

February 15, 2017

RE: Cal. Health & Safety Code §124235

Dear Commissioner,

Heads Up Football can help your youth football organization satisfy its legal obligations under the newly enacted California Health & Safety Code § 124235. The new law took the principles applicable to California school districts, charter schools, and private schools that elect to offer an athletic program and expanded and applied them to youth sports organizations like yours. The requirements of California Health & Safety Code § 124235 and a brief explanation of how Heads Up Football may help you satisfy those requirements is below:

Requirement 1: An athlete who is suspected to have sustained a concussion or other head injury during a practice or game must be:

1. Removed from the activity for the remainder of the day; and
2. Evaluated by and receive written clearance from a licensed health care provider before returning to the activity

Heads Up Football: Heads Up Football educates youth coaches on the standards set by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (the "CDC") for concussion recognition and response. The CDC recommends removing the athlete from play and keeping the athlete out of play on the same day as the injury and until they've been cleared by a health care provider. In order for your organization to fulfill its legal obligations, you should mandate that coaches follow this guidance and enforce this mandate within your organization.

Requirement 2: If a licensed health care provider determines an athlete has sustained a concussion or other head injury, that athlete must complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than 7 days under the supervision of a licensed health care provider

Heads Up Football: Heads Up Football educates youth coaches on the return to play protocol endorsed by the CDC. Unlike the new law, the CDC does not adopt a minimum

time in which the steps must occur but makes clear that the steps should be completed over a series of days, weeks, or months, as required. In an effort to help your organization fulfill its legal obligations, Heads Up Football has developed a return to play protocol form you can require athletes to complete under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. Your organization will need to mandate use of this form and enforce this mandate within your organization. This form is based on the Concussion Return to Play Protocol established by the California Interscholastic Federation (the "CIF") in order to satisfy its similar legal obligations.

Requirement 3: If the athlete who sustained a concussion or other head injury is under 18 years old, the youth sports organization must notify the athlete's parent or guardian of:

1. The time and date of the injury;
2. The symptoms observed; and
3. Any treatment provided for the injury.

Heads Up Football: Heads Up Football already encourages coaches to record certain information that may be helpful to a health care provider when evaluating an athlete's injury (cause of the injury, any loss of consciousness, any memory loss or seizures after the injury, any previous concussions for the athlete), to inform the athlete's parents of possible concussions, and to provide them with a concussion information sheet. To further assist you, Heads Up Football has prepared a template letter you can use to make sure the legally required information is being collected and shared with parents. In order to fulfill your legal obligations, your organization will need to mandate use of the template to make sure parents are being informed of the information required under the new law and enforce this mandate within your organization.

Requirement 4: Annually, before being allowed to participate in practice or competition, each athlete and, if an athlete is under 18 years old, that athlete's parent or guardian, must sign and return a concussion and head injury information sheet provided by the youth sports organization

Heads Up Football: Heads Up Football has created a customizable concussion and head injury information sheet that your organization can use to fulfill its new legal

obligations. The form is based on information from the CDC and the CIF, who created a similar information sheet to fulfill its legal obligations under the original law. In order to fulfill your legal obligations, your organization will need to mandate use of the information sheet including distributing the sheet to parents to review with their athletes and collecting the completed signature page from each athlete and player participating in your program prior to allowing the athlete to participate in any practice or competition and enforce this mandate within your organization.

Requirement 5: Annually, youth sports organizations must offer concussion and head injury education, or related educational materials, to each of the organization's coaches and administrators and, before being allowed to supervise an athlete in an activity of the organization, each coach and administrator is required to successfully complete the offered concussion and head injury education

Heads Up Football: A key feature of Heads Up Football is coaching certification. USA Football's Youth Tackle Coach Certification gives leagues access to nationally accredited courses with content created from leading experts and health professionals. The Youth Tackle Coach Certification includes components on concussion recognition and response, heat preparedness and hydration, sudden cardiac arrest, proper equipment fitting, and shoulder tackling and blocking. The concussion recognition and response component specifically includes resources developed by the CDC to educate coaches and parents on what to look for on the field and how to respond to concussion symptoms. Heads Up Football requires enrolled organizations to put all coaches through the Youth Tackle Coach Certification every year. These resources and the required annual certification position leagues to be in compliance with the education requirement under the new law.

Requirement 6: The youth sports organization must maintain procedures to ensure compliance with:

1. The requirements for providing the concussion and head injury education and information sheet; and
2. The athlete removal provisions and return-to-play protocols

Heads Up Football: Heads Up Football requires organizations enrolled in the program to nominate an individual as the organization's Player Safety Coach ("PSC"). One PSC per enrolled organization is trained in-person to prepare that person to train their coaching staffs and teach the Heads Up Football components organization-wide. In this respect, the PSC helps the enrolled organization fulfill its obligations to provide the education materials under the new law. Your organization may elect to use the PSC to assist with the distribution and collection of information sheets and with the enforcement of athlete removal and return to play protocols established by your organization. However your organization chooses to fulfill this requirement, you will need to ensure that any procedures adopted to comply with this requirement are followed.

As you begin to develop your organization's plan to satisfy the new statutory requirements, questions will likely arise. You should consult your local legal counsel regarding these questions to make sure you are fulfilling all of your legal obligations.

Heads Up Football helps makes football safety an integral part of your league's operations. There is additional Heads Up Football collateral attached for your review. If you have any questions regarding Heads Up Football, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Josh Huber
Regional Manager

CDC Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/parents.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/athletes.html>
- https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/factsheet_athletes_ages11-13-a.pdf
- https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/factsheet_athletes_ages14-18-a.pdf
- https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion_fact_sheet_for_middle_school_athletes.pdf

CIF Resources

- http://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/CIF_Concussion_Info_Sheet.pdf
- http://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/CIF_Physician_Letter_to_School_after_Concussion_Visit.pdf
- http://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/CIF_Concussion_Return_to_Play_Protocol.pdf
- <http://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/AthleteFactsheet.pdf>
- <http://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/ParentsFactsheet.pdf>