



Cardiac Emergency Response Plan Implementation Guide

A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) is a written document that establishes the specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting – be it a school, community organization, workplace, or sports facility. The following guidance will help organizations create, share, practice, activate, and evaluate a cardiac emergency response plan.

1 Create a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

All schools, community organizations or workplaces, and sports facilities should establish a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP). Learn about sudden cardiac arrest, CERPs, and other resources available to guide you. Then, you identify the members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team and start drafting the CERP based on your organization’s resources and needs.

Learn about sudden cardiac arrest and CERPs.

- Learn about sudden cardiac arrest and CPR at [Heart.org/NationofLifesavers](https://www.heart.org/NationofLifesavers)
- Learn about CERPs at [Heart.org/CERP](https://www.heart.org/CERP)

Review the CERP Guidance

- [For schools](#)
- [For community and workplaces](#)
- [For sports facilities](#)

Understand your local resources and organizations that can support your organizational efforts to prepare for and respond to an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Local resources can include the following:

- Community organizations, such as local offices of the [American Heart Association](#) or [Project Adam](#).
- Emergency Medical Responders such as your local fire department.
- Local government, such as local health department or elected officials.

Identify the members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT). The CERT is a group of staff members who have current CPR and AED training and are designated to respond to and provide basic life support during a cardiac emergency. The following resources can help you organize your team.

- [Developing Cardiac Emergency Response Team](#)
- [CERP Team Roster](#)
- [Sample Timeline for CERP Action Steps](#)

Draft your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan based on the following evidence-based guidance and be familiar with resources to help you draft your plan.

- [For schools](#)
- [For community and workplaces](#)
- [For sports facilities](#)
- [CERP Resources by Evidence-based Core Element](#)

2 Share your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Share the CERP at your site. Ensure the plan is integrated with local emergency medical services, fire, and police (if applicable). Post the CERP in key locations throughout the site.

- **Share** the plan with all staff, volunteers (if applicable), organizations using the facility, and other people that are frequently in the location. Post it broadly in high traffic, widely accessible places.
- **Distribute** the cardiac emergency response plan annually and when updates are made.
- **Review** the [CERP Resources: Communication of CERP](#).

3 Practice your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Practice the CERP plan using routine drills (like fire and lock-down drills). Doing regular AED drills is the best way to test your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan, your communication system and your response team's readiness. Review the CERP Drill and Evaluation template for [schools](#) or [community organizations](#).

4 Activate your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Activate the CERP Team in response to a sudden cardiac event. Remember that the protocol for responding to a cardiac emergency should be posted and readily available.

- [Cardiac Emergency Response Protocol](#)
- [Simplified Adult Basic Life Support](#)

5 Evaluate your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

- Evaluate your plan to improve the response process and documentation. Review the [CERP Resources: Annual Review and Evaluation of the Plan](#).