

By the Committee on Criminal Justice; and Senator Grall

591-03135-25

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to background screening of athletic
3 coaches; amending s. 943.0438, F.S.; revising the
4 definition of the term "athletic coach"; revising the
5 effective date upon which an independent sanctioning
6 authority is required to conduct certain background
7 screenings of athletic coaches; providing that an
8 independent sanctioning authority is considered a
9 qualified entity for the purpose of participating in
10 the Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse;
11 prohibiting the Agency for Health Care Administration
12 from allowing certain persons to act as athletic
13 coaches; requiring that certain persons be under the
14 direct supervision of an athletic coach who meets
15 certain background screening requirements; providing
16 an effective date.

17
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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20 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and paragraphs
21 (a) and (b) of subsection (2) of section 943.0438, Florida
22 Statutes, are amended, and subsection (5) is added to that
23 section, to read

24 943.0438 Athletic coaches for independent sanctioning
25 authorities.—

26 (1) As used in this section, the term:

27 (a) "Athletic coach" means a person who:

28 1. Is authorized by an independent sanctioning authority to
29 work as a coach, an assistant coach, a manager, or a referee for

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30 more than 20 hours in a calendar year, whether for compensation
31 or as a volunteer, for a youth athletic team based in this
32 state; and

33 2. Has direct contact with one or more minors on the youth
34 athletic team.

35 (2) An independent sanctioning authority shall:

36 (a) Effective July 1, 2026 ~~January 1, 2025~~, conduct a level
37 2 background screening under s. 435.04 of each current and
38 prospective athletic coach. The authority may not delegate this
39 responsibility to an individual team and may not authorize any
40 person to act as an athletic coach unless a level 2 background
41 screening is conducted and does not result in disqualification
42 under paragraph (b).

43 (b) ~~1. Be considered a~~ ~~Before January 1, 2026, or a later~~
44 ~~date as determined by the Agency for Health Care Administration~~
45 ~~for the participation of qualified~~ entity for purposes of
46 participating entities in the Care Provider Background Screening
47 Clearinghouse under s. 435.12, ~~disqualify any person from acting~~
48 ~~as an athletic coach as provided in s. 435.04. The authority may~~
49 ~~allow a person disqualified under this subparagraph to act as an~~
50 ~~athletic coach if it determines that the person meets the~~
51 ~~requirements for an exemption from disqualification under s.~~
52 ~~435.07.~~

53 2. ~~On or after January 1, 2026, or a later date as~~
54 ~~determined by~~ The Agency for Health Care Administration may, not
55 allow a ~~any~~ person to act as an athletic coach if he or she does
56 not pass the background screening qualifications in s. 435.04.
57 The authority may allow a person disqualified under this
58 paragraph ~~subparagraph~~ to act as an athletic coach if the person

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59 has successfully completed the exemption from the
60 disqualification process under s. 435.07.

61 (5) A person under the age of 16 who is acting as a coach,
62 an assistant coach, a manager, or a referee, whether for
63 compensation or as a volunteer, for a youth athletic team based
64 in this state must be under the direct supervision of an
65 athletic coach who meets the background screening requirements
66 of this section.

67 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.