

Become a Mental Health First Aid Instructor

Mental Health First Aid USA is a public education program that introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and, most importantly, teaches individuals how to help someone in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge.

WHO ARE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTORS?

Mental Health First Aid Instructors are the key link to bringing the training to communities across the country. Instructors are individuals certified to teach the 8-hour course. Most instructors teach the course within the communities where they work and live.

Instructors must be committed to disseminating Mental Health First Aid in their communities. Instructors also must be confident teachers, with the ability to accurately and effectively transfer knowledge, information, and resources and to motivate and engage with learners.

Instructors come from a variety of backgrounds, but should have personal or professional experience with mental health or substance use challenges in addition to training and facilitation experience. Mental Health First Aid USA has trained and certified instructors from:

- community mental health and substance use centers;
- state and Federal government agencies;
- universities;
- hospitals;
- federally qualified health centers;
- faith-based organizations;
- police and criminal justice agencies;
- mental health advocacy organizations (such as MHA and NAMI affiliates); and
- independent trainers.



Qualified instructors may come from all levels of an organization – including CEOs and front-line staff – but should be whoever will be the best advocate for the program in your area.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAMS

Individuals can become certified to teach the adult and youth curricula. In order to obtain instructor certification, individuals are required to complete a 5-day instructor training program offered by the national authorities of Mental Health First Aid USA.

The interactive training program introduces the course, overviews adult learning styles and teaching strategies, and provides in-depth instruction on implementing and managing the program. Individuals must demonstrate mastery of the program through a written test and an evaluated presentation. Courses typically run from 9am-5pm each day of the program. During the last two days of the training, each participant will present an assigned portion of the Mental Health First Aid course to the group. Trainers will conduct an individual evaluation of each participant in addition to the peer feedback provided. Only participants who have been present for the entire 5-day training will be considered for certification as instructors. Each of the above items determines whether or not an individual is granted certification. It is not guaranteed that all participants who attend the instructor training will achieve certification.

If an individual is already an active, certified instructor in one of the Mental Health First Aid USA curricula (adult or youth), then they may attend an expedited 2.5 day training in order to attain certification to teach both curricula.

GET CERTIFIED

The 5-day and 2.5-day instructor trainings are held regularly throughout the year across the country. Individuals must apply to attend instructor trainings. Selection criteria, course tuition, and instructor expectations are outlined within the application. Tuition for the 5-day instructor course is \$2,000 per person (\$1,850 for National Council members), and is inclusive of the five days of instruction, breakfast & lunch throughout the course, materials needed to teach the community course, and ongoing technical assistance once certified, unless otherwise noted. Tuition for the 2.5-day course is \$950 per person (\$850 for National Council members). Payment guidelines are provided once an application has been accepted for a particular program.

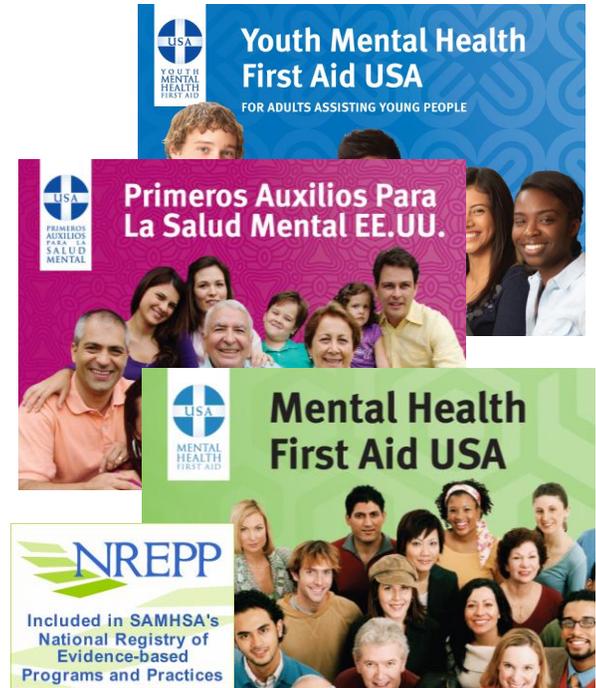
Search for upcoming courses and apply online at www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org/become_an_instructor.

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Mental Health First Aid is included on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

In order to ensure that the course is delivered in a consistent and quality manner, instructors undergo tight credentialing by the national authorities to guarantee strict fidelity to the core Mental Health First Aid USA program model.

Instructors must teach the course in its entirety and maintain fidelity to the core program. Instructors are expected to teach the course at least three times per year once certified. Course schedule and fees may be determined by the instructors and the course participant manuals (\$14.95-\$16.95 each, plus shipping) must be ordered from the national authorities. Instructors are required to provide course evaluations to the national authorities to maintain certification. The national authorities provide ongoing technical assistance, such as grant writing and marketing support, to certified instructors to help them disseminate the course in their communities.



AUDIENCES FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COURSE

Mental Health First Aid is helpful for everyone to learn, but individuals in certain roles and professions who come into frequent contact with members of the public may use the skills learned more often. Instructors teach the course to groups including:

- Educators/School Administrators
- Human Resources Professionals
- Members of Faith Communities
- Homeless Shelter Workers
- Nurses/Physician Assistants/Primary Care Workers
- Police/First Responders/Security Personnel
- Mental Health Authorities
- Policymakers
- Substance Abuse Professionals
- Social Workers
- Consumers and Family Members

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The 5-day instructor training certification program is approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval #886615104-1416) for 32 Social Work continuing education contact hours. The instructor training is also approved by NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals, for 32.0 CEUs, and by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences for 32 CEUs. Additional continuing education opportunities are pending.