

AHA Certification Pathway at a Glance

Heartsaver → BLS → ACLS → PALS | Pulse CPR and First Aid School

Course	Who It's For	Typical Length	Prerequisite
Heartsaver	Anyone with little/no medical training who needs a course card for work, licensing, or personal readiness (e.g., daycare staff, teachers, coaches, general public).	2.5–6 hrs (varies by course/format)	None
BLS Provider	Healthcare professionals and trained first responders providing care in clinical or prehospital settings (nurses, EMTs, medical students).	3–4.5 hrs (varies by Training Center)	None (entry-level healthcare course)
ACLS	Healthcare professionals who direct or participate in managing cardiac arrest, stroke, or cardiopulmonary emergencies (physicians, nurses, paramedics).	6.5–9 hrs (varies by Training Center)	Current BLS Provider certification
PALS	Healthcare professionals who respond to emergencies in infants and children (ER, ICU, critical care staff).	6.5–9 hrs (varies by Training Center)	Current BLS Provider certification

All AHA course completion cards are valid for 2 years, regardless of course level.

Class lengths vary by AHA Training Center and course format (classroom vs. blended learning).

Pulse CPR and First Aid School

We teach Heartsaver, BLS, First Aid, and Babysitter Boot Camp across the CSRA — in person and onsite for groups. For ACLS/PALS, contact your hospital's AHA Training Center or visit cpr.heart.org.

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