



**Emergency Action Plan
Emergencies, Weather, Hydration and Non-Emergencies**

Policy

The safety of the participants is the priority while playing on the field. As such, an emergency action plan is necessary for the safety and well-being of all participants and spectators during a game or at practice.

Standard Practices

The basic duties of first aid are:

- ❖ Check the scene for safety and stop all activity near the participant.
- ❖ Check the injured participant and protect the participant from further harm.
- ❖ Do not move the participant if there is a possibility of head or neck injury or if the participant is unconscious.
- ❖ Contact parent or guardian if not already present.
- ❖ Assume that all blood, body fluids, and any other potentially infectious materials are infected with a blood-borne pathogen.
 - a. Use nitrile gloves and sterilized bandages to administer first aid.
 - b. All bleeding must be stopped before re-entering the practice or game.
 - c. Any blood on a participant's uniform must be cleaned or disinfected before re-entering the practice or game.
 - d. All bandages or other materials that have met blood or other body fluids must be properly disposed of using the red Biohazard bags inside each team's first aid kit.

Activate the Emergency Action Plan

Activating the EAP system may be performed by anyone on the team who is familiar with the EAP. However, the person chosen for this duty must be calm under pressure and have excellent oral communication skills. This person must be familiar with the location and address of the sporting event.

If an injured participant is unconscious or has some other life-threatening condition, it is the responsibility of the coaches on-site to call for emergency medical help. The team parent should alert an organizational Executive Board member immediately of the situation. The team parent should immediately alert the parent or guardian of the participant of the life-threatening issue if they are not at the field. If the participant must be taken by ambulance due to a life-threatening condition, in that case a certified member of the organization should accompany the participant to the hospital, only if the parent/guardian gives consent and the parent/guardian is absent. Should there be an on-field first

responder, they should also be notified. If a participant seems ill, complains about feeling ill, or has been injured, the coach needs to assess the participant to determine if a medical team is needed. Should there be an on-field first responder, they should be notified if necessary.

NOTE: During a Florida Elite event, should there be a need to enact the EAP, the reps on the field and the Executive Board will be the points of contact and follow the same instructions.

To determine if assistance may be needed, look for any of the following signs:

- ❖ Unconsciousness
- ❖ Trouble breathing
- ❖ Pain
- ❖ Pressure or discomfort in the chest.
- ❖ Severe bleeding
- ❖ Vomiting or the passing of blood
- ❖ Seizing from a diabetic emergency
- ❖ Severe headache
- ❖ Injuries to the back, neck, or head
- ❖ Possible broken bones or any other signs that the participant is at risk

Dial 9-1-1

When calling 9-1-1 or the local emergency number, give the dispatcher the necessary information. Answer any questions the dispatcher might ask.

The dispatcher needs to know:

- ❖ The location of the injured participant.
- ❖ The name of the responder.
- ❖ What happened?
- ❖ Number of people involved.
- ❖ The condition of the injured player.
- ❖ What help has been given?

Do not hang up the phone until the dispatcher hangs up. Many dispatchers are also trained to give instructions before EMS arrival, so they can assist with certain life-saving skills, such as rescue breathing or the use of an AED (automated external defibrillator). Coaches need to know the signs of an emergency. Once it is determined help is needed, the coach or responder should call 9-1-1 for help and give the proper information.

Should the on-site EMS responders determine that the participant is in an emergency, it is the policy of Florida Elite Football and Cheerleading Inc. (FEFC) or the organization that the injured participant be transported by ambulance, where the necessary staff and equipment are available to deliver appropriate care. Parents or guardians have the final say as to emergency transportation. FEFC or the organization personnel will not transport injured participants.

Non-Medical Emergencies

Non-medical emergencies encountered during practices and games include inclement weather and heat-related emergencies. FEFC policy states protecting participants and spectators is most important. All coaches must be aware of the danger presented by lightning, tornados, and other hazardous weather. The following guidelines represent general principles regarding the dangers involved with lightning and tornados. No severe weather safety guidelines will give 100% guaranteed safety, but these steps will help volunteer coaches avoid many casualties:

Weather Contingencies

Lightning

If thunder is heard, there is a danger of lightning. Lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles and strike from blue skies. Football fields are especially dangerous areas during a lightning storm.

- ❖ Each organization should have a lightning detection device.
- ❖ If lightning is within 0-6 miles of the practice and game field, all participants should be removed from the field and bleachers.
- ❖ Seek safe shelter. The safest place to be during a thunderstorm is in a car or a fully enclosed building.
- ❖ Avoid the most dangerous locations such as open fields, higher elevations, and metal objects such as goal posts, metal fences, and metal bleachers.
- ❖ Coaches or referees will clear the fields on practice or game day by constantly blowing their whistles.
- ❖ Wait 20 minutes after the last strike outside of the 0–6-mile range before resuming practice or gameplay.

Hail

Suspend practices or games, clear the field, seek proper shelter, and follow the guidelines for lightning.

Hurricanes

All organization board members and volunteer coaches must be extra vigilant when a hurricane watch is in effect. A hurricane watch means that weather conditions are favorable for the development of the hurricane and or we are in the path of it. A hurricane warning is a much more serious condition. A tornado/hurricane warning means an actual tornado/hurricane has been sighted. If a tornado/hurricane warning is issued, all practice or games will stop immediately, and all participants and spectators will seek shelter. Seek shelter in a solid structure, preferably in a basement or an interior room. If no building is available, lie down in a ditch or get to a car.

For organizational board members and volunteer coaches, calm control must be maintained during inclement weather. Coaches must be able to communicate calmly with the participants and parents and ensure that no one is left unaccounted for when seeking shelter. There are no secure shelters at the fields used by the organization when an inclement weather event occurs during a practice or game,

coaches are to gather the participants at the nearest structure for collection by their parents. No participant shall be left unsupervised during an inclement weather event.

Hydration protocol

Hydration Guidelines:

- ❖ Encourage athletes to start hydrating well before practices or games. They should begin drinking fluids at least two hours before the activity.
- ❖ Recommend that athletes drink approximately 16-20 ounces of water or a sports drink containing electrolytes 2-3 hours before exercise.
- ❖ During practices or games, athletes should continue to drink fluids regularly, aiming for 7-10 ounces every 10-20 minutes, depending on the intensity of the activity and environmental conditions.
- ❖ Emphasize the importance of drinking fluids even if athletes do not feel thirsty, as thirst may not always be a reliable indicator of hydration status, especially in young athletes.

1. Fluid Options:

- ❖ Water is generally sufficient for hydration during most youth sports activities. However, for prolonged or intense exercise lasting longer than one hour, sports drinks containing electrolytes and carbohydrates may be beneficial.
- ❖ Avoid sugary beverages and caffeinated drinks, as these can contribute to dehydration and may have negative effects on performance.

2. Environmental Considerations:

- ❖ Monitor weather conditions and adjust hydration protocols accordingly. In hot and humid weather, athletes will need to increase fluid intake to account for greater fluid losses through sweat.
- ❖ Provide shaded areas for rest breaks during practices and games, and encourage athletes to remove helmets or other gear to facilitate cooling.

Heat-Related Emergencies

Heat-related emergencies are progressive conditions, typically caused by overexposure to heat. Heat emergencies fall into 3 categories of increasing severity: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke.

Heat illnesses are easily preventable by taking necessary precautions in hot weather. If recognized early, heat-related emergencies can usually be reversed. Without intervention and resolution of the problem, heat cramps (caused by salt loss from heavy sweating) can lead to heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration), which can progress to heatstroke, a life-threatening condition.

Heat-related emergencies can be avoided by canceling practice or games in extreme weather (high temperature and/or high humidity) and taking frequent breaks for water.

Signs of heat-related illnesses:

Early symptoms of heat illness

- ❖ Profuse sweating
- ❖ Fatigue
- ❖ Thirst
- ❖ Muscle cramps

Later symptoms of heat exhaustion

- ❖ Headache
- ❖ Dizziness
- ❖ Weaknesses and light-headedness
- ❖ Cool, moist skin
- ❖ Nausea and vomiting
- ❖ Dark yellow urine

Symptoms of heatstroke

- ❖ Fever (body temperature above 104 degrees F)
- ❖ Extreme confusion
- ❖ Dry, hot, and red skin
- ❖ Rapid, weak pulse,
- ❖ Seizures
- ❖ Unconsciousness

First Aid Response:

- ❖ Follow the basic duties of first aid.
- ❖ Move the participant to a cool place.
- ❖ Loosen tight clothing.
- ❖ Fan the participant.
- ❖ If conscious, give cool water to drink.

If the participant refuses water, vomits, or starts to lose consciousness:

- ❖ Send someone to call EMS and activate the EAP.
- ❖ Contact parent or guardian if not already present.
- ❖ Place the participant on his/her side.
- ❖ Immediately decrease body temperature by hosing the participant down with cold water or by placing them in an ice bath.
- ❖ Continue to cool the participant by using ice or cold packs on the wrists, ankles, groin, neck, and armpits.
- ❖ Continue to check breathing and for a pulse until EMS personnel arrive.

Emergency Communication

Communication is the key to quick emergency response. The organization board members, coaches, team parents, and emergency medical personnel must work together to provide the best emergency response capability and must have the participant's contact information as a part of pre-planning for emergencies. Communication before the event is a good way to establish boundaries and build rapport between both groups. The importance of being properly prepared when athletic emergencies arise cannot be stressed enough. The emergency plan must be reviewed yearly with all coaching personnel, along with CPR and first aid refresher training (strongly suggest). Through the development and implementation of the emergency plan, the organization ensures the participants will have the best care provided, should an emergency arise.

It is also important to note that assigning roles when there is a need to enact the EAP will allow a quicker reaction to set the process in motion. When you don't delegate roles or have not communicated internally, you are delaying the proper care for the participant.

This document should be implemented immediately but you can curtail the document to your organization by adding more in-detail items:

ADDITIONAL CONTENTS OF AN EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Staff Responsibilities (Assign each staff member a duty)

- ❖ Person to provide care
- ❖ Person to control bystanders and supervise other participants
- ❖ Person to meet EMS personnel
- ❖ Person to transport injured participant when appropriate.

Follow-up

- ❖ Complete appropriate documentation (incident report, accident report, etc.)
- ❖ Replace equipment and supplies
- ❖ Emergency Action Plan evaluation
- ❖ Staff debriefing
- ❖ Critical Incident Stress debriefing (if necessary)
- ❖ Check on the condition of injured participants.

External Support (provide telephone numbers)

- ❖ EMS personnel · Police · Fire
- ❖ Hazardous materials (HazMat) team
- ❖ Poison Control Center · Hospitals
- ❖ Power and gas companies
- ❖ Health department
- ❖ Weather bureau

Communication

· How and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number · Chain of command · Person to contact-
parents or guardians · Person to deal with media

Regards,

FE Executive Board