

PALS Provider Course (Instructor-Led Training) 2025 Guidelines FAQ



As of October 22, 2025

PALS Provider Instructor-Led Training (ILT) Course Questions

Q: What is the American Heart Association's 2025 PALS Provider Course?

A: The Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Provider Course has been updated to reflect new science in the 2025 AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC. The goal of the PALS Provider Course is to improve outcomes for pediatric patients by preparing healthcare providers to effectively recognize and intervene in patients with respiratory emergencies, shock, and cardiopulmonary arrest by using high-performance team dynamics and high-quality individual skills. This course uses precourse preparation, didactic instruction, and active participation in learning stations and simulated cases.

Q: What specifically is taught in the new PALS Course?

A: In the 2025 PALS Provider Course, students will learn and practice

- **Skills:**
 - Performing child and infant CPR
 - Using oxygen delivery and airway management equipment
 - Establishing intraosseous (IO) access and a method for giving rapid fluid boluses
 - Using electrocardiogram (ECG) monitoring
 - Providing defibrillation/cardioversion
- **Pediatric assessment:** A systematic approach
- **Medical management:**
 - 4 types of acute respiratory problems
 - 4 types of acute circulatory problems
 - 4 types of acute cardiac problems, including cardiac arrest
- **Leadership:** Communication and other important elements of team dynamics as they relate to resuscitation
- **High Performance Teams:** Numerous rounds of practice and testing to improve the choreography of team resuscitation

Q: What are the key differences between the 2020 Guidelines and 2025 Guidelines versions of the PALS Provider Course?

A: The new PALS Course includes the following changes:

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Feedback Devices

- Feedback devices are recommended for use during CPR training for health care professionals and lay rescuers.

Single Chain of Survival

- A single Chain of Survival is intended to apply to adult and pediatric in-hospital cardiac arrest and out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. In creating this singular chain, it is acknowledged that before cardiac arrest, prevention and preparedness can both avoid the need for and optimize resuscitation.

Scripted Debriefing

- Scripted debriefing involves the creation of a written plan for debriefing students during or after life support training. Standardized debriefing helps to maintain consistency in the delivery of debriefings across training centers and resuscitation programs.

Use of Cognitive Aids

- Cognitive aids are resources that provide prompts aimed at encouraging recall of information and increasing the likelihood of correct performance and behaviors. It may be reasonable for health care professionals to use cognitive aids during resuscitation.

CPR and Resuscitation

- For infants and children in cardiac arrest, interruptions in CPR should be minimized and pauses in chest compressions should be less than 10 seconds.
- For infants, rescuers should compress the sternum with the heel of 1 hand or use the 2 thumb-encircling hands technique. If the rescuer cannot physically encircle the chest, it is recommended to compress the chest with the heel of 1 hand.
- For infants and children in cardiac arrest with initial non-shockable rhythm, it is reasonable to administer the initial dose of epinephrine as early as possible.
- For infants and children with invasive airways in place during CPR, end-tidal carbon dioxide (ETCO₂) monitoring may be considered to monitor CPR quality.

Post-Cardiac Arrest Care – Prognostication

- It is recommended that health care professionals consider multiple modalities when they are predicting neurological outcomes (favorable or unfavorable after resuscitation from cardiac arrest in infants and children).
- The usefulness of cough or gag reflexes or response to pain to support a favorable or unfavorable neurological prognosis at any time point after cardiac arrest in infants and children is not well established.

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- When interpreted in the context of other prognostic criteria, it is reasonable to use electroencephalography up to 72 hours after cardiac arrest in infants and children to support a favorable or unfavorable neurological prognosis.

Foreign Body Airway Obstruction

- For children with severe foreign-body airway obstruction (FBAO), repeated cycles of 5 back blows alternating with 5 abdominal thrusts should be performed until the object is expelled or the child becomes unresponsive (see the new FBAO algorithm). Rescuers should activate the emergency response system.
- For infants with severe FBAO, repeated cycles of 5 back blows alternating with 5 chest thrusts should be performed until the object is expelled or the infant becomes unresponsive. Rescuers should activate the emergency response system.

PBLS Practice and Testing

- Child and Infant CPR practice and testing stations are designed to reflect CPR more realistically. Each round of practice and testing has increased in duration to require switching of the compressor, utilizing the CPR Coach, and recognizing limitations.

Q: What is the format for the PALS Provider ILT Course?

A: In the 2025 PALS Provider ILT Course, precourse work is completed before the course so that students are prepared for the course at a Training Center (TC) or other facility. Precourse work includes the mandatory Precourse Self-Assessment, followed by video lessons. The course is structured as follows:

- Core concepts are presented online through interactive video lessons. Video lessons are completed before coming to class. Then Instructors lead discussions and case-based scenarios around a manikin during class.
- The Instructor coaches students by using a feedback device as they practice CPR and ventilation skills.
- The Instructor monitors as each student/team demonstrates skills proficiency as outlined in the skills testing checklist.
- Students take the PALS Provider Course Exam to confirm their understanding of core concepts.

The TC may choose for students to complete online video lessons (precourse work) before coming to class, or may choose to conduct a traditional PALS course, where all video lessons are conducted in class as interactive discussions with students. The course is designed to give students the opportunity to practice and demonstrate proficiency in the following skills used in resuscitation:

- Identifying and treating problems that place the child at risk for cardiac arrest
- Applying a systematic approach to pediatric assessment

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- Using the evaluate-identify-intervene sequence
- Using the PALS algorithms and flowcharts
- Demonstrating effective resuscitation team dynamics

PALS Course Completion Requirements

Q: What are the course completion requirements for the PALS Course?

A: The minimum course completion requirements include:

- Participation in the classroom course, including completion of all learning stations
- Completion of the open-resource written exam with a minimum score of 84%
- Passing the 1- and 2-Rescuer Child BLS With AED and 1- and 2-Rescuer Infant BLS Skills Tests
- Passing 2 PALS core case scenarios as a team member or team leader (1 cardiac and 1 respiratory or shock), providing appropriate medical treatment and demonstrating effective team dynamics
- Required skills stations include:
 - Child CPR and AED
 - Infant CPR
 - Airway Management
 - Rhythm Disturbances/Electrical Therapy
 - Vascular Access

Q: Are students required to act as a team leader in the two core test case scenarios in order to pass the PALS Course?

A: No.

Q: Is there a PALS Update Course?

A: Yes. The PALS Update Course will also require completion of Prework and the Precourse Self Assessment.

PALS Target Audience

Q: Who is the intended audience for the PALS Course?

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A: The PALS Course is for healthcare providers who either direct or participate in the management of respiratory and/or cardiovascular emergencies and cardiopulmonary arrest in pediatric patients. This includes personnel in emergency response, emergency medicine, intensive care, and critical care units such as physicians, nurses, paramedics, and others who need a PALS course completion card for job or other requirements.

Q: What are the prerequisites for taking the PALS Course?

A: Before taking PALS, students should have a mastery of infant and child BLS skills. Students should also:

- Be able to recognize a variety of heart rhythms
- Be familiar with different types of airway management tools and how they are used
- Have knowledge of the drugs commonly used in the PALS algorithms and flowcharts
- Understand the Systematic Approach Algorithm and the “evaluate-identify-intervene” sequence

Q: What resources are available to help prepare students for the PALS Course?

A: The following PALS resources are available to students at eLearning.heart.org:

- Mandatory Precourse Self-Assessment
- Precourse Preparation Checklist
- Video Lessons (Precourse Work)
- PALS Supplementary Information

Precourse Self-Assessment

Q: What is the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment?

A: The Precourse Self-Assessment is an online tool that evaluates a student’s knowledge in 3 sections: rhythm recognition, pharmacology, and practical application. Students complete the assessment *before the course* to help evaluate their proficiency and determine the need for additional review and practice before the course. All students must complete the Precourse Self-Assessment and achieve a score of at least 70% before taking the PALS Course. Students must print their successful scoring report and bring it with them to class.

Q: Why is the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment required?

A: Students need to make sure they are prepared for the PALS Provider Course to minimize the risk of failing the course. Market research indicates a significantly favorable response from Instructors on making the Precourse

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Self-Assessment mandatory. The need for the mandatory Precourse Self- Assessment has increased due to more non-traditional students taking PALS.

Q: Will there be a printed version of the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment? If not, why not?

A: The online Precourse Self-Assessment cannot be duplicated in a printed format since it measures knowledge gaps based on how students answer questions as they move through the assessment. A written version would not be able to adequately assess knowledge.

Course Materials

Q: What materials are available for the PALS Provider Instructor-led Course?

A: Materials for the AHA's PALS Provider Instructor-led training course are currently available through ShopCPR.Heart.org or WorldPoint (for some AHA Training Centers). Materials include:

Student/Provider Materials

25-1119 PALS Provider Manual, includes PALS Reference Card (25-1118)

25-3120 PALS Provider Manual eBook, includes PALS Digital Reference Card (25-3121)

25-1118 PALS Reference Card

25-3121 PALS Digital Reference Card

Instructor Materials

25-1114 PALS Provider Course Videos: DVD (2 discs)

25-1424 PALS Provider Course Videos: Digital & Streaming

25-1158 PALS Provider Course Videos: USB

25-1117 PALS Instructor Manual

25-3122 PALS Instructor Manual eBook

25-1159 PALS Instructor Package: USB Videos

25-1139 PALS Instructor Package with Digital & Streaming Videos

25- 1113 PALS Instructor Package: DVD Videos

Cards

25-3006 PALS Provider eCard

25-3013 PALS Instructor eCard

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Supplemental Materials

25-1116 PALS Posters (set of 9)

25-1115 PALS Emergency Crash Cart Cards (set of 4)

Q: Why are there 2 DVDs included in the PALS Course DVD Set?

A: The set includes 2 DVDs to provide more flexibility for Instructors in the way the course is run based on a general ratio of 2 Instructors to 12 students.

Course Length

Q: How long is the PALS Course?

A: Approximate times for each version of the PALS Provider Course are listed below (student-instructor ratio: 6:1):

- PALS ILT Full Course: 12.5 hours with breaks; 11 hours and 40 minutes without breaks
- PALS ILT Traditional Course: 17 hours and 30 minutes with breaks; 15 hours and 50 minutes without breaks
- PALS ILT Update Course: 8 hours and 45 minutes with breaks; 8 hours and 5 minutes without breaks
- HeartCode® PALS Hands-On Session: 5 hours 30 minutes (without optional lessons)

Teaching the New PALS Provider Instructor-led Course

Q: Who can teach the new PALS Provider ILT Course?

A: The new PALS Course may be taught by AHA PALS Instructors who have completed their 2025 Guidelines Instructor Update for PALS and have received and reviewed their new PALS Course Instructor materials.

Q: What resources are available to help Instructors understand the new PALS Course and materials?

A: The 2025 AHA Guidelines PALS Instructor Update Course provides AHA Instructors updates on new science and key changes published in the 2025 AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC. They also deliver Interim Training Materials and guidance on how to use these materials to incorporate 2025 science and education updates.

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NOTE: All US AHA Instructors must complete their required Instructor Update course by 11:59 pm February 28, 2026, to continue teaching AHA courses.

The AHA developed the PALS Product & Course Orientation (P&CO) to help PALS Instructors understand the new, 2025 PALS course design and teaching strategies, and to quickly get up to speed on the latest and most important updates to the PALS Course materials. This orientation is available free of charge to Instructors through [ShopCPR.heart.org](https://shopcpr.heart.org).

The P&CO provides PALS Instructors:

- Information about new course materials, course curriculum updates, and how the changes impact the way you will teach the PALS Course
- Details, clarification, and direction on various course formats
- Specifics about new PALS course materials
- Steps to incorporate new updates into various course settings

While all PALS Instructors are strongly encouraged to complete the P&CO before teaching the new course, it is not required. Viewing the P&CO is most helpful if Instructors have new course materials in-hand while viewing.

The PALS P&CO and Instructor Update courses can be ordered as bundle free of charge on [ShopCPR.heart.org](https://shopcpr.heart.org).

Q: Does the 2025 PALS Provider Course include an option for students to earn a BLS Provider Card during a PALS class?

A: Yes. The AHA allows Instructors to add BLS skills testing and an exam to provide both a BLS Provider eCard and a PALS Provider eCard upon successful completion of the PALS course. If a BLS Provider card is to be issued, a BLS Instructor must be present to complete the adult CPR skills tests as well as the exam. **Note that offering testing for BLS skills and administering the BLS exam will add time to the PALS Course.** Renewal of BLS skills during a PALS class should be a preplanned option, with registration for the BLS portion to allow for both the students and the Instructor to prepare.

2025 PALS Exam

Q: Are students allowed to access resources when taking the PALS Provider Course Exam?

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- A:** The AHA has adopted an open-resource policy for exams. Open resource means that students may use resources as a reference while completing the exam. Resources could include the provider manual, either in printed form or as an eBook on personal devices, any notes the student took during the provider course, the 2025 Handbook of ECC for Healthcare Providers, the AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC, posters, etc. Open resource does not mean open discussion with other students or the Instructor. Students may not interact with each other during the exam.

Continuing Education (CE) Information

- Q:** Does the PALS Provider ILT Course offer continuing education (CE)?

- A:** Yes. The AHA has applied for CE for the PALS Provider Course. Official accreditation statement(s) to follow.