

DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Student-athlete safety during athletic competition should be a priority throughout the season. Developing an **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** is a vital component in achieving this goal. Sound EAPs are the product of a collaborative process involving school administrators, medical professionals (i.e. athletic trainers, physicians) and local EMS and should include the identification of an **Emergency Response Team (ERT)**. In addition, the EAP should be specific to each practice or competition venue and reflect the following important considerations related to managing emergency situations.

Emergency Personnel

Typically, the first responder to a medical emergency is a member of the sports medicine staff such as a certified athletic trainer or team physician. However, these individuals may not always be present at every athletic practice or competition. In some instances, a coach, sponsor, or school administrator may be the first responder and it is imperative that all potential responders understand their role in managing an emergency situation. Therefore, the EAP should identify the members of the ERT and clearly outline/identify each person's role and responsibilities. These may include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring the scene is safe and providing immediate care
- Activating EMS
- Retrieving emergency medical equipment
- Directing EMS to the scene

Emergency Communication

Quick communication between members of the ERT is critical to effective management of an emergency situation. The EAP should identify both primary and secondary communication mechanisms for each venue that allows first responders to contact ERT members and EMS as quickly as possible. The communication system should be reviewed prior to each event and shared with visiting medical professionals prior to/ during contests.

Emergency Equipment

Any necessary emergency equipment (e.g. AED, epi-pen, mechanism for rapid cooling) should be available and easily accessible at each venue. The members of the ERT should be familiar with the function and operation of emergency equipment and trained to use it in advance. Emergency equipment should be inspected on a regular basis and the members of the ERT should be well practiced in its use.

Medical Emergency Transportation

Ideally, an ambulance is onsite at high-risk events or as needed given the size/scope of the contest. EMS response time and overall EMS transportation capabilities (e.g. basic or advanced life support) should be considered when determining whether or not to have an ambulance onsite. If an ambulance is available at the venue, it should be located in a designated, easily accessible location

Venue Directions and Map

The EAP should include detailed directions to the venue, including the street address, cross streets, and landmarks if needed to make the site easier to locate. Ideally, EMS personnel and first responders will meet at the venue to familiarize themselves with its location. Consideration should be given to ambulance entrance/exit points as well as whether or not helicopter transport is a viable option. GPS coordinates can assist a helicopter transport.

SAMPLE EAP: LOCATION NAME

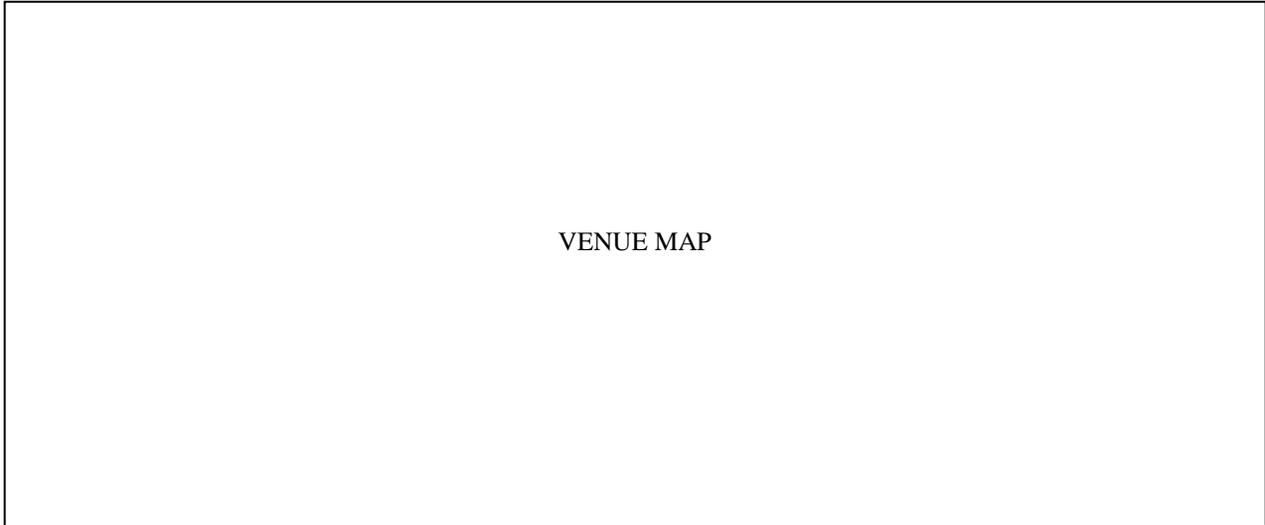
Revised: DATE

ADDRESS:

VENUE DIRECTIONS

Practice field:

Competition field:



EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

Practice field: (Listed by name/profession)

Competition field: (Listed by name/profession)

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Practice field: (Include description of communication mechanism and telephone # if applicable)

Competition field: (Include description of communication mechanism and telephone # if applicable)

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

Practice field: (Identify the available equipment and its specific location)

Competition field: (Identify the available equipment and its specific location)

ROLE OF FIRST RESPONDERS

1. Who will provide immediate care for the injured/ill student-athlete?
2. Who will activate EMS? (Include specific instructions regarding what to tell the dispatcher)
3. Who will retrieve emergency equipment? (Include specific instructions related to location)
4. Who will direct EMS to the scene? (Include specific instructions, including where to stand, access points etc.)
5. Who will provide "crowd control?"

RESOURCES

- Courson RW. Preventing Sudden Death on the Athletic Field: The Emergency Action Plan. *Current Sports Medicine Reports*. 2007;(6):93–100.
- Anderson JC, Courson RW, Kleiner DM, McLoda TA. National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Emergency Planning in Athletics. *J Athl Train*. 2002; 37(1):99-104.
- Casa DJ, Almquist JL, Anderson SA, et al. The Inter-Association Task Force for Preventing Sudden Death in Secondary School Athletics Programs: Best-Practice Recommendations. *J Athl Train*. 2013;48(4):546-553.