

The Maryland General Assembly recently passed legislation (HB 858 / SB 771) regarding concussion awareness and management for organized youth sports programs at public school sites and local parks.

This bill requires that concussion awareness information be provided to coaches, school personnel, students and parent or guardians in collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, local boards of education, and other experts and stakeholders. Compliance includes making the information on concussion and head injuries available to coaches, youth athletes, and parents/guardians. These individuals must acknowledge they have received the information. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have developed a Parent/Athlete Concussion information sheet and a fact sheet for coaches as part of their “Heads Up- Concussion in Youth Sports” initiative. This information is available through the links below.

The bill also requires that a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury in a practice or game shall be immediately removed from play. This injured athlete may not return until they have obtained written clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and head injuries.

As an organization providing youth sports programs at government-owned facilities, such as public schools and county parks, CMRC must annually provide the Division of Parks and Recreation, a statement of intent to comply with the legislation’s requirements. This requirement includes the management of a concussion or other head injury and the distribution of information related to concussions along with a statement of acknowledgement.