

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was classified to section 6732 of this title prior to renumbering by Pub. L. 114-95.

**§ 7943. Definitions**

For purposes of this subpart:

**(1) Economic loss**

The term “economic loss” means any pecuniary loss resulting from harm (including the loss of earnings or other benefits related to employment, medical expense loss, replacement services loss, loss due to death, burial costs, and loss of business or employment opportunities) to the extent recovery for such loss is allowed under applicable State law.

**(2) Harm**

The term “harm” includes physical, non-physical, economic, and noneconomic losses.

**(3) Noneconomic loss**

The term “noneconomic loss” means loss for physical or emotional pain, suffering, inconvenience, physical impairment, mental anguish, disfigurement, loss of enjoyment of life, loss of society or companionship, loss of consortium (other than loss of domestic service), hedonic damages, injury to reputation, or any other nonpecuniary loss of any kind or nature.

**(4) School**

The term “school” means a public or private kindergarten, a public or private elementary school or secondary school, or a home school.

**(5) State**

The term “State” means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, any other territory or possession of the United States, or any political subdivision of any such State, territory, or possession.

**(6) Teacher**

The term “teacher” means—

(A) a teacher, instructor, principal, or administrator;

(B) another educational professional who works in a school;

(C) a professional or nonprofessional employee who—

(i) works in a school; and

(ii)(I) in the employee’s job, maintains discipline or ensures safety; or

(II) in an emergency, is called on to maintain discipline or ensure safety; or

(D) an individual member of a school board (as distinct from the board).

(Pub. L. 89-10, title VIII, §8553, formerly title II, §2363, as added Pub. L. 107-110, title II, §201, Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 1667; renumbered title IX, §9543, renumbered title VIII, §8553, Pub. L. 114-95, title II, §2001(a)(3)(A), (B), (D), title VIII, §8001(a)(7), Dec. 10, 2015, 129 Stat. 1913, 2088, 2089.)

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was classified to section 6733 of this title prior to renumbering by Pub. L. 114-95.

**§ 7944. Applicability**

This subpart shall only apply to States that receive funds under this chapter, and shall apply to such a State as a condition of receiving such funds.

(Pub. L. 89-10, title VIII, §8554, formerly title II, §2364, as added Pub. L. 107-110, title II, §201, Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 1668; renumbered title IX, §9544, renumbered title VIII, §8554, Pub. L. 114-95, title II, §2001(a)(3)(A), (B), (D), title VIII, §8001(a)(7), Dec. 10, 2015, 129 Stat. 1913, 2088, 2089.)

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was classified to section 6734 of this title prior to renumbering by Pub. L. 114-95.

**§ 7945. Preemption and election of State non-applicability****(a) Preemption**

This subpart preempts the laws of any State to the extent that such laws are inconsistent with this subpart, except that this subpart shall not preempt any State law that provides additional protection from liability relating to teachers.

**(b) Election of State regarding nonapplicability**

This subpart shall not apply to any civil action in a State court against a teacher with respect to claims arising within that State if such State enacts a statute in accordance with State requirements for enacting legislation—

(1) citing the authority of this subsection;

(2) declaring the election of such State that this subpart shall not apply, as of a date certain, to such civil action in the State; and

(3) containing no other provisions.

(Pub. L. 89-10, title VIII, §8555, formerly title II, §2365, as added Pub. L. 107-110, title II, §201, Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 1668; renumbered title IX, §9545, renumbered title VIII, §8555, Pub. L. 114-95, title II, §2001(a)(3)(A), (B), (D), title VIII, §8001(a)(7), Dec. 10, 2015, 129 Stat. 1913, 2088, 2089.)

**Editorial Notes**

## CODIFICATION

Section was classified to section 6735 of this title prior to renumbering by Pub. L. 114-95.

**§ 7946. Limitation on liability for teachers****(a) Liability protection for teachers**

Except as provided in subsection (b), no teacher in a school shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the teacher on behalf of the school if—

(1) the teacher was acting within the scope of the teacher’s employment or responsibilities to a school or governmental entity;

(2) the actions of the teacher were carried out in conformity with Federal, State, and local laws (including rules and regulations) in furtherance of efforts to control, discipline, expel, or suspend a student or maintain order or control in the classroom or school;

(3) if appropriate or required, the teacher was properly licensed, certified, or authorized

by the appropriate authorities for the activities or practice involved in the State in which the harm occurred, where the activities were or practice was undertaken within the scope of the teacher's responsibilities;

(4) the harm was not caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the teacher; and

(5) the harm was not caused by the teacher operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which the State requires the operator or the owner of the vehicle, craft, or vessel to—

(A) possess an operator's license; or

(B) maintain insurance.

**(b) Exceptions to teacher liability protection**

If the laws of a State limit teacher liability subject to one or more of the following conditions, such conditions shall not be construed as inconsistent with this section:

(1) A State law that requires a school or governmental entity to adhere to risk management procedures, including mandatory training of teachers.

(2) A State law that makes the school or governmental entity liable for the acts or omissions of its teachers to the same extent as an employer is liable for the acts or omissions of its employees.

(3) A State law that makes a limitation of liability inapplicable if the civil action was brought by an officer of a State or local government pursuant to State or local law.

**(c) Limitation on punitive damages based on the actions of teachers**

**(1) General rule**

Punitive damages may not be awarded against a teacher in an action brought for harm based on the act or omission of a teacher acting within the scope of the teacher's employment or responsibilities to a school or governmental entity unless the claimant establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the harm was proximately caused by an act or omission of such teacher that constitutes willful or criminal misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed.

**(2) Construction**

Paragraph (1) does not create a cause of action for punitive damages and does not preempt or supersede any Federal or State law to the extent that such law would further limit the award of punitive damages.

**(d) Exceptions to limitations on liability**

**(1) In general**

The limitations on the liability of a teacher under this subpart shall not apply to any misconduct that—

(A) constitutes a crime of violence (as that term is defined in section 16 of title 18) or act of international terrorism (as that term is defined in section 2331 of title 18) for which the defendant has been convicted in any court;

(B) involves a sexual offense, as defined by applicable State law, for which the defendant has been convicted in any court;

(C) involves misconduct for which the defendant has been found to have violated a Federal or State civil rights law; or

(D) where the defendant was under the influence (as determined pursuant to applicable State law) of intoxicating alcohol or any drug at the time of the misconduct.

**(2) Hiring**

The limitations on the liability of a teacher under this subpart shall not apply to misconduct during background investigations, or during other actions, involved in the hiring of a teacher.

**(e) Rules of construction**

**(1) Concerning responsibility of teachers to schools and governmental entities**

Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any civil action brought by any school or any governmental entity against any teacher of such school.

**(2) Concerning corporal punishment**

Nothing in this subpart shall be construed to affect any State or local law (including a rule or regulation) or policy pertaining to the use of corporal punishment.

(Pub. L. 89-10, title VIII, § 8556, formerly title II, § 2366, as added Pub. L. 107-110, title II, § 201, Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 1668; renumbered title IX, § 9546, renumbered title VIII, § 8556, and amended Pub. L. 114-95, title II, § 2001(a)(1), (3)(A), (B), (D), title VIII, § 8001(a)(7), Dec. 10, 2015, 129 Stat. 1913, 2088, 2089.)

**Editorial Notes**

**CODIFICATION**

Section was classified to section 6736 of this title prior to renumbering by Pub. L. 114-95.

**AMENDMENTS**

2015—Pub. L. 114-95, § 2001(a)(1), struck out undesignated par. following par. (2) which read as follows: "ate law that makes a limitation of liability inapplicable if the civil action was brought by an officer of a State or local government pursuant to State or local law."

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 114-95, § 2001(a)(1), added par. (3).

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2015 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 114-95 effective Dec. 10, 2015, except with respect to certain noncompetitive programs and competitive programs, see section 5 of Pub. L. 114-95, set out as a note under section 6301 of this title.

**§ 7947. Allocation of responsibility for noneconomic loss**

**(a) General rule**

In any civil action against a teacher, based on an act or omission of a teacher acting within the scope of the teacher's employment or responsibilities to a school or governmental entity, the liability of the teacher for noneconomic loss shall be determined in accordance with subsection (b).