

American Heart Association Heart Club Activity Guidelines

Last Updated February 4, 2026

As an official American Heart Association Heart Club, your leadership matters! These guidelines are designed to support your efforts to make an impact and ensure your activities align with the latest in cardiovascular science. They are also meant to protect both your school and the American Heart Association's reputation and brand. If you have any questions, please email heartclub@heart.org. Thank you for your support in advancing health and hope for everyone, everywhere.

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HEALTH SERVICES ACTIVITIES

Heart Clubs play an important role in supporting the American Heart Association's commitment to advancing cardiovascular health for everyone, everywhere. Through the health events and activities your Heart Club leads, you can help connect students and communities to credible, science-based health information and experiences that will improve health outcomes.

To ensure these activities are grounded in evidence-based science and appropriate for a school setting, the guidance below outlines the types of health services and activities that Heart Clubs may support, as well as those that require additional oversight or are not permitted. Use this quick checklist before planning health services related activities.

Checklist Key:

- ✓ Approved, you're good to go
- Pause and follow Heart Association and school policies before proceeding
- ⚠ College Heart Clubs must contact heartclub@heart.org before proceeding
- ✗ Not approved.

Is the activity focused on distributing American Heart Association health resources at a health fair or other school event? → ✓ Approved

Is the activity focused on working alongside other student organizations on campus to promote health and well-being? → ✓ Approved (Except for health screenings. See below for details.)

Does the activity include self-monitored blood pressure screenings or a Hands-Only CPR experience? → ■ Approved, pending the club secures a licensed healthcare professional or CPR instructor to provide a brief demonstration before students lead demonstrations for others.

Does the activity include a meeting or webinar with a physician or medical professional not employed by your school? → ■ Approved, pending you follow school policies for a guest speaker.

Does the activity include a Zumba or Yoga Class? → ■ Approved, pending you have a certified instructor and follow school policies.

Does the activity include dietary coaching? → ■ Approved, pending you have a registered dietitian and follow school policies.

Does the activity include medical screening or clinical service? → II Please see below for details.
Only College Heart Clubs are permitted to volunteer and promote health screenings because high school students are minors.

X Not permitted for High School Heart Clubs because students are minors.

! College Heart Clubs are permitted to volunteer at and promote health screenings hosted by the College/University for the following activities. For legal reasons, Heart Clubs cannot be the host of these events, but the Heart Club can be involved by promoting the school hosted event on social media and creating posters or flyers. The Heart Club can also participate at the event by helping to sign up participants and distributing American Heart Association health resources to attendees.

- Blood Donation
- Mobile Health Units
- Flu vaccinations
- BMI
- Blood Sugar
- Cholesterol
- Dental
- Vision
- Hearing

Does the activity involve any of the following specialized diagnostics? → X Not approved.

These screenings are on this list because they may not be medically necessary for everyone and require individual medical guidance. Others screenings and services may not be appropriate in a school setting. Individuals should talk with their health care provider to determine if these tests are necessary for them.

- EKG screenings
- Full body scans
- Chiropractic care
- Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) screenings
- Arrhythmia screenings
- Bone marrow screenings
- DNA screenings
- Varicose Veins screenings
- Heart Valvular tests
- Pulse Checks
- HIV testing
- Urinalysis
- Massages
- Omega-3 screenings
- Mammograms
- Reproductive Health screenings
- Any form of invasive screening or procedure
- Any other screening/service not mentioned

Unsure? Have questions? → ✉ Email: heartclub@heart.org. Subject line: Health Services Question

WORKING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

Relationships with lawmakers and other public officials are very important to our mission. We work with elected officials from all major political parties in support of our advocacy priorities. The Heart Association is a strictly nonpartisan organization that does not endorse or oppose any candidate or political party, and we work hard to avoid any appearance that we may favor certain candidates or parties.

Heart Clubs are encouraged to include elected officials in events and other efforts. To avoid legally prohibited activity and any perception of partisanship or endorsement, Heart Clubs should not engage active candidates for public office, including elected officials running for reelection.

Contact your local Grassroots Advocacy Director and Government Relations Director for ideas and support before communicating with any elected official. If you need help in determining who your contacts are,  Email: heartclub@heart.org. Subject line: Advocacy Contacts

EXAMPLES OF WORKING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT WILL LIKELY BE APPROVED

(Contact your Grassroots Advocacy Director and Government Relations Director FIRST.)

- Inviting public officials not currently running for public office as guests to an American Heart Association Heart Club event or school function.
- Posting, liking, commenting or reposting a photo featuring a public official from an official American Heart Association social media channel.
- Talking with a public official or taking a photo or video at an American Heart Association state lobby day or bill signing.
- Liking, commenting or reposting a public official's social media message supporting legislation or regulations reflecting our policy priorities (i.e., thank elected officials for introducing, sponsoring, voting, endorsing or taking other official action in support of legislation/regulations).

EXAMPLES THAT WOULD REQUIRE MORE INFORMATION BEFORE SAYING "YES"

- Inviting elected officials to be a guest speaker at a Heart Club meeting or event.
- Asking a public official to share his/her survivor or family story at a meeting.
- Liking, commenting, or reposting a public official's social media message that is NOT one of our advocacy positions.

EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- Any action that appears to endorse or oppose a specific candidate or political party.
- Recognizing a political candidate who attends a Heart Club event during election season.
- Giving political candidates or their staff the opportunity to campaign at a Heart Club event (i.e., campaign speeches, booth space, handing out materials, etc.).
- Commenting on any political issue that is not directly aligned to our advocacy priorities (i.e., gun control, abortion, sex/gender education in schools, etc.).

HOSTING EVENTS WITH COMPANIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND VENDORS

We love it when our Heart Clubs work alongside other organizations to help advance the mission, and it's important that the groups we work with are aligned with our science and core values. **Before contacting or working with any company, organization or vendor that appears in the yellow section,**  Email: heartclub@heart.org. **Subject line:** Company/Organization Outreach Approval Request

EXAMPLES OF WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE APPROVED

- Working alongside other clubs or organizations on campus
- Working with college/university or high school athletic teams
- Working with trained health care professionals (i.e., doctors, nurses, EMS, etc.). Follow [this guidance](#) on health screenings and services.
- Working with food banks to secure healthy foods. Follow [this guidance](#) for more details.

EXAMPLES THAT WOULD REQUIRE MORE INFORMATION BEFORE SAYING "YES"

- Working alongside nonprofits or organizations not affiliated with your school
- Working with companies that appear to offer a healthy service or product (the company cannot market its product or service to students)

EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- Working alongside political parties or candidate campaigns
- Working alongside companies that sell alcohol, tobacco products (including vaping), sugary drinks, candy, fast foods or foods high in fat, salt or sugar
- Working alongside companies that sell firearms or other weapons
- All co-venture sales (A co-venture sale is a marketing approach used by companies where a percentage of a purchase is given to a nonprofit organization. An example of this is a restaurant or shop giving back 10% of its proceeds from every sale made during the day. Because co-ventures are regulated by state laws – and because every state law is different – co-ventures are not permitted.)

FOOD AND DRINKS AT MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Food and drinks are a great way to bring people together and make Heart Club meetings and events even more engaging. Heart Clubs are encouraged to choose options that support your goals, reflect your creativity, and align with the American Heart Association's mission to advance health and hope for everyone, everywhere.

As you plan events and meetings, please be mindful that the food and beverages you offer positively represent your Heart Club and the American Heart Association. To help with ideas and inspiration, review the following list. For homemade healthy treats, explore [Recipes | American Heart Association Recipes](#).

HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- Fresh fruit, such as apples, bananas, berries, cantaloupe, grapes, melon, oranges and pineapple
- Fruit tray or fruit kabobs
- Applesauce (unsweetened)
- Dried fruits (unsweetened preferably), such as apples, apricots, blueberries, cranberries, papaya and raisins
- Fresh vegetables, such as bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cherry tomatoes, edamame, snap peas and zucchini
- Whole-grain crackers
- Baked whole-grain pita chips
- Dips, such as hummus, salsa and guacamole
- Roasted or raw nuts with no or low salt (serve on the side since some have nut allergies)
- "Build Your Own Trail Mix Bar" that could include dried fruit (unsweetened preferably), nuts, seeds (pumpkin, sunflower) and whole-grain cereal
- Yogurt (fat-free or low-fat)
- Yogurt parfaits with fruit and/or unsalted nuts
- Light popcorn (unsalted or lightly salted)
- Baked multigrain or corn tortilla chips
- Rice cakes (whole-grain and/or brown rice)
- Graham crackers (whole grain preferably)
- Whole-wheat bagels; serve with fat-free or low-fat cream cheese
- Cheese (fat-free/low-fat/light) in small portions

HEALTHY DRINK IDEAS

Beverages marketed with words such as vitamin, natural, power, energy, etc. can contain just as much sugar and calories as a regular soda. Compare nutrition information and choose wisely.

- Ensure that fresh cool drinking water is always available at no cost
- Garnish pitchers of water with citrus or cucumber slices or provide citrus wedges in a bowl to make water a more attractive and appealing option
- Offer sparkling water
- Offer unsweetened coffee and tea, including decaffeinated options.
- Provide fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk
- Offer 100% fruit juices, especially those that provide more beneficial nutrients, such as orange and grapefruit, in small glasses
- Provide a selection of teas, including herbal and decaf

FOODS TO AVOID

Pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, candy, sugary cereals, high-calorie ice cream, high-fat chips, soups with high salt content, white breads and any other foods with high fat, high-calorie or lots of sugar or salt.

DRINKS TO AVOID

Alcohol, soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks, vitamin drinks, sugary-flavored coffees and any other drinks with lots of sugar or high calories.

FUNDRAISING ON CAMPUS

Heart Clubs are encouraged to be creative and have fun with fundraising. This is your chance to bring big ideas and rally your community around a cause that matters! If you want to keep things simple, you can also use our turnkey digital fundraising platforms, which make it easy to set up, share and fundraise online with minimal effort.

To keep things aligned with our mission, we've put together a list of fundraising ideas that work well, plus a few examples that may need extra thought because of health alignment or state rules. For information on how to submit cash or check donations, please email heartclub@heart.org. **Subject line:** Heart Club Donations

All funds raised by Heart Clubs on behalf of the American Heart Association are invested in mission-critical cardiovascular research, CPR education, quality of care improvements and other initiatives that help ensure everyone, everywhere has the opportunity for a longer, healthier life.

EXAMPLES OF WAYS A HEART CLUB CAN FUNDRAISE

(Many of these ideas have been successful events at other Heart Clubs across the country)

- Hosting athletic tournaments, dance-a-thons or talent shows
- Selling plants or flowers
- Hosting a used book sale
- Collecting spare change between classes
- Having a healthy snack sale (fruit, bottles of water, lightly salted popcorn). More ideas can be found [here](#).
- Asking students to give on [National Wear Red Day](#) (first Friday in February)
- High Schools - Signing up for the [American Heart Challenge](#) and learning CPR
- Colleges - Registering your Heart Club as a local [Heart Walk](#) team
- Talking with your American Heart Association staff leads about starting a [Life is Why](#) store campaign with a local business

EXAMPLES OF FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

- Hosting any raffle, auction or game of chance (very difficult to comply with state laws)
- Selling junk food, alcohol, tobacco/vaping products or anything else that would not align with our mission
- Hosting an event that may be considered dangerous (i.e., anything with firearms, paintball, extreme sports, etc.)
- All co-venture sales (A co-venture sale is a marketing approach used by companies where a percentage of a purchase is given to a nonprofit organization. An example of this is a restaurant or shop giving back 10% of its proceeds from every sale made during the day. Because co-ventures are regulated by state laws – and because every state law is different – co-ventures are not permitted.)