arrest is available, including directions on how to receive the information electronically.

13 (i) Acknowledge receipt of the information by:

14 1. Signature;

19 (ii) Return the acknowledgment to the county board or third party.

20 (f) (1) A youth sports program that uses a public school facility shall provide
21 annually to the county board or the board's agent a statement of intent to comply for all its
22 athletic activities with the requirements of subsection (e) of this section.

(2) A youth sports program that does not use a public school facility is encouraged to follow the guidelines of this section.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(3) "Sudden cardiac arrest" means a condition in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating.

(4) "Youth athlete" means an individual who participates in an athletic activity in association with a youth sports program conducted:

6 (i) At a public school facility; [or]

(III) By a recreational athletic organization.

(5) "Youth sports program" means a program organized for recreational athletic competition or instruction for participants who are under the age of 19 years.

13 (b) (1) A youth sports program shall make available information on
14 concussions, head injuries, and sudden cardiac arrest developed by the State Department
15 of Education under §§ 7-433 and 7-436 of the Education Article to coaches, youth athletes,
16 and the parents or guardians of youth athletes.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
20 1, 2026.