

CPR and AED Readiness: Can We Act Now?

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v1.0 | Reviewed October 6, 2026 | Discussion + field checks

Why this matters

An AED sign does not prove the device is ready, and a training card does not show who is available today. Check the response arrangements before an emergency so the crew can get help without searching for basics.

Objective: Locate emergency help, check AED readiness where provided and identify today's response roles.

Key hazards or failure points

Delayed calls; an unknown address; locked AED access; expired or incompatible accessories; missing responder coverage; unsafe practice; mistaking gasping for normal breathing.

Practical controls

- For an unresponsive adult who is not breathing normally or is only gasping, call 911 and begin CPR with dispatcher guidance. Have someone obtain the AED if available and follow its prompts.
- Know the site location, emergency access point and who meets responders. Maintain first-aid arrangements and current responder training appropriate to the workplace.
- Assign AED readiness and replacement checks to a responsible person using the actual manufacturer instructions. Practice with a manikin and training AED, never chest compressions on a healthy coworker.

Verify It in the Field

Walk the route to the AED, if provided, from today's work location. Check access for this shift. The responsible person checks its readiness indication and compatible pads and battery against model instructions and dates.

Ask a worker to give the location details and explain the emergency call method. Complete a normal communications check, not a test call to 911. Confirm gate or building access arrangements.

Identify current responders and backups, plus who retrieves equipment and meets emergency services. Record actual device findings, coverage gaps and the correction owner. This briefing and its attendance sheet do not certify CPR skills.

Stop and reassess

Treat unresponsiveness with absent or abnormal breathing as an emergency. Call for help and start the indicated response promptly; do not delay for a lay pulse check. Stay out of uncontrolled electrical, traffic or atmospheric hazards and summon equipped responders.

Ask the crew

1. How would you give responders our exact location?
2. Can we reach the AED on this shift?
3. Who retrieves it and who meets emergency services?

Before the shift: verify the device, access and people.

Sources: AHA 2025 Adult BLS; FDA AED guidance; OSHA 1910.151 and 1926.50.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance, references, supervisor check and attendance record accompany this talk.