

School Safety and Emergency Management

Monthly Minute: Medical Emergencies

January 2026

Monthly Minute is a newsletter providing insight and tips on potential threats and hazards brought to you by the Oregon Department of Education.



Medical emergencies can happen when we least expect. From a sprained ankle or skinned knee to a heart attack or heat stroke—knowing what to do ahead of time can prevent serious injury and even save a life.

Oregon schools **are required to have a plan to respond to medical emergencies** and ensure that enough staff are trained on First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Schools must have at least one staff member with a First Aid/CPR/AED card for every 60 students. The school Emergency Operations Plan should include a plan for

responding to medical emergencies and a list of staff trained in first aid. School-specific plans should also include access routes for first responders to the school and inside its halls.

When a medical emergency does occur, school staff will need to assess the situation and set the conditions for an effective response that prevents further injury or potential loss of life:

- Clear the area and make it safe for the injured person and the person responding with first aid. This step includes providing first aid.
- Call 911 and notify the front office of the incident. Initiate a Hold drill.
- Clear the approach routes for emergency medical services so they can effectively access and evacuate the injured person.
- Initiate the necessary communication with the family.

Additional steps may be needed depending on the situation. The very **first priority is to provide life-saving care**. That could mean clearing an airway, stopping the bleeding or providing CPR with an AED. In those cases, a person may need to immediately go get the necessary life-saving equipment while the area is cleared for safety.

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This Month... Conduct a Secure or a Hold drill this month. Review response procedures for medical emergencies and make sure that the adequate number of staff have first aid training.

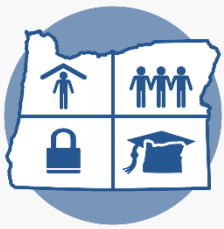


Conduct a **Secure** or a **Hold Drill** in January.

Up Next... February's Monthly Minute will cover crime prevention through environmental design and how to keep your school safe through prevention. Conduct a Lockdown Drill in February.



Conduct a **Lockdown** Drill in February.



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Personal Emergency Accommodation Plans

The Personal Emergency Accommodation Plan, or the PEAP, is a fillable, quick reference document that is used to track the needs of students and staff with access and functional needs. The PEAP will contain critical information that can guide response to a medical emergency for students and staff with disabilities.



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A Hold drill is incredibly effective at controlling traffic during a response to a medical emergency. Placing the school into a Hold will give space to the injured person and the person treating them. It will also prevent congestion in the halls that could obstruct first responders.

The Oregon School Athletics Association

recommends establishing teams with each task ahead of time. While there may be more direct control of student athletes during an athletic event that doesn't involve passing periods, using a similar method for a routine school day will help streamline the response. It is okay to rely on students for these tasks, especially in classes or locations where only one or two staff members are present. Sending one student to grab the AED and another to call 911 will ensure that the fastest possible life-saving care is provided.

The school plan for medical emergencies should identify these needs ahead of time.

Additional considerations when responding to a medical emergency:

- Identify students and staff with medical needs ahead of time so that responsible staff can locate and deliver life-saving medications as needed.
- Just like you do with fire drills and their plans, keep hallways and other access points free of obstruction in case first responders need to access and evacuate an injured person.
- Routinely check first aid kits and AEDs. Make sure their locations are marked on evacuation maps and that staff are aware of their location.
- When conducting Hold drills, practice responding to a medical emergency so that staff and students are prepared.

Contact Information



Scan or click the QR code to visit the School Safety and Emergency Management website with additional school emergency preparedness resources, and to **sign up for the monthly training** and technical assistance sessions.

Resources

[OSAA resource page](#) for Emergency Action Plans that includes responding to medical emergencies.

SSEM: [Planning for students and staff with access and functional needs](#).

Oregon Emergency Management [local contacts list](#).