

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Enrolled

Committee Substitute

for

Committee Substitute

for

Senate Bill 531

BY SENATORS WOELFEL, OLIVERIO, HAMILTON, FULLER,

WILLIS, TAYLOR, AND HELTON

[Passed April 12, 2025; in effect 90 days from

passage (July 11, 2025)]

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 creating definitions; establishing minimum criminal penalties; establishing minimum fines;
4 authorizing county boards of education and governing boards for a state institution for
5 higher education to give written notice banning any person convicted of an offense under
6 this section from certain sports events; requiring written notice to the person banned; and
7 establishing that a violation of the ban is a form of trespass.

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) *Definitions.* —

2 (1) For the purpose of this section, "athletic official" means a person at a sports event, or
3 traveling to or from a sporting event, who enforces the rules of that event, including, but not limited
4 to, an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, including, but not limited to,
5 a coach, assistant coach, or any other athletic staff.

6 (2) For the purpose of this section, "participant" means a player on a sports team or any
7 other team members during the course of a game or related sporting event.

8 (b) If any person commits an assault as defined in §61-2-9(b) of this code, to the person
9 of an athletic official or participant, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction
10 thereof, shall be fined not less than \$250, nor more than \$500 and confined in jail not less than
11 five days nor more than six months.

12 (c) If any person commits a battery, as defined in §61-2-9(c) of this code, against an
13 athletic official or participant, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof,
14 shall be fined not less than \$500, nor more than \$1,000 and confined in jail not less than 10 days
15 nor more than 12 months.

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 (b) or subsection (c) 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
24 of §61-3B-1 *et seq.* of this code.

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

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Clerk of the Senate

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Clerk of the House of Delegates

Originated in the Senate.

In effect 90 days from passage.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House of Delegates

The within is this the.....
Day of, 2025.

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Governor