



Guidance for Implementation of CPR Training Law (2013)

The Department of Education worked in consultation with the Department of Health's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program – Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Work Group and the American Heart Association to develop the guidance in this document.

During the 2013 Legislative Session, *An Act Relating to Education – Curriculum – CPR Training* (H. 5376, S. 318) was enacted. The new law establishes minimum standards for CPR training in Rhode Island schools. This guidance document outlines several ways that the new requirement can be implemented. Schools that are already going above and beyond the minimum standard described herein are encouraged to continue their existing curriculum.

The new law reads:

16-22-15. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. -- (a) The department of elementary and secondary education shall develop and prescribe a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training course for public school students in the state. The course shall be established in accordance with the requirements and criteria obtained from the Red Cross and/or the American Heart Association and the director of the department of health.

(b) The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate course guidelines including the age or grade level of pupils required to receive cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training. *This shall at a minimum include psychomotor skill-based cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training and an overview of automated external defibrillator (AED) use for all high school students prior to graduation. "Psychomotor skill" is defined as the use of hands-on practicing to support cognitive learning. Cognitive-only training does not qualify. Formal certification is not required.*

(c) The school committees of the several cities, towns, and school districts shall provide for the incorporation of the course in training in existing health education courses. *The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish a procedure for monitoring adherence to this section.*

**Sections underlined in italics reflect new requirements.*

Adherence will be monitored through electronic reporting of the Annual School Health Report via eRIDE. The superintendent or non-public school authority is responsible for the timely submission of the report.

Guidance for Implementation

- The new law reflects current science and recommendations. It clarifies that CPR training for high school students needs to include hands-on skills practice and an overview of AED use. Compression-only (hands-only) CPR meets the new requirement.
- Completion of CPR training and an AED overview are **required for grades 9-12 prior to graduation** and are aligned with the *RI Health Education Framework* and *Comprehensive Health Instructional Outcomes*. According to the *Basic Education Program* regulations section G-13-1.3.9 Comprehensive Health, a high quality health education program of study leads to health literacy for all students, providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain healthy lifestyles.
- Teachers do **not** need to hold a CPR or AED instructor certification in order to teach this content.
- Students do **not** need to earn a CPR or AED certification.
- Schools are **not** required to purchase an AED.
- The training can be implemented at **no cost**. See page 3 for free resources.
- **The “Minimum Standard” Required by Law:** At its very basic level, students could view an American Heart Association public service announcement for compression-only (hands-only) CPR – which is available online at www.handsonlycpr.org – and practice compressions. Although practice is ideally performed on purpose built CPR manikins, compressions can be performed on objects such as a soft soccer ball or volleyball to ensure the correct rhythm if manikins are not accessible. Every student should be given an opportunity to practice compressions for several minutes. The overarching goal is to teach students to recognize an emergency, dial 9-1-1, and push hard and fast in the middle of the chest until help arrives. For the AED overview, teachers can simply show a picture of an AED and explain its function and ease of use. If the school has an AED, the teacher should show the actual device and discuss the location of devices on school grounds. The entire hands-only training and AED overview can be accomplished in just one course period over the 4 years of high school.
- **The “Gold Standard”** for CPR and AED training remains certification for all students. Certification takes 3-4 hours and there is a cost associated. Schools that would like to enhance the learning experience by offering certification are encouraged to do so.
- **Good Samaritan Protections:** Rhode Island law protects Good Samaritans who have been trained in accordance with standards promulgated by either the American Heart Association or the Red Cross. Persons providing approved training in CPR and use of automated external defibrillation in accordance with standards promulgated by either the American Heart Association or the Red Cross are also protected under this statute. *This is not intended to be legal advice.* View the current law: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE9/9-1/9-1-34.HTM>

Free Resources

- To meet the “Minimum Standard” required by law students could view an American Heart Association public service announcement for compression-only (hands-only) CPR – which is available online at www.handsonlycpr.org – and practice compressions. Although practice is ideally performed on purpose built CPR manikins, compressions can be performed on objects such as a soft soccer ball or volleyball to ensure the correct rhythm if manikins are not accessible. Every student should be given an opportunity to practice compressions for several minutes. The overarching goal is to teach students to recognize an emergency, dial 9-1-1, and push hard and fast in the middle of the chest until help arrives. For the AED overview, teachers can simply show a picture of an AED and explain its function and ease of use. If the school has an AED, the teacher should show the actual device and discuss the location of devices on school grounds. The entire hands-only training and AED overview can be accomplished in just one course period over the 4 years of high school.
- **Local Fire/Rescue Departments:** Local public safety agencies may be able to enhance training or lend equipment/manikins to schools. Contact your local EMS agency: <http://www.health.ri.gov/lists/AmbulanceServices.pdf>
- **RI HeartSafe Communities:** Many cities/towns have been designated as “HeartSafe Communities” through the RI Department of Health’s HeartSafe Community Program. As part of the criteria for the program, cities/towns have to increase the number of community members who are trained in CPR. Visit the Department of Health’s website to learn if your community is “HeartSafe” and to find a list of contacts: <http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/heartsafecommunities/>
- **“Train-the-Trainer” Workshops:** Several members of the Department of Health’s Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention EMS Work Group have volunteered to provide “train-the-trainer” workshops to demonstrate the minimum standard and what is expected. This can be done at school professional days, teacher conferences or similar events. For more information, please contact Marianne Stepanian, RN at 401-444-8063 or MStepanian@Lifespan.org, or John Potvin, EMT-C, EMS Work Group Chairman at jpotvin@eastprovfire.com.

Other Resources (*cost associated*)

American Heart Association:

- The American Heart Association now offers a *CPR in Schools Training Kit* that empowers students to learn the core skills of CPR in under 30 minutes, and teaches AED skills and choking relief. The easy-to-use kit is designed specifically for the needs of school educators. The Kit includes 10 Mini Anne® Plus inflatable manikins, 10 kneel mats, 10 practice-while-watching training DVDs, a Facilitator Guide and a Lesson Plan.
- Schools can also turn to AHA training centers to request assistance. Find an American Heart Association Training Center: <http://ahainstructornetwork.americanheart.org/AHAecc/classConnector.jsp?pid=ahaecc.classconnector.home>
- For more information please contact David Hiltz at david.hiltz@heart.org or George Murphy at george.murphy@heart.org.

American Red Cross:

- The American Red Cross provides a 30 minute lesson called Citizen CPR where any ARC instructor whose current certification includes CPR is eligible to teach. Anyone who is not a CPR instructor can teach this lesson after successfully completing a one-hour training. For more information contact the Red Cross at 401-831-7700.