



Ohio's Return-to-Play Law: What Coaches & Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports Organizations

Training In Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Individuals who wish to coach or referee in a youth sports organization will be required to successfully complete, every three years, a [free online training program](#) in recognizing the symptoms of concussions and head injuries provided by the Ohio Department of Health if they do not hold a [Pupil Activity Permit](#).

Coaches who already have a current PAP will be required to present evidence that they have successfully completed a training program in recognizing the symptoms of concussions and head injuries that is linked on the Department of Health's web site **or** a training program authorized and required by an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events in order to renew their permit.

Online Training

The current, free online trainings that have been approved by ODH to meet the training requirement for coaches and referees are listed on the **ODH Website, under Online Concussions Management Training** at: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion>.

PLEASE NOTE: All 3 courses offer a “certificate of completion” upon successful passage.

Removal from Play

Coaches, referees, and officials must remove an athlete if the athlete is exhibiting the signs and symptoms of a concussion during practice or a game. These include:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Is confused about assignment or position.
- Forgets plays.
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent.
- Moves clumsily.
- Answers questions slowly.
- Loses consciousness (*even briefly*).
- Shows behavior or personality changes (*irritability, sadness, nervousness, feeling more emotional*).
- Can't recall events before or after a hit or fall.
- Any headache or “pressure” in head. (*How badly it hurts does not matter.*)
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or blurry vision.
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Concentration or memory problems.
- Confusion.
- Does not “feel right”.
- Trouble falling asleep.
- Sleeping more or less than usual.

Return to Play (This Includes Games, Practice, And Training)

The athlete cannot return to play on the same day that he or she is removed. Under Ohio law (ORC [3313.539](#) and ORC [3707.511](#)), a physician must provide **WRITTEN** clearance for an athlete to return to play. Physicians (M.D. or D.O.) and Diplomates in either Chiropractic Neurology or Chiropractic Sports Medicine and Certified Chiropractic Sports Physicians who are listed in the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians (ACBSP) Concussion Registry will be considered able to meet the recommended standards of care and are able to independently clear youth athletes to return to play. All other licensed health care professionals must work in coordination or consultation with a physician (M.D. or D.O.), as written in HB 143.

It is important to review your youth sports organizations' policy regarding what health care providers are authorized to clear an athlete to return-to-play.

For More Information

Ohio Department of Health - Ohio's Return to Play Law:

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Head's Up in Youth Sports:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/>

Ohio Department of Education – Pupil Activity Permit:

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Audiences/Coaching-Permits>