



IMPACT AREA:  
**PREPAREDNESS  
AND SAFETY**

# VOLUNTEER CPR

A **CITIES OF SERVICE** BLUEPRINT

**Volunteer CPR** is a high-impact service strategy in which the mayor's office, through partnerships with local medical professionals or emergency responders, trains volunteers to use a lifesaving hands-only CPR technique.

# VOLUNTEER CPR

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# VOLUNTEER CPR

Volunteer CPR is a high-impact service strategy in which the mayor's office, through partnerships with local medical professionals or emergency responders, trains volunteers to use a lifesaving hands-only CPR technique.

When an adult goes into sudden cardiac arrest, his or her survival depends on immediately getting CPR from someone nearby. Unfortunately, most bystanders are reluctant to give CPR - they are worried that they may do something wrong or make matters worse. Volunteer CPR is an initiative designed to encourage more people to take action.

After the volunteers receive training in CPR, they pledge to teach hands-only CPR to at least five others - friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members - thus dramatically increasing the number of CPR-trained residents and vastly improving a community's ability to respond to sudden cardiac emergencies.





## BACKGROUND

**For decades, medical professionals and emergency responders have been preparing Americans to respond to sudden cardiac emergencies with CPR. Unfortunately, only one-third of people who suffer out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest receive bystander CPR. This low number is due, in large part, to the fact that the number of people who have actually received CPR training is relatively small. If bystander CPR is not provided, a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival falls by as much as 10 percent for every minute of delay until defibrillation.**

As the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation component has been cited in the past as a barrier to bystander provision of CPR, the latest American Heart Association (AHA) approved standard for CPR encourages manual chest compression without the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation component for most circumstances. This move to “hands-only” CPR will increase the confidence of those trained and encourage them to act in the event of an emergency.

The city can significantly increase the number of residents trained with lifesaving hands-only CPR skills by adopting Volunteer CPR.





# REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- 1 Mayor's office partners with qualified medical professionals or emergency responders (firefighters, EMTs, nurses, etc.) who will act as hands-only CPR instructors during organized training sessions.
- 2 Volunteers trained at CPR training sessions are given American Heart Association-approved training kits.
- 3 Volunteers pledge to train at least five others (friends, neighbors, coworkers, and/or family members) and report pledge fulfillment through a tracking system.
- 4 Mayor's office tracks and reports impact metrics for the overall initiative. Required metrics include:
  - Number of volunteers trained directly by qualified medical professionals or emergency responders.
  - Number of individuals trained in hands-only CPR by "volunteer trainers" as confirmed by the pledge fulfillment reports.





# EXECUTING THE PLAN

## ORGANIZING THE CPR TRAINING PROGRAM

- Identify a partner that can provide qualified individuals to conduct CPR training events for interested city residents. Local firefighters, nursing staffs at area hospitals, and EMTs are examples of medical professionals or emergency responders who would make ideal partners to lead training sessions.
- In coordination with the local training partner:
  - Develop a set of regularly scheduled community CPR training events and/or a process where groups of interested residents can schedule appointments for group CPR training sessions; and
  - Identify and secure space for training sessions taking place throughout the community. A few examples include: school gyms, large rooms at local hospitals, fire houses, community centers, senior centers, and YMCAs.
- Develop a strategy to support the city's volunteer recruitment efforts.

## OBTAINING AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION APPROVED CPR TRAINING KITS

At the end of each training event, every volunteer will be sent home with an AHA approved CPR training kit that they will use to train five other individuals. This kit includes an instructional DVD, a CPR training mannequin, and an instructional pamphlet. The number of kits you order is based directly on the size of the program you wish to run. Purchasing kits represents a great opportunity for local funders to help in your efforts to implement Volunteer CPR.





# MEASURING IMPACT

The AHA has developed a comprehensive website (see Resources section) that allows cities to track volunteer numbers, pledge fulfillment, and the overall number of individuals trained in a city. For example, volunteers can use this site to input their pledge fulfillment data. The site also sends email reminders and offers incentives to volunteers who might need a little encouragement to fulfill their pledges. Pledge fulfillment metrics can then be turned into simple reports that track city level outcomes.

Whether a city chooses to use the AHA site or creates its own tracking system, the key to ensuring overall success – and training as many residents as possible – is maintaining a system that encourages volunteer trainers to fulfill their pledged training obligation and tracks overall city level progress.

Once a metrics tracking system is established, the mayor's office or lead partner can track and report impact metrics by measuring:

- Number of volunteers trained by qualified medical professionals or emergency responders.
- Number of individuals trained on hands-only CPR by the “volunteer trainers” as confirmed by the pledge fulfillment reports.

## RECOGNIZING AND THANKING VOLUNTEERS

**Volunteer recognition is an effective recruitment and retention tool. Therefore, it is important to formally thank volunteers for their participation in this initiative and fulfillment of their pledge obligation (for example by providing a thank you letter, certificate of pledge fulfillment, wallet-sized card that provides the basic steps for CPR, etc).**

For volunteers who play a more extensive role in helping to make volunteer CPR a success, like a head nurse or firefighter, the mayor's office might consider recognizing and highlighting the efforts of these individuals more explicitly.





## OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

**In similar volunteer CPR initiatives, medical professionals and emergency responders have had additional involvement. They have also helped with:**

- Handling phone inquiries and scheduling group training events
- Storing CPR training kits and equipment
- Updating and posting schedules for training events online or in the community

**Some cities may choose to kick-off their volunteer recruitment campaign by hosting a mass CPR training event. The AHA, as part of its “White Suit” campaign - which encourages Americans to learn hands-only CPR through celebrity public service announcements, a national ad campaign, and mass CPR training events - may be able to assist in the execution of mass CPR training events. Through its local/regional offices, it can.**

- Serve as the lead local AHA staff for mass training events via the AHA Community CPR Manager. Individuals trained at these events are also provided with free training kits and pledge to train five other individuals.
- Partner with the mayor’s office to coordinate all planning and day-of event logistics, including:
  - Planning of event committee meetings
  - Recruitment of AHA volunteers to serve as event facilitators
  - Identification of training venue
  - Securing funding and/or donations as appropriate
- Conduct 1 or 2 pre-event venue site visits to map out event traffic flow and staging areas of the venue. This is a critical step to anticipating any potential day-of-event challenges and contingency planning.
- Assist in overseeing the participant registration process.
- Manage training impact database and provide reports on status of numbers trained through the previously mentioned AHA website.







# VOLUNTEER CPR IN ACTION

NYC Service, the office tasked with implementing New York City's high-impact service plan, currently runs CPR To Go, a Volunteer CPR program. Prior to this initiative, the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) conducted ad hoc CPR training in an effort to increase the number of New Yorkers who could respond in a cardiac-related emergency. New York formalized this training in a partnership between NYC Service, FDNY, and the FDNY Foundation. Members of the FDNY field calls, manage sign-ups, buy and store CPR training kits, and conduct formal trainings with individual groups. These individuals each pledge to train five other individuals. Their pledges are tracked by the FDNY, which uses NYC Civic Corps AmeriCorps members to conduct email and phone-pledge follow-ups.

In the first year of the program, New York City was able to train 12,000 volunteer CPR trainers who subsequently trained 40,000 other individuals in hands-only CPR. To-date, NYC Service has trained over 120,000 New Yorkers in CPR. The program has also been replicated in: Austin, Buffalo, Duluth, Fort Lauderdale, Houston, Milwaukee, Richmond, Rock Hill, Orlando, Phoenix, Savannah, and Virginia Beach.

## Below are some key lessons learned from implementation:

- Develop partnerships to expand training space capacity and community access. NYC Service partnered with a local athletic club, New York Sports Club, to offer free training to all members of the public (the sports club gave a one-week free membership pass as an incentive to those who came to get training). Partnering with a local athletic club was extremely helpful at solving space challenges.
- When possible, have staff personally call volunteer trainers to track their pledge fulfillment and encourage them to continue training other individuals.
- Increase awareness of CPR training efforts being conducted in the community whenever possible. In New York City, NYC Service coordinated mass training events for the 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance, which resulted in nearly 500 people being trained.





**Another key lesson based on the AHA's experience in training events is:**

- For mass CPR training events, plan the event where there is a built-in audience, high degree of foot traffic, or complementary timing with an existing event. This makes it easier to recruit large numbers of volunteers.





## RESOURCES

**The American Heart Association** has created an online database designed to capture CPR Anytime training impact and qualitative participant data. The system captures the initial participants trained, and then generates e-mail reminders and offers a song download incentive for participants to report the number of additional family and friends trained with their CPR Anytime kit. They also have the opportunity to participate in a brief survey about their experience with the program.  
<http://www.cpranytimeoutcomes.heart.org>

To contact **AHA regional offices**, visit:  
[www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=10000028](http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=10000028)

To learn more about **NYC Service's Volunteer CPR** initiative:  
[http://www.nycservice.org/opportunities/index.php?opp\\_id=1533](http://www.nycservice.org/opportunities/index.php?opp_id=1533)

To learn more about the **AHA's White Suit** campaign, please visit:  
[www.heart.org/cpr](http://www.heart.org/cpr)



**Cities of Service** is a national nonprofit that designs and supports the implementation of high-impact service strategies that can be widely replicated in cities worldwide. We provide technical assistance, programmatic support, planning resources, and funding opportunities. Cities of Service supports a coalition of nearly 200 cities whose mayors are committed to using citizen volunteers to solve local pressing challenges, from engaging mentors to help decrease high school dropout rates to increasing energy efficiency in buildings. We help coalition cities share solutions, best practices, and lessons learned, as well as spread awareness about their great work.

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