

# Heart Safe Community Designation

## TOOLKIT

A Partnership of the Minnesota Department of Health, the American Heart Association,  
and the Minnesota Resuscitation Consortium



**American  
Heart  
Association.**



**MN Resuscitation  
Consortium**

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## **Heart Safe Advisory Committee**

Minnesota Department of Health

American Heart Association – Minnesota Affiliate

Minnesota Resuscitation Consortium

The Heart Safe Advisory Committee is composed of individuals from across the state, representing public safety agencies, health care systems, community programs, educational institutions, and other non-profit groups. The Advisory Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for providing liaison to communities pursuing designation and decisions regarding new designation programs. The committee reviews and approves applications as they are received to ensure that communities receive a timely reply.

The committee does not endorse or support any particular product or program. Vendors are welcome to support their local community in becoming Heart Safe.

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## What is a Heart Safe Community?

If someone in your community, at your business or on your campus suffers a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) tomorrow, how likely is he or she to survive due to rapid access to life saving treatment?

How many residents and public safety officials in your community can recognize the symptoms of cardiac arrest and know to help “on the way, right away?”

How many people who live, work and play in your community, business or campus can recognize the signs of cardiac arrest and know how to help?

Do all of your buildings, auditoriums and meeting areas have effective emergency response plans?

How many public AEDs are available and are ready in case of an emergency?

The answers to these questions bring forth the importance of becoming Heart Safe Designated. The answers to these questions could determine whether or not your community qualifies as a Heart Safe Community. The mission of the Heart Safe Community Designation is to help communities, businesses, and campuses evaluate their readiness for cardiac events. It includes evaluation, planning and development of new awareness, CPR & AED training, and AED location information. Heart Safe Designation is the original program with a focus on overall community development. This program is supported by the Minnesota Department of Health and American Heart Association – Minnesota Affiliate and aims to help communities, businesses, and campuses improve the chances that anyone suffering a sudden cardiac arrest will have the best possible chance for survival. Through the Heart Safe Designation program, a community, campus, or business site can strengthen what the American Heart Association has called the “chain of survival,” which has five critical steps.

## Early Access to Emergency Care

- Bystanders recognize the symptoms of cardiac arrest and call 9-1-1 immediately.
- EMS dispatchers are equipped with instructions for the caller.

## Early CPR

- Early hands-only CPR buys precious minutes until a defibrillator is available, increasing the chances of effective defibrillation.
- Tools are available to assist untrained individuals in performing hands-only CPR.

## Early Defibrillation

- Early Defibrillation is the most critical link in the chain of survival.
- AEDs are light-weight, sturdy and easy to use by anyone.
- AEDs should be available for public use and emergency ready.

## Early Advanced Care

- Basic and Advanced care provided by EMS is critical to the survival of cardiac arrest victims.

## Post-Cardiac Arrest Care

- Post resuscitation care at an appropriate ACLS facility followed by cardiac rehab is an integral step in Sudden Cardiac Arrest long-term survival and recovery.

The first three links in the chain of survival are also the most important and happen with the public!

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who can apply to be a designated Heart Safe Community?

Any municipality, county, business or campus is eligible to apply for the Heart Safe designation. Requirements are determined by geographic locations or business/campus size and average daily population.

### Is there an application fee?

While there is no application fee, there are often costs associated with meeting the criteria to become a Heart Safe Community. Cost will vary depending on the size and needs of your site (i.e. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training and equipment or Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) placement). A proper assessment of your community will determine the needs.

### Why should my community be designated as Heart Safe?

Communities which have been designated as Heart Safe have a documented increase in bystander CPR rates, bystander use of an AED and increased survival rate of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

### When are Heart Safe Community applications due?

Applications can be submitted to the Heart Safe Advisory Committee at any time. Applications are reviewed and referred for designation on a quarterly basis.

### Will an AED always resuscitate someone in Cardiac Arrest?

Unfortunately, NO. However, most SCA's are due to a chaotic heart rhythm and the only effective treatment is early defibrillation along with CPR.

### Is the AED safe to use?

Absolutely! An AED is safe to use by anyone. If you can turn it on, you can use it. They are designed with multiple safeguards and warnings. You can receive training by attending most CPR classes or specific unit training if there is an AED at a site you frequent.

### Is there any protection for public bystanders that administer CPR/AED?

[State of Minnesota Statutes 2018, Section 604A.01 \(www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/604A.01\)](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/604A.01), the Good Samaritan law, specifies both the duty to act and general immunity from liability. The general immunity from liability covers the basic care rendered at an emergency scene and includes the use of an AED.

## Can anyone buy an AED?

Yes. However, AEDs are manufactured and sold under guidelines approved by the FDA. . Current FDA rules require a physician's prescription to purchase most AEDs. [State of Minnesota Statutes 2015, Section 403.51 \(www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/403.51\)](#) requires that AEDS are registered with a maintenance program. There are free options for this available online.

## Do I have to purchase and AED from someone specific?

There are many AED manufacturers and models on the market and vendors available to assist finding the best AED to fit your needs. The Heart Safe Advisory Committee does not endorse or support any single particular product or program.

## Resources

### National Resources

|   |  |
|---|--|
| American Heart Association.....                   | <a href="http://www.heart.org">www.heart.org</a>   |
| American Red Cross.....                           | <a href="http://www.redcross.org">www.redcross.org</a>                                   |
| Anyone Can Save a Life.....                       | <a href="http://www.anyonecansavealife.org">www.anyonecansavealife.org</a>               |
| Be the Beat (American Heart Association).....     | <a href="http://bethebeat.heart.org">bethebeat.heart.org</a>                             |
| Hands Only CPR (American Heart Association) ..... | <a href="http://www.handsonlycpr.org">www.handsonlycpr.org</a>                           |
| Heart Rhythm Society.....                         | <a href="http://www.heartrhythmsociety.org">www.heartrhythmsociety.org</a>               |
| National Center for Early Defibrillation.....     | <a href="http://www.early-defib.org">www.early-defib.org</a>                             |
| Parent Heart Watch.....                           | <a href="http://parentheartwatch.org">parentheartwatch.org</a>                           |
| Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association.....            | <a href="http://suddencardiacarrest.org">suddencardiacarrest.org</a>                     |
| Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation.....             | <a href="http://www.sca-aware.org">www.sca-aware.org</a>                                 |
| Take Heart America .....                          | <a href="http://takeheartamerica.org">takeheartamerica.org</a>                           |
| Citizen CPR Foundation.....                       | <a href="http://citizencpr.org">citizencpr.org</a>                                       |
| Pulse Point AED App.....                          | <a href="http://www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-aed">www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-aed</a> |

### Minnesota Resources

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Allina Health Heart Safe.....                         | <a href="http://www.allinahealth.org/heartsafe">www.allinahealth.org/heartsafe</a>                 |
| Minnesota Resuscitation Consortium.....               | <a href="http://www.mrc.umn.edu">www.mrc.umn.edu</a>   |
| Minnesota AED Registry .....                          | <a href="http://minnesota.nationalaedregistry.com">minnesota.nationalaedregistry.com</a>           |
| Minnesota Sudden Cardiac Arrest Survival Network..... | <a href="http://mncasurvivor.net">mncasurvivor.net</a>   |
| North Memorial Health Ambulance .....                 | <a href="http://northmemorial.com/specialty/ambulance/">northmemorial.com/specialty/ambulance/</a> |

### AED Resources

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Cardiac Science ..... | <a href="http://www.cardiacscience.com">www.cardiacscience.com</a>                 |
| Defibtech .....       | <a href="http://www.defibtech.com">www.defibtech.com</a>                           |
| Philips .....         | <a href="http://www.usa.philips.com/healthcare">www.usa.philips.com/healthcare</a> |
| Heartsine .....       | <a href="http://heartsine.com">heartsine.com</a>                                   |
| Zoll.....             | <a href="http://www.zoll.com">www.zoll.com</a>                                     |

# Application Information for Heart Safe Designation

## Overview

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the American Heart Association-Minnesota (AHA), and the MN Resuscitation Consortium (MRC) encourage and promote community/business/campus-wide awareness of the potential for saving the lives of sudden cardiac arrest victims through the use of CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and increased public access to defibrillation. The Heart Safe project is a replicable model that seeks to strengthen the five links in the Chain of Survival, which has been documented to increase survival rates for cardiac arrest victims.

Communities/businesses/campuses achieve the Heart Safe recognition by developing and implementing an action plan that includes providing CPR with Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training; helping community members recognize the warning signs and symptoms of heart attack & sudden cardiac arrest; and training the public to call 911 and use CPR and AEDs, as medically appropriate. Recognized Heart Safe Communities/businesses/campuses will place AEDs in strategic locations where they are readily available to use in a cardiac emergency, and develop emergency response plans that furthers the goal of saving lives from cardiac arrest.

The application process for a Heart Safe Designation includes several steps. This process can take as little as a few months or in some cases, more than a year to accomplish everything. However, a key factor is not only applying and receiving the designation but the effort and plans that your community will put together for ongoing awareness and education about sudden cardiac arrest, CPR training and AED location identification. The following pages include a checklist for getting started, with suggestions for activities and tools that will make your program successful; charts for developing your program; and finally, the application. The application can be filled out as you are earning heartbeats or at the completion using your own records; however, it is recommended that you read the application completely before beginning so that you are aware of what you will need to document for the final application. For questions or technical assistance contact: Minnesota Heart Safe Advisory Committee at 952-278-7712 or [heart.safe@heart.org](mailto:heart.safe@heart.org).

## Acknowledgments

This version was adapted by the Heart Safe Advisory Committee and the Minnesota Department of Health. The original document was prepared by Allina Health – Heart Safe Communities. We would like to acknowledge the following contributors and extend to them our sincere thanks: HeartSafe Kansas, Contra Costa Heart Safe, Butler County HEARTSafe, Physio-Control’s Heart Safe Communities guidelines, and the American Heart Association.

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## Steps to Become Heart Safe Designated

### Step 1: Build your Heart Safe Team

Identify a Heart Safe Champion, lead organization, key partners, and assess current activities. The Champion will act as a catalyst to help other members articulate and achieve the requirements to become heart safe designated. The lead organization and key partners will help gain community/business/campus buy-in.

Potential champions and team members could include: local EMS, law enforcement, fire department, a cardiac arrest survivor/family, faith-based groups, youth organizations, school members, community volunteer groups and the business community.

### Step 2: Identify Community/Business/Campus and Fiscal Needs

Review the requirements for your community/business/campus to achieve Heart Safe designation. Gauge where your community/organization has already placed efforts and identify where additional work is needed. Many groups find that there are already programs in place that achieve some of the goals. Work to form strong partnerships and identify ways that you can improve what has already been done.

Identify any expenses that may be needed to perform planned events or actions throughout your process and work with your partners on resources to assist. Often times there is grant money, donations and other special funds available for volunteer organizations and public programs.

## Step 3: Letter of Intent

Fill out the letter of intent and return that to American Heart Association – MN Office:  
2750 Blue Water Road, Suite 250, Eagan, MN 55121; fax to 952.835.5828; or email to  
[heart.safe@heart.org](mailto:heart.safe@heart.org)

By completing this letter you are notifying the Minnesota Heart Safe Committee of your intent. You will have two (2) years from the date of the letter of intent is submitted to complete the designation process, and will earn your first 20 Heartbeats toward your designation (added under bonus heartbeats). The committee can also be a resource as you are developing goals. If you prefer, you may copy the letter text below into your own organizational letterhead.

### Draft Letter of Intent

It is the intention of [enter in name of organization here] to obtain the Heart Safe designation.

We have chosen [enter in name of organization here] as the lead organization of our Heart Safe effort, earning our first 20 Heart Beats towards our Heart Safe recognition.

The champion/contact for our Heart Safe Business program will be:

Name [Enter in first and last name]

Address [Enter in complete address here]

Contact Number [Enter in phone number here]

Email [Enter in email address here]

Our goal to strengthen the Chain of Survival at our site includes:

[Please describe goals here]

## Step 4: Implementation

Implementation can progress in a variety of ways. Each community/organization will determine the best possible plan for accomplishing their goals. Use the application as a tool to follow for recommended heartbeats. Hosting a kick-off event and other large public events may help gain interest in your program and train large groups of people in CPR. Determine the best way to record and track the number of people you train in CPR. Decide who is going to locate AEDs in your community/organization and verify they are emergency ready and registered. Develop materials to advertise your program as desired. There are committee members available as resources to assist you in beginning this process.

## Step 5: Submit Application

Using your completed worksheets, complete the Heart Safe Community, Heart Safe Business, or Heart Safe Campus application and submit it to:

Mail: American Heart Association- MN  
2750 Blue Water Road, Suite 250  
Eagan, MN 55121

Phone: 952.278.7712

Fax: 952.835.5828

E-mail: [heart.safe@heart.org](mailto:heart.safe@heart.org)

## Step 6: Gain Recognition

Gain Recognition as a Heart Safe Community/Business/Campus. Communities and Organizations can use their newly gained Heart Safe Designation as an opportunity to celebrate by having the Mayor sign a Proclamation, holding a Heart Healthy Business celebration, or a campus ceremony. One sign will be provided to the Community/Business/Campus to post in recognition of its Heart Safe efforts. Additional signs are available for purchase.

If you would like a planning checklist to help you document Steps 1 through 6, please email [health.heart@state.mn.us](mailto:health.heart@state.mn.us) and ask for "Heart Safe Planning Checklist".

## Heart Safe Designation Requirements

### What is a “Heartbeat?”

Heartbeats are basically points. Every activity and step that your team identifies and plans will have a point value. Points can vary for each part of the application. It is recommended that you calculate heartbeats based on what you know about your community/business/campus in the planning stages to gauge next steps and how many you will need to become designated.

### Chart of Requirements: Communities (population based)

There is a minimum number of total heartbeats required for designation. Within this number, there are minimum heartbeats required to come from CPR/AED training, AED identification; new training events & a minimum number of public AEDs to be identified. All numbers listed in the charts represent minimum requirements within these categories. In addition, a lead organization & champion are to be identified and a sustainability plan is created.

| Community Daily Population | Required Total Heartbeats | Required Heartbeats for CPR/AED training and Identification of AEDs | Minimum new training events & AEDs identified |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| ≤5,000                     | 350                       | 80  | 4 new training events<br>6 AEDs Identified    |
| 5,001- 15,000              | 450                       | 120   | 6 new training events<br>12 AEDs Identified   |
| 15,001-30,000              | 600                       | 260   | 10 new training events<br>24 AEDs Identified  |
| 30,001-50,000              | 800                       | 300   | 14 new training events<br>48 AEDs Identified  |
| 50,001-150,000             | 1,000                     | 320   | 15 new training events<br>100 AEDs Identified |
| >150,000                   | 1,500                     | 360   | 20 new training events<br>150 AEDs Identified |

## Chart of Requirements: Business or Campus (daily population based)

There is a minimum number of total heartbeats required for designation. Within this number, there are minimum heartbeats required to come from CPR/AED training and AED identification. All numbers listed in the charts represent minimum requirements within these categories. In addition, a lead organization & champion are to be identified and a sustainability plan is created.

Population of a **business or campus** site is based on the average daily number of people who are on site. For example, a business with 100 regular employees and 50 daily visitors or delivery personnel would have a daily population of 150. Some days this may be more or less, but the average is what is used for calculation.

| Daily Business/Campus Population | Required Total Heartbeats | Required Heartbeats for CPR/AED training and Identification of AEDs | Number of AEDs required on site |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| ≤250                             | 300                       | 210   | Minimum of 1                    |
| 251-500                          | 330                       | 230   | Minimum of 1                    |
| 501-1,000                        | 350                       | 250   | Minimum of 1                    |
| 1,001-5,000                      | 380                       | 280   | Minimum of 1                    |
| 5,001-10,000                     | 420                       | 320   | Minimum 10 or 1 per building    |
| >10,000                          | 470                       | 370   | Minimum 15 or 1 per building    |

*“Make your community/business/campus a SAFER place to live, work and play  
by being prepared to reduce the number of deaths and  
disabilities associated with Sudden Cardiac Arrest...  
because it takes a village to save a life!”*