



Selecting an AED

AEDs can be purchased by the general public through medical supply companies or online vendors. They are manufactured and sold under guidelines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and may require a physician's prescription for the device.

Some vendors provide a prescription at the time of purchase. AED owners may also get a prescription from a physician or osteopath of their choice or [request a prescription](#) free of charge from King County Emergency

Medical Services

To help you choose an AED that is “right” for your organization or company, consider the following:

Who may use or be served by the AED?

Knowing who may potentially **use** the AED or **be treated** with the AED will help you consider how often you may use the AED and what features may support its use.

- Employees and/or customers in work settings
- General population in public spaces
- People in locations with increased or high impact physical activity (gyms, fitness facilities, parks, etc.)
- People who may be more at risk for SCA (elderly, people practicing high levels of physical activity, those with heart conditions, those participating in drug use, etc.)
- People living in single or multi-family homes

Where will the AED be placed?

The AED location will help you determine whether you need more than one AED and what type of features you may want to consider in your selection (Do you need a basic AED, one with rugged/protective accessories that protect against extreme weather conditions, one with bilingual prompts, etc.?) For example:

- Small workspace with limited public access?
- Large, complex workspace or area with multiple floors, keyed entries, etc.?
- Smaller spaces with public access (offices, stores, restaurants, etc.)?
- Outdoor spaces?
- Mobile units in vehicles?
- High volume areas/locations with high public access?
- Locations with increased or high impact physical activity (parks, gyms, fitness centers, etc.)

What is the Ease of Use of the AED?

How intuitive is the AED to use? If someone had no training, would they easily be able to use it on someone who needed it?

- Do you need to plug in the pads before using the device, or are the pads already attached?
- Do you need to turn the device on, or does it automatically turn on when it is opened?
- Is the weight of the device manageable?
- Are the buttons on the device easy to locate and understand?
- Are the pads accessible and easy to remove from its packet?
- Are the audio prompts easy to understand? Are they loud enough?
- Can the AED be programmed in languages other than English?
- Is the device easy to maintain? How easily can you tell whether the battery and/or pads are current or expired?
- Is it easy to replace the pads and batteries?
- Is use of the device intuitive to those who are unfamiliar with it?
- Do you prefer a semi-automatic AED or an automatic AED?

What other features are available?

All AEDs will do the same thing- detect a shockable heart rhythm and deliver a shock if indicated. Whether you need a simple, basic AED, or one with additional features will depend on your organization's specific needs. Additional features may include:

- Wi-Fi capability (useful for remote monitoring and data transmission, if necessary)
- Child features (child pads or attenuator to deliver a shock appropriate for a child)
- Bilingual AEDs (can program to provide prompts in languages other than English)
- Real-time feedback on CPR quality
- Tracking software (for AED maintenance)
- Color screen displays

Cost Considerations

AEDS can range in cost from \$1200-\$3000 each.

- Initial costs- May include AED, case, batteries and pads, storage cabinets, etc.
- Maintenance costs- Most pads need to be replaced every 2 years. Battery-life may range between 4-5 years.
- Many vendors offer various levels of maintenance packages. Depending on your AED oversight plan, you may or may not need this.
- Is grant funding available? Grants are usually limited to non-profit organizations, schools, etc. Be cautious of AED vendors that offer "grants." These are often "buy down" discounts- not a grant.
- Availability of state or local funding for governments, schools, and non-profit organizations. For information about the Washington State AED purchasing contract, contact the King County CPR/PAD Program Manager – laura.miccile@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-8664

New AED vs. Pre-Owned AED?

If purchasing a low-cost device is a priority, some vendors sell pre-owned devices, which cost about half the price of a new AED. New devices have never been removed from the box or put into service. Pre-owned devices may have been traded in from previous owners, used as demo units for sales teams, or come from equipment buyback programs.

Consider the following when shopping for pre-owned AEDs:

- Has the AED has gone through a testing and inspection process? Not all testing and inspection processes are the same. What was involved in the testing and inspection process? Was the inspection performed following bio-medical guidelines?
- Is the AED still serviceable or supported by the vendor or manufacturer? Will you still be able to purchase pads and batteries when you need them in a few years?
- Is the vendor an authorized re-seller? It is not recommended to purchase an AED through re-sale sites such as eBay, Facebook Marketplace, Offer Up, Craigslist, etc.
- Is the warranty transferrable, or does the vendor offer a warranty for its pre-owned devices?
- Is the device programmed with current AHA guidelines?
- Does the device have any current recalls?
- If the device had a recall, has it been resolved? How?
- Is the AED supplied with new pads and battery? Other accessories, such as a case, rescue supply accessories, signage, storage cabinets, etc.?

Additional Questions?

Contact the King County EMS CPR/AED Program- www.kingcounty.gov

Program Manager- Laura Miccile | laura.miccile@kingcounty.gov | 206-477-8664