

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 4999

BY DELEGATES BROWNING, McCORMICK, STEPHENS,

CAMPBELL, AKERS, FOGGIN, AND D. CANNON

[Passed March 14, 2026; in effect 90 days from
passage (June 12, 2026)]

1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §61-2-15a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended,
2 relating to crimes against athletic officials; clarifying that victims include participants;
3 establishing minimum fines; creating and clarifying definitions; authorizing a person
4 convicted of the offenses to be banned from certain sports events; requiring written notice
5 to the person banned; establishing that a violation of the ban is a form of trespass; creating
6 certain exemptions for participating athletes; 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 §61-2-9(b) of this code to the person of
2 an athletic official or participant during the time the official or person is acting as an athletic official
3 or participant, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined
4 not less than \$250, nor more than \$500 or confined in jail not more than six months, or both fined
5 and confined.

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

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

16 (d) In addition to the criminal penalties set forth in this section, a county board of education
17 or a governing board for a state institution of higher education may provide written notification to

18 any person convicted of an offense under subsection (a) or subsection (b) of this section that he
19 or she is banned from all state school sports events or school-sponsored sports events as a result
20 of the conviction for a minimum of one year. Any person receiving the written notification set forth
21 in this subsection who refuses to leave the premises of any state school sports event or school-
22 sponsored sports event upon request is subject to prosecution pursuant to the provisions of §61-
23 3B-1 and §61-3B-2 of this code.

24 (e) Participants who are players on a sports team in the game are exempt from prosecution
25 under this section for acts, including, but not limited to, hard fouls, committed during the sporting
26 event, provided the participant acts within the scope of the rules or nature of the sport.

The Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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Clerk of the House of Delegates

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Clerk of the Senate

Originated in the House of Delegates.

In effect 90 days from passage.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates

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President of the Senate

The within is this the.....
Day of, 2026.

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Governor