

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: POLICY, SYSTEMS & ENVIRONMENTAL (PSE)



American Heart Association.
Hard Hats with Heart™

Heart, brain and mental health are important factors in a person's life expectancy, and they share common risk factors such as chronic disease, nutrition and tobacco use. With the construction industry disproportionately affected by heart disease, that is why the American Heart Association created an industry-specific list of recommendations for policy, system and environmental changes that will drive sustainable improvements to employee health.

If you have questions regarding how to implement these policy recommendations, please contact Lily Banning (Lily.Banning@heart.org).

CPR & AED

- Require Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) on jobsites and provide training for employees to recognize the signs of a sudden cardiac arrest, how to operate an AED and how to perform CPR.
 - Place your AEDs in visible and accessible locations - near elevators, eating areas, on walls in main corridors. Use a three-minute response time as a guideline to help you determine how many AEDs you need and where to place them. Effective AED programs are designed to deliver a shock to a victim within three to five minutes after the person collapses.
 - Develop a training plan for all employees. AED users should be trained in CPR and the use of an AED. This can help increase the comfort and confidence level of responders.
 - Implement an ongoing maintenance routine. It is important to do a weekly or monthly visual inspection of the AEDs to ensure they are in working order. A designated team member can develop a checklist and perform regular inspections.

Chronic Disease Management

- Establish a self-monitoring blood pressure (SMBP) program by providing employees with self-monitoring cuffs and referral resources to accurately measure and track their blood pressure at home.
 - Purchase self-monitoring blood pressure cuffs for employees (\$40-\$50, [sold online](#)). If you're unable to purchase for the entire team, consider implementing a loaner program at your jobsite or office.
 - Encourage tracking results - have employees utilize an online tracking tool, or pocket guide to monitor their blood pressure readings. Encourage employees to share their results with their physicians.
 - Connect with local clinic and ask a nurse or Community Health Worker to visit jobsite to refer employees to primary care services, health resources to manage blood pressure, and schedule follow ups via telephone or video.

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Tobacco Use

- Adopt a smoke free organizational policy that ensures a smoke free environment in all workspaces, inclusive of jobsites, office buildings and surroundings, covering the smoking of any tobacco product and the use of oral tobacco products, "spit" tobacco and e-cigarettes, and applies to both employees and non-employee visitors.
 - Provide employees with smoking and e-cigarette cessation resources and education to support the implementation and raise awareness of harm reduction in smoke free environments.
 - Update your policies - Does your smoke free policy include the latest tobacco/vaping products? Are you sharing educational resources to effectively prevent nicotine addiction?
 - Offer proven tobacco treatment benefits through your health plan with no co-pays. This may include: (1) screening for tobacco use and; (2) offering cessation resources each year including guide for a "quit plan," alternatives to manage your cravings, text service for [24/7 advice](#) (such as Text HEART to 88709)

Nutrition

- Ensure employees have easy access to healthy foods. Create a healthy food environment inclusive of vending machines, catering, onsite food service, potlucks, etc.
 - Use the AHA's "[Healthy Food & Beverage Toolkit](#)" to establish nutrition standards for the types of food your organization provides at the workplace.
 - Identify and use vendors who provide healthier food and beverage options for onsite lunch, breaks and meetings, including low-sodium and low-calorie meals.
 - Swap out the soda and energy drinks in your jobsite vending machines. Water is the healthiest option, but if you want something sweet to offer, diet drinks can be a better choice than sugary drinks.
 - Sign a [nutrition pledge](#) and post it in a common area where employees and visitors can see your commitment to their health and wellbeing, and include educational resources about healthy living and eating