

Community First Responder Guidelines

Purpose

The Community First Responder Program aims to deliver life-saving assistance to individuals facing medical emergencies in the critical minutes prior to ambulance arrival. Community members with current First Aid qualification or registered medical or health care practitioner with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) can register to be alerted of nearby medical emergencies and be given the choice to provide assistance. These guidelines are to be adhered to in conjunction with the First Responder App Terms and Conditions and St John WA's Privacy Policy.

You can view the App Terms and Conditions [Here](#). (Link to be added)

You can view St John WA's Privacy Policy [Here](#). (Link to be added)

Skills and Qualifications

You must be proficient in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or the utilisation of an automated external defibrillator (AED). It is your individual responsibility to ensure your CPR and AED skills remain current.

Receiving Incident Notifications

From time to time, you may receive notification that there is a medical emergency near to your location. You can choose to respond (though you are not obliged to respond) when you receive an incident notification.

You should only accept incident notifications if you are in a suitable condition and adequately prepared to provide assistance. You must not accept an incident notification if you are impaired due to alcohol, fatigue, prescription medications, or other substances.

When you choose to accept an incident notification, you are responding voluntarily as a Good Samaritan and not as a representative or agent of St John WA. You are responsible for your actions and safety in the assistance you provide. You are protected as a Good Samaritan from civil liability when providing emergency assistance (in good faith and without recklessness) to a person whose life or safety is in danger (see *Civil Liability Act 2022 (WA)*).

Travelling to the Scene

You should opt to travel on foot to the incident. If you choose to travel to the scene in a vehicle, you must drive safely and observe all standard road rules. Being a community first responder does not exempt you from adhering to the Australian Road Rules, relevant traffic legislation, or any other pertinent legal requirements.

Standing Down

Occasionally, an incident that you have accepted will be updated while you are enroute to the scene. This can include the incident being 'cancelled'. This means your assistance is no longer required, or the situation has been deemed unsafe or inappropriate for you to attend. You should immediately stand down and not approach the incident area.

Arriving at the Scene

You are responsible for your personal health and safety. You should not enter any location perceived as hazardous to yourself or others.

Should a significant safety risk become apparent, or if at any time you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, you can retreat to a safe area and contact Triple Zero (000) to seek further assistance or inform them that you are not providing assistance.



Identification

Upon arrival, you must clearly identify yourself, explaining you are a community first responder there to provide assistance until the ambulance arrives.

e.g., *“Hi, my name is Jane and I have been notified by St John WA (via the First Responder App) that you need medical assistance – I can help while the ambulance is on its way.”*

If access to the location is unavailable or assistance is declined on your arrival after identifying yourself, you should leave the scene.

Consent

You must seek verbal consent from the patient or the Triple Zero caller before providing any assistance. However, where it is impractical to obtain consent (e.g. where patient is unconscious), you can offer necessary life-saving measures.

If at any time the patient or the Triple Zero caller declines your assistance or asks you to leave, you must cease providing care or leave immediately.

Behaviour at the Scene

When attending an incident, you are expected to adhere to the following guidelines, ensuring the safety, privacy, and wellbeing of all involved parties.

Professionalism and Respect

You are expected to remain professional and respectful at all times, maintaining a calm demeanour to help reduce the stress of the situation for the patient and any bystanders.

Multiple Community First Responders

There may be occasions where multiple app users accept the same incident. If you arrive and there is already a community first responder at the scene, identify yourself and ask if your assistance is required, and if so, how you can help. Ensure assistance is provided as needed with utmost regard for the safety of the patient and others at the scene.

Patient Privacy

You must respect the privacy of the patient at all times. Any personal information or observations about the patient’s condition are to be kept confidential and only shared with the ambulance crew, police, or other emergency service provider upon their arrival.

Discretion and Judgement

You must use your discretion and judgement when attending a scene, acknowledge the limits of your training and abilities, and ensure you do not attempt interventions beyond basic first aid, CPR and the utilisation of an AED unless you are qualified to do so.

AHPRA registered health practitioners should exercise professional judgement in the provision of clinical care to the patient commensurate with their qualification, level of training, competence in any procedure, assessment or clinical skill, equipment at hand and where there is a time-critical need to perform the intervention.

If there is a Triple Zero (000) call operator on the line with you or another person at the scene, you must follow their instructions.

Responsibility for Actions

You are accountable for your own actions at a scene and must be prepared to explain your actions and decisions to the ambulance crew upon their arrival.



Handover to Ambulance Crew

When the ambulance crew arrives, you must provide a brief and accurate summary of the patient's condition and any actions taken. Afterwards, you should allow the responding ambulance clinicians to take over management of the patient. You may be asked to continue assisting with resuscitation efforts, but only under the direct supervision and leadership of the St John WA ambulance crew.

Leaving the Scene

After handing over to the ambulance crew, or departing the scene for any other reason, you should promptly leave the scene (unless otherwise directed by the ambulance crew), ensuring you maintain the confidentiality of the patient at all times.

Acknowledgement and Agreement:

By participating in the Community First Responder Program, you acknowledge you have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to these Guidelines. Failure to comply with these Guidelines may result in the use of your account and/or access to the App being suspended, or in case of serious violation terminated.

If you are subject to other relevant codes of conduct, these guidelines are in addition to those codes. For example, if you are a St John WA paid or volunteer team member, you are also required to act in accordance with the St John WA code of conduct; and if you are a registered health practitioner you are required to act in accordance with the code of conduct adopted by the national board for your profession while acting as a Community First Responder.