

**HB103 INTRODUCED**



1      HB103  
2      9JKK8BP-1  
3      By Representative Hulsey  
4      RFD: Children and Senior Advocacy  
5      First Read: 13-Jan-26  
6      PFD: 06-Jan-26



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4     SYNOPSIS:

5             This bill is the Youth Athlete Protection Act.

6             This bill would require the State Department of  
7     Human Resources (DHR) to develop a model Youth Athlete  
8     Protection Policy to: (i) prevent the abuse of youth  
9     athletes; (ii) set standards for appropriate conduct  
10    between coaches and youth athletes; and (iii) provide  
11    mandatory reporter training for coaches of youth  
12    sports.

13            This bill would authorize DHR to rely on  
14    national resources, such as the U.S. Center for  
15    SafeSport, when developing the model policy.

16            This bill would require each youth sports  
17    organization and each local government which provides  
18    individuals under 18 years of age the opportunity to  
19    participate in youth sports to: (i) adopt a Youth  
20    Athlete Protection Policy, which must reflect the  
21    minimum standards of DHR's model policy; (ii) require  
22    coaches, including volunteers, to undergo a criminal  
23    history background check; and (iii) require coaches,  
24    including volunteers, to annually complete mandatory  
25    reporter training.

26            This bill would require youth sports  
27    organizations and local governments to annually  
28    register with DHR to certify compliance with this act,

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29 and would require DHR to publish a list of certified  
30 youth sports organizations and local governments. If a  
31 youth sports organization or local government does not  
32 certify compliance, this bill would prohibit the entity  
33 from providing youth sports.

34 This bill would provide immunity to youth sports  
35 organizations and local governments relating to the  
36 hiring of a coach or acceptance of a coach as a  
37 volunteer, with exceptions.

38 This bill would also require DHR to adopt rules.

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42 A BILL

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TO BE ENTITLED

44

AN ACT

45

46 Relating to youth sports organizations; to establish  
47 the Youth Athlete Protection Act; to require the State  
48 Department of Human Resources (DHR) to develop a model Youth  
49 Athlete Protection Policy and mandatory reporter training for  
50 youth sports coaches; to provide standards for the policy and  
51 training relating to the prevention of child abuse; to require  
52 youth sports organizations and local governments that offer  
53 youth sports to implement a Youth Athlete Protection Policy;  
54 to require coaches, including volunteers, to undergo a  
55 criminal history background check and annual mandatory  
56 reporter training to be eligible to act as a youth sports



57 coach; to require youth sports organizations and certain local  
58 governments to certify compliance with this act with DHR,  
59 without which the entity is prohibited from offering youth  
60 sports; and to require DHR to adopt rules.

61 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

62         Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
63 the Youth Athlete Protection Act.

64         Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following  
65 terms have the following meanings:

66             (1) CHILD ABUSE. Physical abuse, sexual abuse or  
67 exploitation, negligent treatment, or mental or emotional  
68 abuse of an individual under 18 years of age.

69             (2) COACH. An individual employed or volunteering as a  
70 coach, manager, or supervisor of a youth athletic activity.

71 The term does not include:

72                 a. Any individual who occasionally assists with or  
73 supports a youth athletic activity; or

74                 b. Any employee or volunteer of a youth sports  
75 organization that provides passing, general, or nominal  
76 assistance with or support of a youth athletic activity.

77             (3) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Human  
78 Resources.

79             (4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT. A city, county, or other local  
80 government that provides youth athletes the opportunity to  
81 participate in scheduled competitive or recreational sporting  
82 activities, whether individually or as a team.

83             (5) YOUTH ATHLETE. An individual under 18 years of age  
84 participating in a youth sports organization.



85 (6) YOUTH SPORTS ORGANIZATION. Any organization that,  
86 as part of its core function, provides youth athletes the  
87 opportunity to participate in scheduled competitive or  
88 recreational sporting activities, whether individually or as a  
89 team. The term does not include any of the following:

90                   a. An organization that only offers sporting activities  
91    incidental to a nonathletic program or lesson.

92 b. A public or private preK-12 school.

93                   c. A licensed child-care facility, as defined in  
94                   Section 38-7-2, Code of Alabama 1975.

95 d. A public or private institution of higher education.

96 e. An organization that offers recreational sporting  
97 activities only by providing the opportunity to participate in  
98 unsupervised, unscheduled competitive or recreational sporting  
99 events on a walk-in basis.

107 (1) Standards for prohibited conduct in youth sports.  
108 The policy shall include a list of prohibited conduct by  
109 parents, spectators, coaches, and youth athletes to prevent  
110 the abuse of youth athletes. Prohibited conduct shall include,  
111 but not be limited to, sexual abuse or misconduct, physical  
112 abuse or misconduct, emotional abuse or misconduct, bullying,

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113 harassment, hazing, grooming behaviors, and any other  
114 behaviors that risk the safety of youth athletes.

115 (2) A code of conduct for parents, spectators, coaches,  
116 and youth athletes to follow. The code of conduct shall  
117 include appropriate one-on-one interactions between players  
118 and coaches and shall address topics including, but not  
119 limited to, appropriate use of electronic communications  
120 between adults and youth athletes, travel supervision  
121 policies, and appropriate use of locker rooms and restrooms.

122 (3) A mandatory reporting policy for adults who have  
123 knowledge of an act of prohibited conduct.

124 (b) (1) The department shall require each youth sports  
125 organization and local government to annually certify  
126 compliance with this act. The annual certification shall  
127 include: (i) confirmation that the youth sports organization  
128 or local government has a Youth Athlete Protection Policy that  
129 complies with this act; and (ii) verification that each coach  
130 has satisfactorily completed a criminal history background  
131 check, completed mandatory reporter training, and been  
132 provided a copy of the relevant Youth Athlete Protection  
133 Policy. The department shall publish a list of all certified  
134 youth sports organizations and local governments on the  
135 department's website.

136 (2) A youth sports organization or local government  
137 that is found to be out of compliance with the requirements of  
138 this act shall immediately suspend the provision of youth  
139 athletic activities until the entity provides documentation to  
140 the department which verifies the entity has come into



141 compliance.

142 (c) The department shall develop a mandatory reporter  
143 training program for coaches. The mandatory reporter training  
144 shall include, but not be limited to, explanations of: (i) who  
145 is a mandatory reporter and circumstances that must be  
146 reported; (ii) the responsibilities of coaches as it relates  
147 to the reporting of suspected child abuse; (iii) how to  
148 respond to disclosures of child abuse or reports of behavior  
149 that violate the prohibited conduct policy in a supportive and  
150 appropriate manner that meets the mandatory reporting  
151 requirements pursuant to state law; and (iv) child abuse  
152 prevention strategies. In developing the mandatory reporter  
153 training program, the department may use resources from  
154 relevant national groups, such as the U.S. Center for  
155 SafeSport.

156 (d) The department shall adopt rules to implement and  
157 administer this act.

158 Section 4. (a) (1) No later than January 1, 2027, each  
159 youth sports organization shall adopt a Youth Athlete  
160 Protection Policy including, but not limited to: (i) standards  
161 for prohibited conduct in youth sports; (ii) a code of conduct  
162 for parents, spectators, coaches, and youth athletes; and  
163 (iii) a mandatory reporting policy. The policy, at a minimum,  
164 shall reflect the model policy developed by the department in  
165 Section 3. Each youth sports organization shall provide a copy  
166 of the Youth Athlete Protection Policy to all coaches employed  
167 by or volunteering for the organization and parents of youth  
168 athletes participating in a sport offered by that



169 organization.

170                   (2) Each youth sports organization shall require each  
171 of its coaches to: (i) comply with the organization's  
172 prohibited conduct policy; and (ii) annually complete  
173 mandatory reporter training, as provided in Section 3.

174                   (b) (1)a. Each youth sports organization shall require  
175 each coach to obtain, prior to his or her employment or  
176 acceptance as a volunteer, a criminal history background check  
177 from the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA). ALEA may  
178 provide the results of the criminal history background check  
179 to the youth sports organization where the coach is seeking to  
180 be employed or volunteer. The youth sports organization may  
181 use the criminal history background check only for purposes of  
182 making hiring or volunteer decisions, and the results of the  
183 criminal history background check are otherwise confidential.

184                   b. Youth sports organizations may rely on the results  
185 of a criminal history background check when making hiring and  
186 volunteer decisions. Youth sports organizations are immune  
187 from any civil liability relating to the hiring of a coach or  
188 acceptance of a coach as a volunteer, except where the youth  
189 sports organization: (i) knows the information relating to the  
190 coach's criminal history background check is false; or (ii)  
191 acts with reckless disregard concerning the veracity of that  
192 information.

193                   (2) No youth sports organization may hire or accept as  
194 a volunteer a coach if a criminal history background check  
195 performed on that individual shows that he or she has been  
196 convicted of, pled nolo contendere to, or has received a

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197 deferred sentence or deferred prosecution for:  
198           a. Any felony under Chapter 15 of Title 26, Code of  
199 Alabama 1975;  
200           b. Any sex offense under Section 15-20A-5, Code of  
201 Alabama 1975;  
202           c. Any felony assault or sexual offense under Title  
203 13A, Code of Alabama 1975, in which the victim is an  
204 individual under 18 years of age or older, or any other  
205 offense involving child abuse; or  
206           d. Any comparable offense provided in this subsection  
207 which was committed in any other state.

208           Section 5. (a) (1) No later than January 1, 2027, each  
209 local government shall adopt a Youth Athlete Protection Policy  
210 including, but not limited to: (i) standards for prohibited  
211 conduct in youth sports; (ii) a code of conduct for parents,  
212 spectators, coaches, and youth athletes; and (iii) a mandatory  
213 reporting policy. The policy, at a minimum, shall reflect the  
214 model policy developed by the department in Section 3. Each  
215 local government shall provide a copy of the Youth Athlete  
216 Protection Policy to all coaches employed by or volunteering  
217 for the local government and parents of youth athletes  
218 participating in a sport offered by that local government.

219           (2) Each local government shall require each of its  
220 coaches to: (i) comply with the local government's prohibited  
221 conduct policy; and (ii) annually complete mandatory reporter  
222 training, as provided in Section 3.

223           (b) (1)a. Each local government shall require each coach  
224 to obtain, prior to his or her employment or acceptance as a

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225 volunteer, a criminal history background check from the  
226 Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA). ALEA may provide  
227 the results of the criminal history background check to the  
228 local government where the coach is seeking to be employed or  
229 volunteer. The local government may use the criminal history  
230 background check only for purposes of making hiring or  
231 volunteer decisions, and the results of the criminal history  
232 background check are otherwise confidential.

233 b. Local governments may rely on the results of a  
234 criminal history background check when making hiring and  
235 volunteer decisions. Local governments are immune from any  
236 civil liability relating to the hiring of a coach or  
237 acceptance of a coach as a volunteer, except where the local  
238 government: (i) knows the information relating to the coach's  
239 criminal history background check is false; or (ii) acts with  
240 reckless disregard concerning the veracity of that  
241 information.

242 (2) No local government may hire or accept as a  
243 volunteer a coach if a criminal history background check  
244 performed on that individual shows that he or she has been  
245 convicted of, pled nolo contendere to, or has received a  
246 deferred sentence or deferred prosecution for:

247 a. Any felony under Chapter 15 of Title 26, Code of  
248 Alabama 1975;

249 b. Any sex offense under Section 15-20A-5, Code of  
250 Alabama 1975;

251 c. Any felony assault or sexual offense under Title  
252 13A, Code of Alabama 1975, in which the victim is an

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253 individual under 18 years of age or older, or any other  
254 offense involving child abuse; or  
255 d. Any comparable offense provided in this subsection  
256 which was committed in any other state.  
257 Section 6. This act shall become effective on October  
258 1, 2026.