

**Practice Guideline for Joint Reduction by NYS Certified Athletic Trainers.**  
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Occasionally, athletic trainers may encounter patients with a joint dislocation. It is typically advantageous for a dislocated joint to be reduced quickly, within minutes of the injury. However, there is a danger that further damage could be caused by the reduction being performed incorrectly.

[Section 8352](#) of the NYS Education Law defines the practice of athletic training. This section of law states, in part, “The practice of the profession of athletic training is defined as the application of principles, methods and procedures for managing athletic injuries, which shall include the preconditioning, conditioning, and reconditioning of an individual who has suffered an athletic injury through the use of appropriate preventative and supportive devices, under the supervision of a physician...”

As it is advantageous for joint reduction to be done as soon as possible to prevent further damage, it is the opinion of the NYS Committee for Athletic Trainers that NYS certified Athletic Trainers may reduce a dislocated joints in the field immediately when the injuries happen if the AT is properly trained and competent in joint reduction. The AT must have a written standing order from their supervising physician that identifies the specific joint or joints that may be reduced to engage in joint reduction. The AT may attempt the joint reduction once and must refer the individual to a physician if that attempt is unsuccessful. Additionally, the AT can instruct an athlete to perform a self-reduction technique. If the AT is successful in reducing the dislocation, the athlete should still be referred to a physician for further evaluation.

Practice guidelines do not replace legal requirements for practice, nor are they grounds for professional misconduct. Practice guidelines do not carry the force of law or regulation. Practitioners must specifically become familiar with and observe the legal requirements associated with professional practice. For specific legal requirements for the practice of Athletic Training in New York State refer to:

- The law, or statute, authorizing the licensure of athletic training, [Article 162](#) of Education Law.
- [Part 79-7](#) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education in Title 8 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations.
- Education Law, [Article 130](#), Sections 6509, 6510, and 6511 concerning professional misconduct; and
- 8NYCRR [Part 29.1](#) (General provisions) and [Part 29.2](#), General provisions for health professions.
- Additional information concerning unprofessional conduct is found in various sections of [Part 29](#) of the Rules of the Board of Regents.