

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 935
Ways and Means

(Delegate Roberts, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Venue-Specific Emergency Action Plans - High School Football Games -
Requirements

This bill requires that for all public and certain nonpublic high school football programs, the venue-specific emergency action plan that a high school must develop must include during a football game (1) the presence of a volunteer or school employee who is, as specified, a trained health care professional, or (2) an ambulance – either present at the game or located at a fire, rescue, or ambulance facility within three driving miles – staffed with the appropriate emergency medical services personnel. A trained health care professional includes (1) a licensed athletic trainer; (2) a licensed or certified emergency medical services provider; or (3) a licensed nurse or physician. The bill specifies that a qualifying ambulance is not prohibited from responding to an emergency during a football game. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill pertains only to local school systems.

Local Effect: Expenditures in some local school systems may increase to continue to hold public high school football games. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each public middle school and high school, and each private middle school and high school that receives State funding, must develop a venue-specific emergency

action plan for all athletic facilities. A venue-specific action plan includes (1) the operation and use of automatic external defibrillators; (2) heat acclimatization; (3) coordination of care for other emergent injuries, as specified; and (4) a specified cardiac emergency response plan.

All high school coaches are required to have completed a one-credit course in the prevention and care of athletic injuries. The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association advises that it reviews and updates relevant content to ensure coaches are trained to handle emergency situations until appropriate medical responders arrive.

Local Fiscal Effect: To the extent local school systems do not presently provide for the presence of a trained health care professional and/or presence within three miles of a staffed ambulance at all high school football games, local school system costs increase substantially to avoid cancellation of high school football games. However, several local school systems advise that existing resources are sufficient to cover the bill's requirements.

Baltimore City Public Schools, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Wicomico County Public Schools all advise that their school systems currently staff high school football games with athletic trainers and, therefore, are not likely to incur increased costs under the bill. Frederick County Public Schools similarly advises that it can meet the bill's requirements with existing resources. St. Mary's County Public Schools advises that its contractor has been unable to supply an athletic trainer at every football game, but the school system has arranged for a staffed ambulance to be at every game. However, the Department of Legislative Services does not have similar information for all 24 local school systems; to the extent that some other school systems do not already comply with the bill's requirements, costs may increase to ensure that trained health care professionals and/or ambulances are available for every football game.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Wicomico County Public Schools; Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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