

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 11-0245R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Middleton, Henry, Branch, Stokes, Holton, Welch, Spector,  
Clarke, Curran, Reisinger, Cole, President Young, Councilmember Conaway

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2011

Assigned to: Health Committee

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Department of Human Resources, Fire Department,  
Health Department, Labor Commissioner

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – Department of Human Resources**  
3 **– Workplace First Aid Program**

4 FOR the purpose of requesting the Director of the Department of Human Resources to report to  
5 the City Council on the efficacy of the workplace first aid training course currently available  
6 to City employees; to assess the need for expansion of the training program to meet  
7 Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines; and to determine which  
8 Baltimore City employees need participate in initial mandatory workplace first aid training  
9 and periodic refresher courses.

10 **Recitals**

11 In Best Practices Guide: Fundamentals of a Workplace First-Aid Program, Occupational  
12 Safety and Health Administration, 2006, first aid is described as “emergency care provided for  
13 injury or sudden illness before emergency medical treatment is available. The first-aid provider  
14 in the workplace is someone who is trained in the delivery of initial medical emergency  
15 procedures, using a limited amount of equipment to perform a primary assessment and  
16 intervention while awaiting arrival of emergency medical service (EMS) personnel”.

17 First aid is generally used in the treatment of minor illnesses, in which case it may be  
18 sufficient by itself. However, first aid can also be used as the first response to a more serious  
19 injury or illness that will later require medical treatment. Common conditions that may require  
20 first aid treatment range from workplace injuries so minor that only a band-aid is required such  
21 as a paper cut, minor burn, or bruise to life threatening conditions such as choking, heart attack,  
22 anaphylactic shock, bone fracture, or epileptic seizure

23 An article in the November, 2000 HR Magazine holds that for employers offering first aid  
24 training provides a host of benefits – including compliance with the Occupational Safety and  
25 Health Administration (OSHA) regulation standard that states: “In the absence of an infirmary,  
26 clinic or hospital in near proximity to the workplace ... persons shall be adequately trained to  
27 render first aid. Adequate first aid supplies shall be readily available.

28 OSHA’s Health Specialist for the Directorate of Compliance Programs states that “near  
29 proximity” varies. “In areas where accidents resulting in suffocation, severe bleeding or other

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.  
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 life-threatening or permanently disabling injury or illness can be expected, a 3- or 4- minute  
2 response time – time from the time of injury to the time of administering first aid – is required.  
3 Where a life-threatening or permanently disabling injury is an unlikely outcome of an accident, a  
4 longer response time – such as 15 minutes – is acceptable.” OSHA requires care within 3 to 4  
5 minutes because that is the maximum amount of time the brain can survive without oxygen  
6 before serious damage occurs.

7 According to the American Heart Association, 400,000 to 460,000 persons die each year of  
8 cardiac arrest, and 13% of these deaths are in the workplace. *The Cost of Cardiac Arrest in the*  
9 *Workplace*, Occupational Health & Safety, September 01, 2004 reports that “cardiac arrest, the  
10 equal opportunity killer, took 1,261 American’s lives yesterday, most of them before they  
11 reached the hospital. Many of the deaths happened at work.” These deaths are part of the  
12 250,000 sudden cardiac arrests (SCA) that the Association found occur out-of-hospital annually.

13 The actual number of SCAs that happen at work is unknown. If an employee collapses  
14 without warning and is not attended to promptly and effectively, the employee may die. Prompt,  
15 properly administered first aid may mean the difference between rapid or prolonged recovery,  
16 temporary or permanent disability, and even life or death. The *Best Practices Guide* instructs  
17 that Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), now widely available, safe, effective, portable,  
18 and easy to use, “provide the critical and necessary treatment for SCA caused by ventricular  
19 fibrillation, the uncoordinated beating of the heart leading to collapse and death. Using AEDs as  
20 soon as possible after sudden cardiac arrest, within 3- 4 minutes, can lead to a 60% survival  
21 rate.”

22 The *Best Practices Guide: Fundamentals of a Workplace First-Aid Program* summary  
23 offers several recommendations:

- 24 • Employers are required to have a person or persons adequately trained to render first  
25 aid for work sites that are not in near proximity to an infirmary, clinic or hospital.
- 26 • The program must comply with all applicable OSHA standards and regulations.  
27 OSHA requires certain employers to have a CPR-trained rescuers on site.
- 28 • Sudden cardiac arrest is a potential risk at all work sites, regardless of the type of  
29 work. Serious consideration should be given to establishing a workplace AED  
30 program.
- 31 • First-aid supplies must be available in adequate quantities and be readily accessible.
- 32 • First-aid training courses should include instruction in general and workplace hazard-  
33 specific knowledge and skills. CPR training should incorporate AED training if an  
34 AED is available at the work site. First-aid training should be repeated periodically  
35 to maintain and update knowledge and skills.
- 36 • Management commitment and worker involvement is vital in developing,  
37 implementing and assessing a workplace first-aid program.

38 The Baltimore City *Department of Human Resources Training Course Catalog September*  
39 *2010 - June 2011* offers an Adult/Child CPR First Aid course where “participants will receive  
40 training in first aid procedures so they are equipped to provide basic care in the first few minutes

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1 of an emergency until professional help arrives.” The course is not mandatory for any employee,  
2 including safety officers, and no periodic refresher course is offered.

3 Recent threats to employee health and safety that resulted in building evacuations and an  
4 aging workforce driven by the economic downturn are part of a myriad of reasons that Baltimore  
5 City should re-access the preparedness of employees to respond to medical emergency.

6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the  
7 Director of the Department of Human Resources is requested to report to the City Council on the  
8 efficacy of the workplace first aid training course currently available to City employees; to  
9 assess the need for expansion of the training program to meet Occupational Safety and Health  
10 Administration guidelines; and to determine which Baltimore City employees need participate in  
11 initial mandatory workplace first aid training and periodic refresher courses.

12 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the Fire Chief and appropriate Fire Department  
13 personnel are requested to attend the hearing on this resolution and to offer expert observation  
14 and recommendation.

15 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
16 Director of Human Resources, the Fire Chief, Baltimore City Fire Department, the Baltimore  
17 City Health Commissioner, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.