



California Chiropractic Association

Pre-Participation Athletic Sports Physicals

Sponsor: California Chiropractic Association

ISSUE

Under current law doctors of chiropractic have been legally performing pre-participation sports physicals in California for over 30 years.

An outdated section of the education code does not list all health care providers qualified to perform these physicals.

Some school districts are only accepting these physicals when performed by a health care provider listed in the education code, for fear of a perceived increase in potential liability.

SOLUTION

This proposal is a reintroduction of AB 1992 (2016, Jones) and addresses required pre-participation physical examinations within interscholastic athletic programs.

Currently, Education Code §49458 lists a physician, surgeon or a physician assistant and any qualified health care provider, to perform these sports physicals. **Only listing three of the many qualified health care providers creates a perceived liability issue for self-insured school districts utilizing any health care provider not specifically listed in the education code.** As a result, many school districts no longer accept pre-participation sports physicals from legally qualified health care providers.

Specifically, this proposal will expand this code to also list doctors of chiropractic, naturopathic doctors and nurse practitioners to the education code.

BACKGROUND

Pre-participation sports physicals are under the auspices of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and the Community College League. The California Chiropractic Association (CCA) has worked for many years with CIF in an attempt to

have the CIF suggested physical form include doctors of chiropractic within the signature/sign-off line.

CIF states that they do not take an official position regarding chiropractors performing these examinations and transfer that authority to the local school district/board. However, because the CIF recommended physical form only lists MD/DO, school liability insurance companies such as Schools Insurance Authority (SIA) has taken the position that doctors of chiropractic are not allowed to perform these physicals. What this situation has created throughout California is that some school districts will allow doctors of chiropractic to perform these physicals and some do not.

In an effort to resolve this issue, the Board of Chiropractic Examiners issued an official statement to SIA defining and stating definitively the doctor of chiropractic scope of practice (November 2014). This statement has not swayed the stance of CIF or made any impact on school liability companies to include doctors of chiropractic in the list of acceptable providers of pre-participation sports physicals.

FACT: Current law and the chiropractic scope of practice fully permit pre-participation physicals. Since 1922, doctors of chiropractic in California have been educated and licensed by the State of California to serve as portal of entry/primary care providers.

After undergraduate study, chiropractic students earn a four-year doctorate degree with over 4,600 hours of classroom and laboratory work in basic clinical sciences, physical examination, diagnosis and differential diagnosis, x-ray and interpretation of laboratory blood work and other treatment procedures excluding pharmacological and surgical medicine. For context, medical doctors receive 4,800 hours of training and education.



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FACT: Governor Brown signed AB 722 (Lowenthal, 2013) allowing doctors of chiropractic to perform bus driver commercial drivers' license examinations effective January 1, 2014.

FACT: Doctors of Chiropractic perform school bus driver physicals under existing law.

FACT: Effective May 2014, federal regulations require all health care providers performing commercial drivers' exams to become certified in the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners. Doctors of chiropractic who perform commercial drivers' exams are eligible and are required to be federally certified.

SUPPORT

California Chiropractic Association (Sponsor)
California Naturopathic Doctors Association
California Association for Nurse Practitioners

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PROPOSAL OR BILL STATUS

Language submitted to Legislative Counsel Unbacked.