



May 2022

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation – Healthy Kids Act

Healthy Kids Act Requirement

In accordance with Iowa Code 256.11(6) and 281—IAC 12.5(20) subject to the provisions of subrule 12.5(6), at any time prior to the end of twelfth grade, every pupil physically able to do so shall have completed a psychomotor course that leads to certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). A school or school district administrator may waive this requirement for any pupil who is not physically able to complete the course. A course that leads to certification in CPR may be taught during the school day by either a school or school district employee or by a volunteer, as long as the person is certified to teach a course that leads to certification in CPR. In addition, a school or school district shall accept certification from any nationally recognized course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation as evidence that this requirement has been met by a pupil. A school or school district shall not accept auditing of a CPR course, nor a course in infant CPR only.

281—IAC 12.5(6) Exemption from...cardiopulmonary resuscitation course completion. A pupil shall not be required to meet the requirements of subrule 12.5(20) regarding completion of a cardiopulmonary resuscitation course if the pupil's parent or guardian files a written statement with the school principal that the completion of such a course conflicts with the pupil's religious beliefs.

Frequently Asked Questions

May a school district charge a fee for the certification card to the student?

The law requires that each student take a CPR class that may lead to certification, not become certified. Only if students are told that certification is optional, may a district charge for a certification card.

How does a school know if a transfer student has had CPR training?

If the student cannot satisfactorily provide proof of having completed a CPR course, have the student take another CPR course. What constitutes satisfactory proof is left to local schools to determine.

Does a community person who is brought in by a school or school district to provide CPR training have to have a criminal background check?

There is no requirement for this, but neither is there any prohibition against a school or school district imposing such a requirement.

Must schools directly provide the CPR course as part of the Healthy Kids Act requirements?

Schools must offer a course that meets the CPR course requirements. Schools may accept proof that a student has completed CPR certification outside of school (for instance, as part of training to be a swim instructor, life guard or EMT). A CPR course offered by the school may be taught by either a school or school district employee or by a volunteer, as long as the person is certified to teach a course that leads to certification in CPR.

May a parent ask that the parent's child be exempt from the CPR requirement?

A student shall not be required to fulfill the Healthy Kids Act requirement of completing a CPR course if the pupil's parent or guardian files a written statement with the school principal that the completion of such a course conflicts with the student's religious beliefs.

What if a student is physically unable to perform CPR?

That student should be excused by school administrators. The requirement is mandated only for "physically able" students, and determining who is physically able is left to the judgment of local school officials.

What is the requirement for CPR in the Healthy Kids Act?

Prior to graduating, a student in a school district or accredited nonpublic district must complete a course in CPR. There is no requirement that the student receive a certification for having completed the course. However, the course must include components that one would find in a course that leads to certification including psychomotor skills. The purpose is to provide students with the skills to assist a classmate or staff member in cardiac distress. If a course meets that purpose, the DE believes that the course is acceptable. The rules do not permit an infant-only CPR course for the reason that such a course would not equip a student with the skills necessary to assist a peer or adult.

Can schools offer CPR before high school to count toward the graduation requirement?

A CPR course taken in middle school or high school (prior to graduation) that meets all other requirements can count toward the CPR graduation requirement.

Can the CPR requirement be met virtually?

Schools and school districts have multiple and flexible ways to offer CPR instruction, including virtual and contactless instruction. While the psychomotor component is still required, providers of CPR instruction can offer contactless or virtual ways for students to demonstrate they grasp CPR technique.