



## 10 Steps to an Effective AED Program

### Your implementation checklist

*Cardiac arrest* is when someone's heart suddenly stops beating. It can happen to anyone, at any time, in any place—including at work. In the United States, it happens in workplaces thousands of times each year.

If it happens where you work, having *automated external defibrillators* (AEDs) on-site can help save a life. AEDs provide safe electric shocks that can restart someone's heart. When they are used with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), AEDs can save lives.

To set up an effective AED program (sometimes called a *PAD* [or public access defibrillation] *program*), your organization will need to take 10 important steps. Find complete details about these steps in *Your On-site AED Program—An Implementation Guide* from the American Heart Association. As you complete each step, you can track your progress on this checklist.

*Note:* This checklist and the full guide are provided for your convenience. The American Heart Association does not recommend particular manufacturers' products and cannot provide legal advice. It does, however, publish research and offer training relating to heart health.

Learn more about AEDs at  
[cpr.heart.org/en/training-programs/aed-implementation](https://cpr.heart.org/en/training-programs/aed-implementation).

For more information about American Heart Association  
lifesaving courses and programs, visit [cpr.heart.org](https://cpr.heart.org).

Learn more about training your workforce at [heart.org/workforcetraining](https://heart.org/workforcetraining).

# Implementation Checklist

## Step 1

### Check local requirements

Research and follow your state's requirements for AED programs. Be sure to check legal requirements. You will also need to find out about any registration and reporting requirements.

## Step 2

### Assess your organization's needs

Set a program budget and decide how many AEDs you need, how sturdy they must be, and what features you want (such as a bilingual option or child features).

Try to budget for enough that no matter where a cardiac arrest emergency occurs, an AED will be no more than a 3- to 5-minute round-trip walk away; but if that is beyond your budget, remember that some are better than none.

## Step 3

### Research the AED market

Compare models online. Then choose the one that best meets your needs.

The American Heart Association does not recommend one AED over another.

## Step 4

### Buy the AEDs and other supplies

Buy extra AED electrode pads so that you can replace used ones immediately. You'll also need additional pairs for removing chest hair, if necessary. Your shopping list should also include pocket masks, 1-way valves, razors, and first aid kits with scissors.

## Step 5

### Register your AEDs

If required, register your AEDs with your state and with local emergency medical services. Register with the manufacturer, too. That way, you will receive news of updates and recalls.

## Step 6

### Place and post

Place the AEDs in visible, easy-to-access locations. Post clear signs that specifically identify the devices as AEDs. If you are tempted to lock up your AEDs, rest assured that AEDs are rarely stolen. And an AED that's locked up can't save a life.

## Step 7

### Manage your program

Assign a team to manage program policies and procedures.

## Step 8

### Train employees

Train enough people in CPR and AED use so that someone is always available to respond to a cardiac arrest emergency. You can never have too many trained responders.

The American Heart Association offers CPR and AED training in both a classroom setting and an online format.

## Step 9

### Raise awareness

Publicize your AED program internally. Make sure that everyone knows where the AEDs are—and who is trained to use them.

## Step 10

### Maintain your AEDs

Assign a person or a team to inspect your AEDs regularly, restock supplies, arrange for any needed maintenance, and check for software updates and for recalls.

Make AED maintenance a top priority.

Only a working AED can help save a life.