



EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS CAMPAIGN

Our goal with this collaboration between the four groups is to heighten awareness around emergency action plans (EAPs) in our school communities. We are looking to provide resources and best practice recommendations to school personnel on implementing venue specific EAPs.

ARTICLE #3

EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

The response to a medical emergency is often described as a chain of a survival – each step of the response is a link and each link is critical to increase the chances of survival. When emergencies occur during school activities, the first steps or links will involve school personnel. Identifying their proper roles will help everyone know what they are supposed to do in an emergency situation. An emergency action plan (EAP) identifies those roles and guides the first individuals on the scene through the initial steps of responding to a medical emergency. In this article we outline *potential emergency personnel and the roles* that each will play during the emergency response and how to incorporate this into your school's EAP.

Identifying Emergency Personnel

Ideally there is a health care professional, such as an athletic trainer, available at all events. That is not always possible though, and even schools that have an athletic trainer realize the athletic trainer is unable to be present at all events, and certainly unavailable at many practices or conditioning sessions. This means *EVERYONE* needs to be prepared to initiate the time-critical steps in the chain of survival - coaches, administrators, and even teammates all have roles to fill when the EAP is activated.

Typically, the individual with the highest level of training takes charge.

- A health care professional
 - Professionals trained in responding to medical emergencies (e.g., an athletic trainer, an EMT or paramedic, or physician) are the ultimate first responders. However, since these individuals are not always available, others have critical roles in responding. Therefore, school *EAPs must incorporate additional personnel.*
- Athletic director or an event administrator
 - While typically untrained in medical response, the administrator has knowledge that is critical to the response, such as: How will EMS be activated? How will EMS be directed to the scene? How can the scene be made safe for the first responders?
- Coach or chaperone
 - The coach plays a critical role in any emergency because it is unlikely a practice, competition, or event will occur without them present. The coach should know the steps of the EAP and be trained in providing emergency care (performing CPR, using an AED, and providing first aid).
- Teammates or other participants
 - Just as coaches are typically present for all events, so are teammates. The opportunity exists to train students to be a valuable member of the emergency response team.

- A program that is recommended by the OSAA that incorporates students into the emergency response is the [Anyone Can Save a Life](#) program. The program divides the emergency response into 4 teams (visit the [program's website](#) for more details):
 - a team to call 911,
 - a team to assist the coach with CPR,
 - a team to retrieve the AED and the athletic trainer (if one is available), and
 - in cases of heat-related emergencies, a team to prepare for cooling the athlete.

Roles of the First People on the Scene

The following are key steps that first responders should do and also be identified in the EAP.

1. Establish scene safety

- Before responding to any emergency, you need to ensure the scene is safe for you and other responders.
- Even if the scene is safe, you should take further steps to ensure it remains safe. If there is a large crowd at the event? Someone needs to ensure that there is adequate room to provide care and access to the patient. If the emergency is weather-related, does the injured person need to be moved to prevent further injury to them or the responder?

2. Immediately care for the injured or ill athlete

- Quickly evaluate the individual to determine what care is needed. This is where required CPR/AED and First Aid training is essential to ensure appropriate immediate care.

3. Quickly activate EMS and alert any onsite medical responders

- If the situation is deemed an emergency, EMS should be activated. (For example, the athlete is unconscious, unresponsive, obvious deformed limb, disoriented, or is in and out of consciousness.)
- If your school has an athletic trainer or other health care personnel available - quickly alert them so they can arrive on-scene. (The next article in this campaign will highlight how to develop an emergency communication plan.)

4. Rapidly retrieve needed equipment

- Lifesaving equipment may be needed depending on the cause of injury. (A future article will provide additional resources on appropriate emergency equipment.)

5. Direct EMS to the scene

- Someone should meet EMS and help direct the ambulance to the scene.

All personnel associated with after school activities have a duty to provide care to an injured or ill student. Prior to an emergency, potential first responders should be identified, their roles delineated, and be properly trained to carry out the critical steps of the chain of survival.

Do you have feedback or questions about emergency planning?

Do you have questions about emergency action planning at your school? Do you have feedback on this campaign? Do you have examples of what has worked at your school that we can share in this campaign? Do you have specific challenges that you need help with? Please complete this [short online form](#).