

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2025 REGULAR SESSION**

### **ENGROSSED**

## **House Bill 2774**

By Delegates Browning, Stephens, Lucas, Dean,  
Campbell, Leavitt, Foggin, W. Clark, Riley, Ferrell,  
and Hornby

[Introduced February 21, 2025; Referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §61-2-15a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to crimes against athletic officials; clarifying that victims include participants; establishing  
3 minimum jail penalties; creation definitions; authorizing a person convicted of the offenses  
4 to be banned from certain sports events; requiring written notice to the person banned;  
5 establishing that a violation of the ban is a form of trespass; and creating criminal penalties.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **ARTICLE 2. CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON.**

### **§61-2-15a. Assault, battery on athletic officials or participants; penalties.**

1 (a) If any person commits an assault as defined in ~~subsection (b), section nine of this article~~  
2 §61-2-9(b) of this code, to the person of an athletic official or participant during the time the official  
3 is acting as an athletic official or participant, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon  
4 conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than \$250, nor more than \$500, ~~or and~~ confined in jail not  
5 less than five days nor more than six months, ~~or both fined and confined~~.

6 (b) If any person commits a battery, as defined in ~~subsection (c), section nine of this article~~  
7 §61-2-9(c) of this code, against an athletic official or participant during the time the official is acting  
8 as an athletic official or participant, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction  
9 thereof, shall be fined not less than \$500, nor more than \$1,000, ~~or and~~ confined in jail not less  
10 than 10 days nor more than twelve months, or both fined and confined.

11 (c) For the purpose of this section, "athletic official or participant " means a player on a  
12 sports team, person at a sports event who enforces the rules of that event, such as including, but  
13 not limited to, an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, such as including,  
14 but not limited to, a coach, assistant coach, or any other official team members during the course  
15 of a game or related event.

16 (d)(1) In addition to the criminal penalties set forth in this section, a county board of  
17 education or a governing board for a state institution of higher education may provide written  
18 notification to any person convicted of an offense under subsection (a) or subsection (b) of this

19 section that he or she is banned from all state school sports events or school-sponsored sports  
20 events as a result of the conviction for a minimum of 365 days.  
21 (2) Any person receiving the written notification set forth in subdivision (1) of this  
22 subsection who refuses to leave the premises of any state school sports event or school-  
23 sponsored sports event upon request shall be subject to prosecution pursuant to the provisions of  
24 §61-3B-1 et seq. of this code

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to modify the criminal and administrative penalties for assault or battery on athletic officials.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.