

# No AED, No Game!

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It is not about wins and losses, but life and death.

A PSAL basketball game in Brooklyn was cancelled this week when the coaches for EBC/ENY and Clara Barton failed to have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on site. A double forfeit was ruled and both teams suffered a loss without even playing.

State law requires public schools to ensure the presence of personnel who are trained in the operation of an AED, a device that is used to restore a normal heartbeat in an individual who has experienced sudden cardiac arrest caused by certain kinds of irregular heartbeats.

Whenever a school-sponsored athletic contest or practice is held at any location, an AED must be on the premises according to Robert Hoerburger of the PSAL. All coaches are now mandated to be certified in First Aid and CPR/AED.

“The PSAL is enforcing its rules and regulations to ensure the highest safety standards of all our students,” added Hoerburger.

It is the responsibility of the officials to ensure that AED machines are present at every scrimmage, non league game and league game.

Both teams are required to have the machines at the venue hosting the event. If one team doesn't have a defibrillator the game will still take place, but one of the officials must call the assignor and report it.

If neither team has a defibrillator on site at game time as was the case for the EBC/ENY and Clara Barton boys' basketball game, the contest will be declared a double forfeit. Coaches that fail to comply with State Law and Department of Education regulations could be suspended.

At a recent wrestling match, both coaches had their AED machines visible on the bench.

“Since they mandate it, it's with me all the time,” said Alfred Smith coach David Irizarry. “I bring it to practice, matches, everywhere we go.”

Seth Cook, the coach at Newtown, preaches a safe environment for his kids and has no problem complying.

“The safety of the kids is first and foremost,” said Cook. “The kids know safety comes first in my book.”