



ACT 68 An Act Relating To Health and Schools

A Vermont School Administrators Guide

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1st 7:15 A.M. OSCAR WILDE BALLROOM
Informational session with Bob Johnson, VPA Assoc. Ex. Director

WHAT IS ACT 68 AND WHAT DOES IT REQUIRE AN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR TO DO?

ACT 68 OF 2013 IS A NEW VERMONT LAW (16 V.S.A. *1431) THAT WENT INTO EFFECT ON JULY 1, 2013.

IT REQUIRES ALL SCHOOLS (K - 12) TO EDUCATE THEIR COACHES, YOUTH ATHLETES AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF CONCUSSION-RELATED INJURIES.

PRINCIPALS AND HEADMASTERS OF EACH PUBLIC AND APPROVED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL IN VERMONT SHALL INSURE THAT:

A) THE HOME TEAM SHALL INSURE THAT A HEALTH PROVIDER IS PRESENT AT ANY ATHLETIC EVENT IN WHICH A HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM PARTICIPATES IN A COLLISION SPORT (FOOTBALL, HOCKEY, WRESTLING, LACROSSE, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2015). IF AN ATHLETE ON THE VISITING TEAM SUFFERS A CONCUSSION DURING THE ATHLETIC EVENT, THE HEALTH CARE PROVIDER SHALL NOTIFY THE VISITING TEAMS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR WITHIN 48 HOURS AFTER THE INJURY OCCURS (EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2013).

B) A SCHOOL SHALL NOTIFY A PARENT/GUARDIAN WITHIN 24 HOURS OF WHEN A STUDENT PARTICIPATING ON THAT SCHOOL'S ATHLETIC TEAM SUFFERS A CONCUSSION.

C) INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF CONCUSSION-RELATED INJURIES BE PROVIDED ANNUALLY TO EACH STUDENT ATHLETE AND THE ATHLETE'S PARENTS/GUARDIAN(S). A FORM ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF THE INFORMATION IS REQUIRED AND IT MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SCHOOL PRIOR TO THE STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN PRACTICE OR COMPETITIONS.

D) EVERY COACH OF A SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM WILL RECEIVE TRAINING NO LESS FREQUENTLY THAN EVERY TWO YEARS ON HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION OR OTHER HEAD INJURY, HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CONCUSSIONS DURING ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES, AND HOW TO TEACH ATHLETES PROPER TECHNIQUES FOR AVOIDING CONCUSSIONS. COACHES MUST RECEIVE THIS TRAINING PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF HIS/HER SPORTS SEASON AND EACH REFEREE INVOLVING A HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM PARTICIPATING IN A COLLISION SPORT RECEIVE TRAINING NOT LESS THAN EVERY TWO YEARS ON HOW TO RECOGNIZE CONCUSSIONS WHEN THEY OCCUR DURING ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES.

E) SCHOOLS MAY ONLY ACCEPT DECISIONS FROM A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER LICENSED PURSUANT TO TITLE 26, WHO HAS WITHIN THE PRECEDING FIVE YEARS BEEN SPECIFICALLY TRAINED IN THE EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIONS AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES. TRAINING PURSUANT TO THESE GUIDELINES SHALL INCLUDE TRAINING MATERIALS AND GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICING PHYSICIANS PROVIDED BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, IF AVAILABLE.

F) NEITHER A COACH NOR A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER SHALL PERMIT A YOUTH ATHLETE TO CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY TRAINING SESSIONS OR COMPETITION ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM IF THE COACH OR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER KNOWS OR SHOULD KNOW THAT THE ATHLETE HAS SUSTAINED A CONCUSSION OR HEAD INJURY DURING THE TRAINING SESSION OR COMPETITION.

G) NEITHER A COACH NOR A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL SHALL PERMIT A YOUTH ATHLETE WHO HAS BEEN PROHIBITED FROM TRAINING OR COMPETING WITH A SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM UNTIL THE ATHLETE HAS BEEN EXAMINED BY AND RECEIVED WRITTEN PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES FROM A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

H) THE PRINCIPAL OR HEADMASTER SHALL ENSURE THAT EACH SCHOOL HAS A CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT DESCRIBES THE PROCEDURES THE SCHOOL SHALL TAKE WHEN A STUDENT ATHLETE SUFFERS A CONCUSSION. THE ACTION PLAN SHALL INCLUDE POLICIES ON 1) WHO MAKES THE INITIAL DECISION TO REMOVE A STUDENT ATHLETE FROM PLAY WHEN IT IS SUSPECTED THAT AN ATHLETE HAS SUFFERED A CONCUSSION, 2) WHAT STEPS THE STUDENT ATHLETE MUST TAKE IN ORDER TO RETURN TO ANY ATHLETIC OR LEARNING ACTIVITY, 3) WHO MAKES THE FINAL DECISION THAT AN ATHLETE MAY RETURN TO AN ATHLETIC ACTIVITY AND 4) WHO HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO INFORM A PARENT / GUARDIAN WHEN A STUDENT ON AN ATHLETIC TEAM SUFFERS A CONCUSSION. THIS ACTION PLAN SHALL BE PROVIDED ANNUALLY EACH YEAR TO EACH YOUTH ATHLETE AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS.

THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE ONLY APPLICABLE TO SCHOOL SPONSORED TEAMS. ACT 68 IS NOT APPLICABLE TO SUMMER LEAGUE TEAMS OR RECREATION TEAMS THAT USE SCHOOL FACILITIES.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO ME?

VPA, VT DOE, VT Dept. of Health and the Brain Injury Assoc. of VT (BIAVT) all have information available to you.

Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) have videos and written information available to you.

The local Athletic Director in your high school also can help.

Fletcher Allen Concussion Taskforce.

Resources:

1. Coaches education training - there are two videos that we recommend. Both are free and can be done on-line.
 - a) NFHS “Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know” (www.nfhslearn.com). 25 minute free video. All VT high school coaches are required to watch this video. Provides a certificate of completion at the end. Also allows schools to purchase (no cost) “bundles” of registrations that you can give to your coaches.
 - b) CDC “Heads Up” (www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html) 25 minute free video. No documentation at the end of the course so schools would have to develop a documentation system.
2. Information on concussions - primary source we recommend is the CDC. CDC link is www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html. Resources are free and can be downloaded. Contains information for coaches, students and parent/guardians.

- 3) Return to Play Protocol - Fletcher Allen Concussion Taskforce has issued a RTP protocol that the VPA has endorsed.
- 4) VPA Sports Medicine page on VPA web site. This page contains information and links to various sites (www.vpaonline.org).
- 5) Brain Injury Assoc. of VT has various information available on its web site including a Concussion Tool Kit that all schools may use.

<http://www.biavt.org/index.php/component/content/article/1025-vermonts-student-athletes-and-concussion-return-to-learn-a-return-to-play-toolkit.html>

What Does A School Need To Do To Be In Compliance?

1. Provide coaches education (NFHS/CDC course does this). Also, if you get your own officials, they must have received the same training as coaches.
2. Give written information to parents/guardians and students on concussions (CDC 1 page fact sheet does this) and on the schools action plan for dealing with concussion.
3. Need to get parent/guardian and student sign-offs stating that they received information from the school.
4. Post concussion information on your school web site (you can link to VPA Sports Medicine page)
5. Develop a process where written permission from an appropriate medical care professional is received and filed.
6. Adopt return to play protocols.