



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: March 3, 2021
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
Route To: Principals, School Nurses, School Physicians
From: Peggy McDonald, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Paul's Law Requirements to Support Students with Seizure Disorders

According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), approximately 12,000 children in New Jersey have been diagnosed with epilepsy. In order to further prioritize the safety of children with epilepsy and seizure disorders in New Jersey schools, the State Legislature passed and Governor Murphy signed [Paul's Law](#) (N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.34 through 12.38). Paul's Law requires training for all current and new school staff on epilepsy and seizure disorders and the inclusion of epilepsy and seizure disorders in individualized health care plans for students.

Training for School Staff

Pursuant to [N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.35\(d\)1](#) and 2, district boards of education shall coordinate the provision of epilepsy and seizure disorder care within district schools and ensure that *all* staff are trained in the care of students with epilepsy and seizure disorders, including staff working with school-sponsored programs outside of the regular school day. School district staff must complete one of the following New Jersey Department of Health [approved](#) training courses:

- [Seizure Training for School Personnel](#) offered by the Epilepsy Foundation; or
- [T.R.U.S.T. Seizure Recognition and First Aid](#) offered by the Epilepsy Alliance of America.

Seizure Action Plans and Individualized Health Care & Emergency Health Care Plans

The parent or guardian of a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder who seeks epilepsy or seizure disorder care while at school shall annually submit to the school nurse the student's seizure action plan. The school nurse shall develop an individualized health care plan and an individualized emergency health care plan for the student, as long as the student's parent or guardian annually provides the board of education with written authorization for the provision of epilepsy or seizure disorder care.

The individualized health care plan shall include the following components:

- Written orders from the student's physician or advanced practice nurse outlining the epilepsy or seizure disorder care;
- Symptoms of the epilepsy or seizure disorder for that student and recommendations for care;
- Full participation in exercise and sports, and any contraindications to exercise, or accommodations that must be made for that student;
- Accommodations for school trips, after-school activities, class parties, and other school-related activities;
- Education of all school personnel about epilepsy and seizure disorders, how to recognize and provide care for epilepsy and seizure disorders, and when to call for assistance;
- Medical and treatment issues that may affect the educational process of the student with epilepsy or the seizure disorder;
- Student's ability to manage, and the student's level of understanding of the student's epilepsy or seizure disorder; and

- How to maintain communication with the student, the student’s parent or guardian and health care team, the school nurse, and the educational staff.

The individualized emergency health care plan may include any of the above information and/or additional information necessary to specify the delivery of healthcare accommodations and services in the event of an emergency. Both the individualized health care plan and the individualized emergency health care plan shall be updated by the school nurse annually and as necessary in the event of a change in the health status of the student.

Information Sharing

The school nurse shall obtain a release from the parent or guardian of a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder to authorize the sharing of medical information between the student's physician or advanced practice nurse and other health care providers. The release shall also authorize the school nurse to share medical information with other staff members of the school district as necessary.

In the event that a school bus driver transports a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder, the school district shall provide the driver with a notice of the student’s condition, information on how to provide care for epilepsy or the seizure disorder, emergency contact information, epilepsy and seizure disorder first aid training, and parent contact information.

Contact information

School districts should contact the New Jersey Department of Education’s Office of Student Support Services with questions regarding Paul’s Law by emailing HealthySchools@doe.nj.gov. For specific questions regarding the training courses, please contact Yannai Kranzler at the New Jersey Department of Health by emailing Yannai.Kranzler@doh.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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