

Policy JLCE- First Aid and Emergency Medical Care

Student accidents or illnesses

No treatment of injuries except first aid shall be permitted in the schools. First aid is that immediate help given by the best qualified person at hand in case of accident or sudden illness.

It is proper and lawful for school personnel to give emergency care to sick or injured students whenever the illness or injury comes to the attention of school personnel on school property, on school buses, in any group under school supervision off of school property, or adjacent to school environs. Whenever serious emergencies occur on a school bus, the driver shall drive at once to the nearest hospital to obtain emergency medical attention.

No drugs shall be given at any time unless it be aromatic spirits of ammonia in case of fainting. The administering of aspirin for headaches or pain or the giving of sodium bicarbonate is forbidden.

Principals and department heads shall be responsible for familiarizing personnel in each unit with policies and procedures for handling illnesses and injuries involving students. At least one person in each building shall have had special training in first aid.

Emergency information cards for all students shall be completed each year by parents or guardians of all students at the time of enrollment and shall be on file in school offices.

When athletic teams are participating away from their home school, coaches shall have in their possession duplicate copies of emergency cards for all participating athletes.

Whenever a situation requires additional attention beyond first aid measures given at school, references on the emergency cards should be contacted. When no adult listed on the emergency card can be reached or if such urgent care is needed that the time does not permit several telephone calls, the staff member in charge shall dial 911 and request the Denver City and County Fire Rescue Squad, give name and address of the school building, and state if an ambulance is needed.

The fire rescue squad in the immediate area shall respond to the emergency call and if an ambulance has been requested it shall be sent from the Denver Health and Hospitals. The injured or ill person may be taken to the closest hospital emergency room. A Denver Public Schools employee should accompany the student if the parent/guardian is not present.

These procedures shall be followed for all emergencies involving students at school, at school-sponsored activities and at athletic events unless a physician is in attendance at the latter to direct handling of such emergencies.

Liability in the administration of first aid*

In determining the propriety or nonpropriety of administering first aid in any emergency situation, the test of liability to be applied is that of what the ordinary prudent person equipped with like knowledge would do under the same or similar circumstances.

The element of emergency definitely must be present and a long-standing injury or illness or an occurrence not of an emergency nature would not justify the administration of first aid or in particular of anything that could be deemed a continuous course of treatment.

Ordinarily in the case of an emergency or accident, there is a duty to afford reasonable first aid. The question of whether first aid is negligently administered is a question of fact to be judged by the standards of what an ordinary prudent person possessed of like knowledge would have done under the same or similar circumstances.

A person need not be unduly fearful of liability in administering first aid if there is an emergency if the person stays within normal areas of first aid and acts in good faith and to the best of his knowledge and ability at the time. There would be more hazard involved through an overly cautious attitude in failing to administer first aid in the event of an accident than there would be in the administration of first aid.

If the emergency is severe, then the first thing to do is summon a physician or the city ambulance in addition to notifying the parents. As noted, once the student is turned over to the public health authorities, the person's responsibility for first aid treatment ceases.

**Extracted from an opinion rendered by the attorney for the Denver Public Schools, January 25, 1965*

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File: JLCE

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 13-21-108

C.R.S. 24-10-106.5

CROSS REFS.: JLIB, Student Dismissal Precautions

JLCD, Administering Medicines to Students