



Official Statement on Athletic Trainers in High Schools

The National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) is confident the best way to protect the public is to allow only Board of Certification certified athletic trainers and state licensed athletic trainers to practice as athletic trainers. The NATA is not alone in these beliefs. The American Medical Association has stated that certified athletic trainers should be used as part of a high school's medical team. The American Academy of Family Physicians agrees and states on its web site, "The AAFP encourages high schools to have, whenever possible, a BOC certified or registered/licensed athletic trainer as an integral part of the high school athletic program."

In states with athletic training regulation, allowing other individuals to continue practicing as athletic trainers without a valid state license or BOC certification places the public at risk. Athletic trainers have unique education and skills that allow them to properly assess and treat acute and traumatic injuries in high school athletics. In coordination with the team physician, they routinely make decisions regarding the return-to-play status of student athletes. Other allied health professionals are not qualified to perform these tasks. Finally, most situations encountered by athletic trainers should not be left to a coach or layperson who does not have the necessary education and medical and emergency care training.

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