

Quick Reference for “Return to Play” Law for Leagues and Coaches

Leagues are responsible for implementing a protocol to ensure **(1)** that each league coach is trained as required by the law; **(2)** that the coaches understand and abide by the Return-to-Play law; and **(3)** that each athlete’s parent or guardian is provided the required informational sheet at the beginning of each season.

Training for Coaches

All coaches, regardless of age or paid or volunteer status, must complete, every three years, an online certified online training program recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion and head injuries provided by the Department of Health. Alternatively, the individual may hold a Pupil Activity Permit (“PAP”) issued by the Ohio Department of Education. PAPs are typically held by individuals who also coach at a school and have registration and certification requirements, too.

Leagues must track and verify each coach’s compliance with the training required by the new state law. Although there are two online training courses approved, Ohio North mandates the use of the National Federation of State High School Associations course (NFHS).

NFHS Video: This option requires registration with the NFHS. The NFHS training course allows the leagues and Ohio North to search for coaches and verify compliance

Leagues must collect and maintain completion certificates and/or look-up the coaches on the NFHS website to verify completion.

[NFHS training site](#)

Removal From and Return to Play: Three Key Rules for Coaches and Referees:

Ohio’s Return to Play law features three key rules that its league, coaches, referees, officials, and athletes and their families must abide by:

Rule One: Coaches, referees, or officials **must** remove an athlete exhibiting the signs and symptoms of a concussion during practice or a game. (See O.R.C. 3707.511 (D)(1).)

Rule Two: The athlete cannot return to play on the same date that he or she is removed after exhibiting symptoms of a concussion. (See O.R.C. 3707.511 (E)(1).)

Rule Three: The athlete is not permitted to return to play until he or she has been assessed by a physician or licensed health care provider approved by the youth sports organization and received **written** clearance. (See O.R.C. 3707.51 (E)(1).) Upon Ohio North’s request, leagues must be able to produce evidence of compliance with this obligation, including producing the written release. Ohio North strongly encourages each league to implement a protocol to ensure compliance with this obligation.

Quick Reference for “Return to Play” Law for Leagues and Coaches

The signs and symptoms of a concussion during practice or a game, include, but are not limited to, **any** of the following:

- Dazed or stunned
- Confused about assignment or positions
- Forgets plays
- Uncertainty of game, score, or opponent
- Sleeps more or less than usual
- Moving clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loss of consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Unable to recall events before or after hit or fall
- Trouble falling asleep
- Feeling of nausea or vomiting
- Experiencing balance problems or dizziness
- Complaining of double or blurry vision
- Complaining of sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Complaining of concentration or memory problems
- Displays or complains of confusion
- Does not “feel right”
- Experience any headache or “pressure” in head