



Act 352: Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP)

Effective 2025-2026 School Year: All Arkansas schools are required to develop and implement a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan as part of their emergency operations plan.

What is a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan?

A CERP is a written, school-based protocol that outlines how to respond to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and similar life-threatening emergencies.

Required components of the CERP:

1. Nationally Recognized Standards

Plan must align with guidance from organizations like the American Heart Association (AHA).

2. Cardiac Emergency Response Team

Designated staff trained and ready to respond to SCA events.

3. AED Automated External Defibrillator) Placement

- On-site, accessible, clearly marked, and unlocked
- Must be usable within 3 minutes of a cardiac emergency.

4. Staff Training

- Ongoing training in CPR, AED, and first aid using nationally approved guidelines.
- Staff must be ready to assist before EMS arrives.

5. Annual Drills

Practice response protocols for SCA annually.

6. EMS Integration

Schools must collaborate with local EMS to align their CERP with community protocols.

7. Plan Dissemination & Review

- Share CERP campus wide.
- Include review and evaluation procedures.
- Revise emergency operations plan by 2026-2027 at the latest.

Why this matters

- Sudden cardiac arrest can strike anyone – students, staff, or visitors.
- A well-prepared response saves lives and improves outcomes.

Resources

[American Heart Association CERP Toolkit & Training](#)

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