

## Medical staffing at events: What's required?

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We all know that gymnastics injuries can be quite serious, especially at higher levels of the sport. Serious injuries in gymnastics are more likely to occur during competition than during practice. As a reminder, USA Gymnastics has requirements for medical coverage that are slightly different for each discipline and each level of competition. These requirements can be found in the Rules & Procedures (R&P) for your discipline. The R&P defines which levels of the discipline are considered low, moderate, or high risk and the medical staffing varies based on the risk level.

High risk events require a meet director to have highly trained medical staff on site. The ability to respond quickly and appropriately to serious injuries can make a big difference in an athlete's recovery. For high-risk events, we require medical personnel onsite who, as part of their standard educational curriculum, have been trained in things like cervical spine stabilization and spine boarding, concussion assessment, musculoskeletal injury assessment, stabilizing fractures (including open fractures), immediate care of deep wounds and stopping blood loss. These are all injuries that can be reasonably expected to occur during a meet. Certified Athletic Trainers (ATCs), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), Physical Therapists with a Sports Certification (PT, SCS), and fellowship-trained Sports Medicine physicians all have this education as part of their standard training. Other medical professionals *may* have this training and may be qualified to provide coverage for high-risk events but meet directors will have to verify their training prior to engaging them as medical providers at high-risk events.

If you don't already have medical providers in your community that work with you, you can find qualified medical providers by reaching out to your local health system's sports medicine/orthopedics program, a local physical therapy/athletic training provider, local EMT companies, or by using an online ATC job board like [www.go4.io](http://www.go4.io) where you can post your needs at no cost.

Once you hire medical providers, there are several requirements that they must meet. You should verify their medical license on your state's licensing website. You can look up a medical provider's license by their name and verify that their license is active and will not expire prior to the end of your event. It's best not to accept a copy of their license as verification as this can be forged. All medical providers MUST have a background check that meets USA Gymnastics'

requirements and must have SafeSport training. If you are contracting with a health system for medical coverage, the medical providers do not need to be members of USA Gymnastics but still need to complete SafeSport training (you should ask for their certificates) and the health system needs to verify that the providers have an up to date background check that meets [our requirements](#). If you are contracting with an individual, the provider must be a member of USA Gymnastics. USA Gymnastics now offers medical memberships free of charge, though there is a fee for the background check. Individual medical providers should also show you proof of their malpractice insurance. Health systems will cover the malpractice insurance for any providers that they send you. More details on requirements for medical providers are found in [Appendix D of the USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy](#) and should be reviewed prior to your event.

If you have any questions on the medical requirements, please reach out to me or to member services who can help you answer your questions.