

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

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 9, 2026

CHAPTER _____

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; requiring a certain physical examination for
14 student participation in an interscholastic sport to include a cardiovascular
15 prescreening under certain circumstances; requiring an individual performing a
16 cardiovascular prescreening to make certain notices under certain circumstances;
17 and generally relating to ~~student athletic activities, physical examinations, and~~
18 cardiovascular prescreening for interscholastic sports.

19 ~~BY adding to~~
20 ~~Article – Education~~
21 ~~Section 7-402.1~~
22 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~
23 ~~(2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 2 Article – Education
 3 Section 7–436
 4 Annotated Code of Maryland
 5 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

6 BY adding to
 7 Article – Education
 8 Section 7–436.1
 9 Annotated Code of Maryland
 10 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
 12 Article – Health – General
 13 Section 14–501(a)(1), (3), and (5) and (b)
 14 Annotated Code of Maryland
 15 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 17 Article – Health – General
 18 Section 14–501(a)(4)
 19 Annotated Code of Maryland
 20 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Education**

24 ~~7-402.1.~~

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

29 ~~(1) A TARGETED PERSONAL AND FAMILY HISTORY; AND~~

30 ~~(2) A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION BASED ON NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED,~~
 31 ~~EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED BY ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON~~
 32 ~~CARDIOVASCULAR CARE IN PEDIATRIC POPULATIONS.~~

33 ~~(B) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS~~
 34 ~~THAT HOLD A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD UNDER §~~
 35 ~~2-206 OF THIS ARTICLE THAT REQUIRES STUDENTS TO RECEIVE A PHYSICAL~~

1 ~~EXAMINATION DETERMINING PHYSICAL FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN~~
2 ~~INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS.~~

3 ~~(C) A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF A STUDENT USED TO DETERMINE THE~~
4 ~~STUDENT'S PHYSICAL FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS,~~
5 ~~INCLUDING A TRY-OUT, PRACTICE, OR CONTEST OF A SCHOOL TEAM, SHALL~~
6 ~~INCLUDE A CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION~~
7 ~~BEFORE THE STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN AN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT.~~

8 ~~(D) (1) (i) BEGINNING IN THE 2026 2027 SCHOOL YEAR, A QUALIFIED~~
9 ~~HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHO PERFORMS PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS UNDER § 7-402~~
10 ~~OF THIS SUBTITLE FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS OR~~
11 ~~FOR A NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT, SHALL INCLUDE A CARDIOVASCULAR~~
12 ~~PRESCREENING AS A PART OF THE EXAMINATION.~~

13 ~~(H) A CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING MAY NOT BE~~
14 ~~CONDUCTED EARLIER THAN THE 90-DAY PERIOD BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF THE~~
15 ~~SCHOOL YEAR IN WHICH THE STUDENT INTENDS TO PARTICIPATE IN~~
16 ~~INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS.~~

17 ~~(2) IF A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER DETERMINES THAT A STUDENT'S~~
18 ~~CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING HAS A POSITIVE FINDING, THE HEALTH CARE~~
19 ~~PROVIDER SHOULD DETERMINE WHETHER A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR~~
20 ~~FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING IS NECESSARY.~~

21 ~~(E) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND~~
22 ~~DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SHALL DEVELOP GUIDELINES TO INCREASE HEALTH~~
23 ~~CARE PROVIDER KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF CARDIOVASCULAR~~
24 ~~PRESCREENING FOR CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN YOUTH SPORTS, INCLUDING~~
25 ~~POLICIES, PROGRAMS, TRAINING, AND CONTINUING EDUCATION ON:~~

26 ~~(1) HOW TO COMPLETE A CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING,~~
27 ~~INCLUDING COLLECTING A FAMILY HISTORY AND PERSONAL REPORTS OF~~
28 ~~SYMPTOMS;~~

29 ~~(2) IDENTIFYING EARLY SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST THROUGH~~
30 ~~PHYSICAL EXAMINATION; AND~~

31 ~~(3) REFERRAL PROCEDURES FOR POSITIVE FINDINGS.~~

32 ~~(F) (1) BEGINNING IN THE 2026 2027 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH PUBLIC~~
33 ~~SCHOOL SHALL REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD OR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT~~
34 ~~THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO:~~

1 ~~(I) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION TO PARTICIPATE IN~~
2 ~~INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;~~

3 ~~(II) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION THAT INCLUDED A~~
4 ~~CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;~~
5 ~~AND~~

6 ~~(III) WERE GIVEN A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR~~
7 ~~FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING RESULTING FROM A CARDIOVASCULAR~~
8 ~~PRESCREENING.~~

9 ~~(2) THE COUNTY BOARD OR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT SHALL~~
10 ~~REPORT THE INFORMATION OBTAINED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION~~
11 ~~TO THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BY THE DATE ESTABLISHED THE~~
12 ~~MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.~~

13 ~~(C) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 31 EACH YEAR, THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT~~
14 ~~OF HEALTH SHALL PUBLISH A REPORT ON ITS WEBSITE:~~

15 ~~(1) LISTING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO:~~

16 ~~(I) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION TO PARTICIPATE IN~~
17 ~~INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;~~

18 ~~(II) HAD A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION THAT INCLUDED A~~
19 ~~CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS;~~
20 ~~AND~~

21 ~~(III) WERE GIVEN A REFERRAL TO A CARDIOLOGIST FOR~~
22 ~~FURTHER EVALUATION AND TESTING RESULTING FROM A CARDIOVASCULAR~~
23 ~~PRESCREENING; AND~~

24 ~~(2) ANALYZING THE OUTCOMES OF THE CARDIOVASCULAR~~
25 ~~PRESCREENING REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING UTILIZATION AND UPTAKE BY~~
26 ~~CLINICIANS, THE PROPORTION OF POSITIVE SCREENINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS~~
27 ~~FOR ANY ADDITIONAL DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES.~~

28 ~~(H) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND~~
29 ~~DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS~~
30 ~~SECTION.~~

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

2 (2) (i) “Athletic activity” means:

3 1. Interscholastic athletics;

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

6 3. Practices and scrimmages.

7 (ii) “Athletic activity” includes cheerleading and sports sponsored by
8 school-affiliated organizations.

9 (3) “Sudden cardiac arrest” means a condition in which the heart suddenly
10 and unexpectedly stops beating.

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

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

16 (c) (1) The Department shall develop policies and implement a program to
17 provide awareness to coaches, school personnel, students, and the parents or guardians of
18 students, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, each county board, the
19 Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, the Maryland Athletic Trainers’
20 Association, Parent Heart Watch, and licensed health care providers who treat heart
21 issues, on:

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

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

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

28 (3) (i) Before a student enrolled in a public school system in the State
29 may participate in an authorized athletic activity, the county board shall provide a sudden
30 cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs information sheet to the student and a parent
31 or guardian of the student.

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

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

5 (4) The Department may use materials available from the Centers for
6 Disease Control and Prevention, Parent Heart Watch, Sudden Arrhythmia Death
7 Syndromes Foundation, or any other appropriate entity to carry out the requirements of
8 this subsection.

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

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

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

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

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

19 (i) A separate information sheet; or

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

23 (3) The individual and, if applicable, the parent or guardian of the
24 individual shall:

25 (i) Acknowledge receipt of the information by:

26 1. Signature;

27 2. Checking an acknowledgment box on the registration
28 form; or

29 3. Another method of written or electronic acknowledgment;
30 and

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

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

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

6 (3) **A NONPUBLIC SCHOOL THAT HOLDS A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL
7 ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD UNDER § 2-206 OF THIS ARTICLE SHALL DEVELOP
8 POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION
9 FOR ITS STUDENT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES.**

10 **7-436.1.**

11 (A) **IN THIS SECTION, "CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING" MEANS A SET OF
12 QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO ASSESS AN INDIVIDUAL'S HEART HEALTH, IDENTIFY RISK
13 FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE, AND DETECT ANY UNDERLYING CARDIOVASCULAR
14 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.**

22 (C) (1) **SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBSECTION, A
23 PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF A STUDENT USED TO DETERMINE THE STUDENT'S
24 PHYSICAL FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT, INCLUDING A
25 TRY-OUT, PRACTICE, OR CONTEST OF A SCHOOL TEAM, SHALL INCLUDE A FREE
26 CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION BEFORE
27 THE STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN THE INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT.**

28 (2) **THE CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING SHALL BE OFFERED AS
29 PART OF THE PROCESS THE SCHOOL REQUIRES FOR A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION
30 BEFORE A STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS.**

31 (3) **A CARDIOVASCULAR PRESCREENING IS NOT REQUIRED UNDER
32 THIS SECTION IF:**

1 (III) By a recreational athletic organization.

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

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

8 (2) A coach of a youth sports program shall review the information provided
9 in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
11 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.