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Memorandum

To: Athletic Directors, Athletic Trainers, and School Nurses
From: Tony Maselli, NJSIAA Chief Operating Officer
Date: May 31, 2024
Re: New PPE Procedure

The NJSIAA and the NJSIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee have put together the following memo regarding the new student-athlete pre-participation (PPE) process to help our member schools with this transition. We will communicate further information and updates as clarifications and/or adjustments are provided to us from the Department of Education.

The NJ Department of Education has updated the Student Athlete Pre-Participation Forms, which include the Health History, the Physical Examination Form, and the PPE Medical Eligibility Form. The up-to-date PPE forms for NJ, as well as a FAQ document, can be found on the NJDOE website at: <https://www.nj.gov/education/safety/health/athlete/>. The new forms begin with all physicals completed after June 30th. All physicals completed before July 1, can use the old form. The Cardiac, Opioid and Concussion forms have not changed and are still required.

The NJ PPE forms were recently updated to match the national PPE forms, as required by NJ statute. The national PPE form was created and adopted by multiple national medical organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Practice, the American College of Sports Medicine, as well as many others.

The updated PPE forms and the subsequent guidance have been provided by the NJDOE, not the NJSIAA. The NJSIAA provides access to the forms as a convenience for schools, physicians, and families, but is not responsible for their content nor the official guidance on how they are to be used.

The new forms have some minor changes in the Health History and Physical Exam form. The more significant update is that the Medical Eligibility page is now the only page that is to be submitted to the school. The Health History and Physical Exam are to be completed by the Health Care Provider performing the sports physical and to be kept in the provider's office but not to be submitted. This joint decision was made by the national organizations mentioned above and is part of their national form, which NJ is obligated by statute to use.

The medical eligibility form does require the health care provider to sign denoting that they have reviewed the health history form as well as examined the student. It also requires the provider to sign that they have completed the Cardiac Assessment Development Module. The healthcare provider does have an opportunity to share other healthcare information, including medications, allergies, and any other relevant information they feel is appropriate on the bottom of the eligibility form.

All public school districts are required to provide to the parent/guardian written notification signed by the school physician indicating that the Medical Eligibility Form has been received, reviewed by the School Physician, and that the student athlete has either been deemed medically eligible ("cleared") or not medically eligible ("not cleared") as per recommendations of the Health Care Provider completing the evaluation and Medical Eligibility Forms.

Non-public schools are not required to send this notification, as they may establish their own procedure for parental notification. A sample form has been provided by the NJSIAA. Schools should determine their own preferred notification form but may feel free to utilize the sample provided.

The school physician is approving the student's participation solely in an administrative capacity, as the medical clearance is performed by the student's Health Care Provider and the school physician does not have access to the Health History or physical exam documentation.

School nurses and the school physician can always request further information about a student's health if they have a valid medical concern about the student's sports participation and require further information.

The NJDOE provided links for the updated forms are NOT a single combined PDF. They are currently provided on the NJDOE website as a separate History Form, Supplemental History (for Special Needs Students) Form, Physical Exam Form and Medical Eligibility Form. Schools may certainly provide a single combined form to their district's parents if this is felt to provide better clarity.

Lastly, each school district or private school should determine an appropriate process for obtaining and sharing an appropriate level of medical information to help keep the students of New Jersey safe as they pursue their education, sports participation and any other endeavors appropriate to their development.