
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1572
Author: Alanis (R), et al.
Amended: 8/13/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/17/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/30/26

AYES: Arreguín, Seyarto, Caballero, Cortese, Pérez, Wiener

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0, 5/21/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: California Interscholastic Federation: officials: registration, certification, and eligibility verification

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) to require its officials to annually register through a platform selected by the CIF to verify the official's eligibility to officiate CIF contests, which will, until July 1, 2028, include a statewide and standardized background screening and, commencing July 1, 2028, will include a record of a valid Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate (ASCC) issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) States that the CIF is a voluntary organization that consists of school and school-related personnel with responsibility for administering interscholastic athletic activities in secondary schools. (Education Code (EC) § 33353)
- 2) Requires the CIF to report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature and the Governor on its evaluation and accountability activities on or before January 1, 2023, and on or before January 1 every seven years thereafter, and shall include, but not be limited to, the goals and objectives of the CIF with regard to, and the status of, all of the following:
 - a) The governing structure of the CIF, and the effectiveness of that governance structure in providing leadership for interscholastic athletics in secondary schools.
 - b) Methods to facilitate communication with agencies, organizations, and public entities whose functions and interests interface with the CIF.
 - c) The quality of coaching and officiating, including, but not limited to, professional development for coaches and athletic administrators, and parent education programs.
 - d) Gender equity in interscholastic athletics, including, but not limited to, the number of male and female pupils participating in interscholastic athletics in secondary schools, and action taken by the CIF in order to ensure compliance with Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972 (20 United States Code (USC) § 1681 et seq.).
 - e) Health and safety of pupils, coaches, officials, and spectators.
 - f) The economic viability of interscholastic athletics in secondary schools, including, but not limited to, the promotion and marketing of interscholastic athletics.
 - g) New and continuing programs available to pupil athletes.
 - h) Awareness and understanding of emerging issues related to interscholastic athletics in secondary schools. (EC § 33353)

- 3) Authorizes a community youth athletic program to request state and federal level criminal history information from the California Department of Justice (DOJ) for a volunteer coach or hired coach candidate. (Penal Code § 11105.3)
- 4) Requires, commencing January 1, 2016, a community youth athletic program to provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any youth participating in the program regarding the program's policies relating to whether the program obtains criminal background checks for hired and/or volunteer coaches. Defines a community youth athletic program as an organization for which the primary purpose is the promotion or provision of athletic activities for youth under 18 years of age and which has adult employees who have supervisory or disciplinary power over children. (Business and Professions Code § 18900)
- 5) Requires any entity that has a contract with a local educational agency (LEA) to ensure that any employee who interacts with pupils, outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupil's parent or guardian or a school employee, has a valid criminal records summary. Requires, when the contracting entity performs the criminal background check, the entity to immediately provide any subsequent arrest and conviction information it receives to any LEA that it is contracting with pursuant to the subsequent arrest service. (EC § 45125.1)
- 6) Requires all noncertificated candidates, prior to assuming a paid or volunteer position to work with pupils in a pupil activity program sponsored by a school district, to obtain an ASCC from the CTC. Indicates that a "pupil activity program" sponsored by a school district includes, but is not limited to, scholastic programs, interscholastic programs, and extracurricular activities sponsored by a school district or school booster club. (EC § 49024)
- 7) Requires the CTC to issue an ASCC to candidates serving in a specified position upon verification of the candidate's personal identification and verification that the candidate meets all specified professional requirements. (EC § 44258.7)
- 8) Requires that an ASCC be issued initially for a five-year period and may be renewed, and requires that the CTC establish a fee for the ASCC. (EC § 44258.7)
- 9) Excludes from the definition of an "employee" a person, other than a regular employee, performing services as a sports official, as defined, for an entity sponsoring an intercollegiate or interscholastic sports event, or any person

performing services as a sports official for a public agency, public entity, or a private nonprofit organization sponsoring an amateur sports event. Defines a “sports official” as including an umpire, referee, judge, scorekeeper, timekeeper, or other person who is a neutral participant in a sports event. (Labor Code § 3352)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CIF to require its officials to annually register through a platform selected by the CIF to verify the official’s eligibility to officiate CIF contests.
- 2) Requires the platform to consist of all of the following components:
 - a) Until July 1, 2028, a statewide and standardized background screening, and commencing July 1, 2028, a record of a valid ASCC issued by the CTC, including the applicable expiration date.
 - b) A record of rules tests, online training modules, sport-specific annual certifications, and continuing education requirements.
 - c) A record of liability insurance coverage.
- 3) Requires, commencing July 1, 2028, that the CTC regularly publish a list on its internet website of ASCC holders who have their certificate suspended or revoked by CTC.
- 4) Requires the CIF, through its chosen platform, to verify that all specified components are complete before an official is deemed and marked as eligible to receive an assignment to officiate.
- 5) Requires that CIF complete the specified verification annually until July 1, 2028, and requires, commencing July 1, 2028, that the CIF maintain the platform and, as part of the verification requirement, ensure that the chosen platform regularly reviews the list published by the CTC in order to update the eligibility of the officials whose ASCC has been suspended or revoked.
- 6) Authorizes that only officials who are deemed eligible in the selected platform be assigned to CIF contests by assignors or officiating associations.

- 7) Requires the CIF to ensure that its participating member schools, school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools can access the platform to verify the eligibility of an official, but shall not have access to the sensitive information in each individual component of the platform.
- 8) Prohibits the CIF from being considered an employer of officials.

Comments

Need for the bill. According to the author, “AB 1572 is necessary to ensure that California’s student athletes compete in safe, fair, and well-regulated environments. By establishing a consistent standard for CIF officials, we can give schools and parents confidence that officials assigned to games are qualified and accountable. This measure will also promote greater transparency and consistency across leagues, reducing uneven enforcement of rules. Ultimately, it strengthens the integrity of high school athletics and reinforces a commitment to protecting the well-being of every student athlete.”

CIF’s structure and role in interscholastic athletics. The CIF, founded in 1914, is a voluntary organization consisting of over 1,600 public, public charter, and private high schools and over 750,000 student-athletes, for the purpose of governing education-based athletics in grades 9 through 12. Almost all public and private high schools in California are CIF members. The CIF is organized under the California Department of Education (CDE), and CDE has allowed the CIF to regulate interscholastic athletics and be the rulemaking body for these programs.

The CIF consists of ten regional sections, each of which is divided into several local leagues, for purposes of developing sports, scheduling athletic contests, and assigning referees. Each league elects a representative to their respective CIF section’s governing body, which is called a Board of Managers or Council. Each CIF section’s governing body elects officers, establishes section policies, develops section playoff sports and schedules, and CIF members adhere to these rules and regulations adopted by their section.

This bill creates requirements for game officials for CIF contests, and game officials are not considered employees of CIF or schools. This bill requires officials to annually register for a platform selected by the CIF to verify the official’s eligibility to officiate CIF contests, including having done fingerprinting and a criminal background check as well as that official having liability insurance coverage.

Existing law excludes sports officials from being considered employees of an entity sponsoring an interscholastic sports event, or any person performing services as a sports official for a public agency or public entity, and according to CIF, these sports officials are considered independent contractors. There are associations of officials and referees that are accredited by CIF and organized by region and sport, and as mentioned above, CIF consists of ten regional sections, which are divided into local leagues, and the local leagues assign referees and officials to CIF games. These officials are paid and generally have liability insurance coverage, either individually or through an officials' or referees' association.

CIF is rolling out a similar statewide eligibility program for officials. In July 2025, CIF launched a new statewide registration and eligibility process for all high schools called the CIF Officials Registration Program. Officials can pay \$29 to register through a platform to begin the process of becoming CIF-eligible, and the system will streamline background checks, standardize qualifications, and simplify access to cost effective insurance coverage through a centralized structure. The program is voluntary in 2025-26 and will become mandatory beginning in 2026-27. This bill creates a very similar process, with the notable exception of requiring officials to obtain an ASCC from the CTC, which is considered a higher level of screening than a background check. According to CIF, other states have similar systems for game officials, including Massachusetts, Illinois, and New Jersey.

What is an ASCC? When AB 1572 was introduced, the bill required CIF to require that its officials who have undergone a background screening would be deemed eligible to receive an assignment to officiate. The most recent version of this bill ensures a greater level of security screening for officials and requires CIF, starting July 1, 2028, to require that its officials have a record of a valid ASCC issued by the CTC before being deemed and marked as eligible to receive an assignment to officiate.

According to the CTC, an individual obtaining an ASCC from the CTC must obtain fingerprint clearance through a criminal background check completed by the DOJ and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This is considered a higher level of screening than a background check. Existing law already requires non-certificated individuals, prior to starting a paid or volunteer position working with pupils in a student activity program sponsored by the school district or county office of education, to obtain an ASCC from the CTC.

The sole purpose of the ASCC is to provide verification that the holder has completed the professional fitness review before being placed in a position

working with pupils in a pupil activity program, and a pupil activity program may include interscholastic programs. Here are a few features of the ASCC as it relates to the implementation of this bill:

- The ASCC is not limited to one employing agency but may be used in all California public school districts, which makes it a valuable certification for game officials working across multiple school districts.
- The CTC charges a \$100 fee on a rolling five-year basis for the ASCC.
- In renewing the ASCC, if an individual maintains their certificate and renews in a timely manner, they would not need to repeat fingerprinting.
- The initial fingerprinting allows the CTC to continuously receive official criminal history records in the case that a certificate holder is arrested.
- According to the CTC, when there are no delays in fingerprint information being received, and no flags on an applicant's background that require investigation, ASCC applications are granted within 10 business days from receipt. However, if there is misconduct that needs to be investigated, processing may take longer, and timing depends on the specific investigation.
- According to CIF, this bill delays the requirement that game officials obtain an ASCC from January 1, 2027 to July 1, 2028 because that gives additional time for CIF to ensure that their platform interfaces with CTC's list of ASCC holders who have their certificate suspended or revoked. In the meantime, game officials would still be required to receive a statewide and standardized background screening.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 465 (Bonilla, Chapter 146, Statutes of 2013) specifically provides that a community youth athletic program can request state and federal level criminal history information from the DOJ for a volunteer or paid coach.

AB 346 (Conway, Chapter 52, Statutes of 2010) provides that the requirement to obtain an ASCC is applicable to a paid or volunteer position to work with pupils in a pupil activity program sponsored by a school district.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$625,000 each year to hire additional analytical and legal staff to manage the additional screenings, case intake, and misconduct caseload.
- The costs for the CIF to oversee the registration platform and verification process are expected to be minor and absorbable.
- The Department of Justice does not anticipate a significant fiscal impact as a result of this bill.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/14/26)

California Association of Private School Organizations
 California Interscholastic Federation
 California Teachers Association
 Informed Policy Advocates
 Schools Excess Liability Fund

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/14/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0, 5/21/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Chen, Garcia, Jackson, Lackey, Lee, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez

Prepared by: Michelle Nguyen / ED. / (916) 651-4105
 8/17/26 10:38:00

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